



For Immediate Release

PENINSULA LIVELY ARTS PRESENTS
THREE AMAZING VERSIONS OF *THE NUTCRACKER* THIS SEASON:
***NUTCRACKER SWEETS* FOR YOUNG FAMILIES, DEC. 6 & 7, STUDIO ONE;**
***HIP-HOP NUTCRACKER*, DEC. 20, SAN MATEO PERFORMING ARTS CENTER;**
***THE NUTCRACKER*, DEC. 21, SAN MATEO PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**
FROM CLASSICAL GRACE TO HIP-HOP ENERGY, THREE WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF A HOLIDAY FAVORITE

www.peninsulalivelyarts.org



Nutcracker Sweets



Hip-Hop Nutcracker



The Nutcracker

San Mateo, Calif. (October 12, 2025) — This December, **Peninsula Lively Arts** (PLA) invites audiences to experience not one, but three spectacular interpretations of the cherished holiday ballet, the *Nutcracker*. Each production offers a distinct artistic vision—from classical ballet to high-energy hip-hop—featuring outstanding dancing, storytelling, dazzling costumes, and Tchaikovsky’s timeless score reimagined in fresh and inspiring ways.

NUTCRACKER SWEETS: December 6 & 7 at 12.30, 2.30 and 4.30 p.m.

The holiday season begins with the company’s beloved ***Nutcracker Sweets***, a delightful 60-minute abridged version of the *Nutcracker* created especially for children ages 3 to 9, and their families. Performed by members of **Peninsula Ballet Theatre** and students from the **Peninsula School of the Arts**, this fully costumed performance offers six showings on **December 6 and 7 at 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., and 4:30 p.m.** in the intimate Studio One at Peninsula Lively Arts, 1880 South Grant Street, San Mateo.

HIP-HOP NUTCRACKER: December 20 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Adding a bold contemporary twist, Peninsula Lively Arts presents the very popular and electrifying ***Hip-Hop Nutcracker***, choreographed by Peninsula Hip-Hop Productions Artistic Director **Stuck Sanders** and Associate Director **Alée Martinez**. This two-act production fuses multiple hip-hop styles—including breakdance, turfing, cyber yoga, flexing, and bone breaking—with E.T.A. Hoffmann’s 19th century classic Christmas tale. Set to Tchaikovsky’s famous score but layered with surprising urban remixes and industrial beats, this thrilling

performance pulses with raw energy and creativity, celebrating the *Nutcracker's* universal message of joy, love, and imagination through the language of virtuosic street dance.

Featuring standout hip-hop artists from the **Tribe** and **Poisen** crews, L.A.-based stars **Cyber Yoga and Paola**, returning favorites **T Dot** and **Nasty Ray**, and new additions **Feline Finesse** (San Francisco's all-girl youth crew) and **Str8 Jacket** from San Mateo, the *Hip-Hop Nutcracker* lights up the stage with jaw-dropping choreography, fearless athleticism, and over-the-top style. It's a high-voltage dance spectacle that bridges generations and celebrates community with a refreshed look at this timeless holiday story. Two performances are scheduled at the San Mateo Performing Arts Center on **Saturday, December 20 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.**

THE NUTCRACKER: December 21 at 2 p.m.

Rounding out the season is the grand and traditional *Nutcracker* ballet by **Peninsula Ballet Theatre**, choreographed by company Artistic Director **Gregory Amato**. This classical full-length production brings to life the enchanting tale of Clara and her magical journey through the "Land of Sweets." With more than 135 dancers, exquisite costumes, glittering sets, and the participation of **Masterworks Chorale** and the Snow Chorus from **Oakland's Skyline High School** under Adam Green's direction, this production embodies the sheer beauty, elegance, and grandeur that have made *The Nutcracker* a family tradition for generations.

New to this year's presentation, Amato has invited acclaimed choreographers **Ye Feng (Feng Ye Dance Company)** and **Sharlyn Sawyer (Ballet Afsaneh)** to stage new Chinese and Persian divertissements—authentic, culturally rich additions that will enhance Act II's vibrant journey through the "Land of Sweets" and beyond. These new dances will add even more depth and diversity to a production already known for its visual splendor and heartfelt storytelling.

