

Maryland Youth Ballet



MARYLAND YOUTH BALLET FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MYB Presents the 20th Season
of the Award-winning, *The Nutcracker*



Photo by Stephen Baranovics

Silver Spring, MD — October 1, 2009 — Maryland Youth Ballet (MYB) is celebrating 38 years of excellence in ballet training as pre-professional students and children from the academy prepare for the 20th season of MYB's *The Nutcracker*, choreographed by Principal, Michelle Lees. "When I think back, I am amazed that over 2,000 MYB students have performed in our Nutcracker during the past 20 years", says Lees. "It has been a great joy to have students come back year after year to touch base and tell me they remember being a Mouse or a Flower. I take pride in the number of Sugar Plums, Snow Queens, Cavaliers, and Flower Queens who went on to professional careers. Many have reported back that our Nutcracker was superior in many ways to the version they are currently doing!"

Voted both Outstanding Production in Classical Dance and Outstanding Youth Performance by Metro DC Dance Awards, Lees' version of the holiday classic is a metropolitan area family favorite. With costumes by Tensia Fonseca and Judy Hansen and sets and scenery by Jeffrey J. Grandel, the production brings together one of the most dynamic creative teams in the area.

Lees followed the standard Petipa footprint for the general sections but created original versions of the Party Scene, Battle Scene and Snow Scene herself. There is something for everyone in this fun and engaging version of the Nutcracker—a huge cannon that fires at the mice, a beautiful growing Christmas tree, whirling flakes in a snowstorm, cute little Ginger Snaps peeking out of a huge Mother Ginger skirt, a lovely Sugar Plum dancing with her handsome Cavalier, and extraordinary costumed characters from the Kingdom of Sweets. All the main

roles are performed by students, with faculty and parents filling some roles in the Party Scene. The stunning performance is so beautifully and professionally mounted and presented that it belies the fact that the performers are young dancers. Lees says, "It is always exciting for the students to perform in a full scale professional production. They wait eagerly for the Nutcracker season each year. Just as importantly, the undertaking brings together the faculty, students, their family members and the community in this annual family event."

As part of its outreach and education efforts, MYB offers a unique Q&A session after its matinee performances conducted by faculty member and assistant choreographer, Harriet Williams, at which children in the audience may question student cast members and see how some of the special effects are created. According to Williams, "They are always surprised to learn that we have approximately 90 dancers in our Nutcracker. The youngest spend between 1-3 hours per week on rehearsals and the most advanced dancers rehearse on both Saturdays and Sundays for 3-4 hours at a time for two months!"

Performance information: December 18, 19, 20, 23, 26, 27, 2009

Friday, December 18 at 7:00 pm
Saturday, December 19 at 1:00 and 5:00 pm
Sunday, December 20 at 1:00 and 5:00 pm
Wednesday, December 23 at 7:00 pm
Saturday, December 26 at 1:00 and 5:00pm
Sunday, December 27 at 1:00 and 5:00pm

Ticket Costs:

Adults \$25 (\$30 at Door)
Students & Seniors \$20 (\$25 at Door)
Children 12 and Under \$15 (\$20 at Door)

Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center, Montgomery College Rockville Campus, 51 Mannakee Street

For tickets, call the Box Office at **240-567-5301**
Mon.–Fri. 10-6pm in person or online at www.montgomerycollege.edu/PAC

About MYB: *The mission of the Maryland Youth Ballet is to provide the highest caliber of dance to the community through training, performance, and outreach. The academy has consistently served the community for 38 years and graduates of the school have been placed with internationally acclaimed dance companies around the world. Classes are available for youth and adults in various levels, seven days a week.*

Programs of the Maryland Youth Ballet are funded in part by the State of Maryland General Assembly, the Montgomery County Executive's Ball, the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, the Jim and Carol Trawick Foundation, and the Margaret Abell Fund.

Maryland Youth Ballet is a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization.



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