"With three distinct productions, the *Nutcracker* truly comes alive for everyone this season—whether you love the beauty and precision of classical ballet or the raw, kinetic energy of hip-hop," said Artistic Director Gregory Amato. "Each version celebrates the same timeless Christmas story that continues to resonate with audiences everywhere, reminding us of the joy, wonder, and imagination that define the season. I am particularly honored to collaborate with highly respected choreographers Ye Feng and Sharlyn Sawyer for infusing our production with authentic and more historically accurate dance scenes in Act II."

With its breathtaking collaborative choreography, exquisite costumes, and Tchaikovsky's immortal music, Amato's *Nutcracker* will enchant audiences at the San Mateo Performing Arts Center on **Sunday, December 21 at 2 p.m.**—a perfect holiday outing for the entire family.

Peninsula Ballet Theatre, founded in 1967, is the Bay Area's second oldest professional ballet company. Now operating as **Peninsula Lively Arts**, an exciting and unique dance hub located in San Mateo, this producing organization is comprised of **Peninsula Ballet Theatre, Peninsula School of the Arts, Peninsula Hip-Hop Productions**, and the **Peninsula International Dance Festival**. PLA features five dance studios that are used for weekly company rehearsals, school instruction in a variety of dance styles for young children to adults, and as a home to over 13 dance, music and Pilates organizations that rent studios.

CALENDAR

Peninsula Lively Arts Presents 3 *Nutcrackers* This December

NUTCRACKER SWEETS

Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 12.30 p.m., 2.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.

Sunday, December 7 at 12.30 p.m., 2.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.

Venue: Peninsula Lively Arts, Studio One Theatre, 1880 South Grant, San Mateo

Tickets: \$35 children 12 and under; \$45 general; www.peninsulalivelyarts.org

An abridged 60-minute version of the classic ballet *Nutcracker* for children ages 3 – 9 and families. Featuring dancers from Peninsula Ballet Theatre and students from the Peninsula School of the Arts.

HIP-HOP NUTCRACKER

Saturday, December 20, 2025 at 2 p.m.

Saturday, December 20 at 7 p.m.

Venue: San Mateo Performing Arts Center, 600 North Delaware Street, San Mateo

Presented in two acts, one intermission for two hours.

Tickets: \$45, \$55 and \$65; www.peninsulalivelyarts.org

Back by popular demand, a full-length production by **Peninsula Hip-Hop Productions** Artistic Director **Stuck Sanders** with additional choreography by **Alée Martinez**. Featuring a cast of over 35 dancers and guest artists from **Tribe, Poisen, Cyber Yoga and Paola, T Dot, Nasty Ray, Feline Finesse**, and **Str8 Jacket** as they move through all styles of street dance including turf dancing, break dancing, cyber yoga, flexing and bone breaking. A two-act dance scenario adapted from E.T.A. Hoffmann's traditional Christmas story with original classical music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, but overlaid with fresh DJ industrial beats, remixes and high-voltage sounds.

THE NUTCRACKER

Sunday, December 21, 2025 at 2 p.m.

Venue: San Mateo Performing Arts Center, 600 North Delaware Street, San Mateo

Presented in two acts, one intermission for two hours.

Tickets: \$45, \$55 and \$65; www.peninsulalivelyarts.org

A full-length professional production by **Peninsula Ballet Theatre's** Artistic Director **Gregory Amato**, based on the original setting by E.T.A. Hoffmann and set to the lush music of Russian composer, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. New this season will be additional choreography in Act II by award-winning creators **Ye Feng/Feng Ye Dance Company** for a new Chinese divertissement and **Sharlyn Sawyer/Ballet Afsaneh** for a new Persian divertissement. The *Nutcracker* production will feature a costumed cast of 135+ dancers and singers with the participation of students from the **Peninsula School of Ballet**, San Mateo's **Masterworks Chorale** and Oakland's **Skyline High School Chorus**.

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