National Presenting Partner BMO

BALLETJÖRGEN

The Nutcracker

A Canadian Tradition



HFA HUNTSVILLE festival of the arts

November 21, 2026
Algonquin Theatre, Huntsville

Message from the Artistic Director

Welcome to *The Nutcracker: A Canadian Tradition!*



Every year, Ballet Jörgen has the privilege of sharing this production and other ballets with over 50,000 people from coast to coast, bringing people together and to help build stronger communities through dance. The Nutcracker is a wonderful holiday tradition for so many Canadians and is often a child's first experience watching a ballet. For this reason, we are pleased to incorporate dance students into this production, as so many professional dancers start their careers as young performers in The Nutcracker!

When I thought about re-creating our Nutcracker, I wanted it to be a Canadian-inspired Nutcracker, one that would connect this wonderful ballet to our own heritage. I am particularly delighted to have created a ballet connected to one of my own favourite pastimes — canoeing in Ontario's Algonquin Park.

Sue LePage, our Set & Costume Designer and Heinar Piller, Stage Director, have contributed greatly to the creation of this unique re-imagining of the ballet. Thank you to Clea Iveson for suggesting the use of Group of Seven paintings as a backdrop for our stunning and dramatic Canadian landscapes and to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection for their help in making this uniquely Canadian production possible.

I am deeply grateful to the loyal supporters of Ballet Jörgen who have shown extraordinary generosity. In particular, I extend heartfelt thanks to several generations of the Henderson family for their pivotal role in bringing *The Nutcracker: A Canadian Tradition* to life.

This performance is made possible in part through the support of our National Presenting Partner, BMO Financial Group and with touring support from the Ontario Arts Council. The National Education and Skills Program is made possible by RBC. Ontario Programming is supported by The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts with additional contributions from The William and Nona Heaslip Foundation and dedicated Ballet Jörgen donors.

Thank you for coming and for making *The Nutcracker: A Canadian Tradition* part of your holiday season.

Enjoy the show!



Bengt Jörgen C.M.

JÖRGENDANCE

Dance for all

For 39 years Jörgen Dance has brought the joy of dance to countless individuals, families, and communities across Canada and beyond. While we are firmly rooted in our history as an exceptional professional ballet company, we have grown to be so much more! Today we offer a wide range of training and community programs across many dance styles to ensure dance is truly accessible for all Canadians.

Whether you are looking to attend a performance, learn to dance, or engage with the arts for the first time; there is something for you under the **Jörgen Dance** umbrella. You will be welcomed, educated, entertained, and be a respected member of our in-person and virtual community. As an organization we genuinely believe in our motto **Dance for All.**

Visit the website today and subscribe for email news and updates.

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Synopsis

Act I

It is Christmas Eve 1912, in the small village of Bisset, Ontario, north of Algonquin Park. The community is preparing for a holiday celebration and rare respite from every-day hard labor. People are gathering, a Christmas tree is cut and everyone heads to the school house for the festivities. Klara, a young girl recently orphaned and sent to Canada to join her older sister, arrives.

With the party already in full swing, Klara is warmly welcomed by everyone except by the daughter of the one well-to-do couple in the community, with whom Klara's sister is employed as a maid. The celebrations are interrupted by the arrival of a painter who brings handmade toys for the kids and a painting for his sweetheart, the local school teacher. Klara is left without a wooden toy, since she is an unexpected arrival but then she brings out the one heirloom from her home, a beautifully decorated Nutcracker. This immediately makes her the centre of attention. Jealous, the rich girl grabs the Nutcracker and in a fit of anger throws it into the wood stove. An inconsolable Klara stomps off, hides behind a school desk and falls asleep. As the Party comes to an end and everyone is leaving, Klara's sister is growing worried. When she cannot find her sister she rushes out together with the painter and the teacher to look for Klara.

McMichael
CANADIAN ART COLLECTION D'ART CANADIEN



When Klara wakes up she finds the school house deserted and growing cold. She is all alone! As the clock chimes 12 times, her world starts to change. Creatures of the wood are intruding; giant sized toys come alive and from the stove pops a life size Nutcracker. She is no longer alone. She has a friend! Together they have to face the attacks of King Bat and his cunning compatriots. A wild battle ensues, ebbing back and forth. Bowling pin Mounties join the fray, but it is Klara and the Nutcracker who save the day and defeat King Bat. As the walls of the school house fade away, Klara and the Nutcracker enter the beautiful snow covered forest on a sleigh drawn by white tailed deer. Out of the snow beautiful snowflakes appear, mesmerizing and blowing Klara and the Nutcracker deep into the forest. As the snow starts to fall, Klara and the Nutcracker are lost. Tired they fall asleep in the snow.

–INTERMISSION–

Act II

Klara wakes to find all the snow gone and the forest in full summer bloom. Amazed, she wakes the Nutcracker. The ice has turned to water with beavers, frogs and squirrels guiding Klara and the Nutcracker ever deeper into the forest until they come face to face with Lady and Lord Birch. Klara and the Nutcracker, explaining that they are lost, are welcomed to stay to meet some of the animals and flowers of the woods.

Raccoons, loons, dragonflies, bears, cottontail rabbits, flowers, a giant spruce tree and the small animals living under its branches, entertain the two guests of the forest. Finally Lord and Lady Birch sway their majestic crowns in a twirling pas de deux. Klara is exhilarated by the warm welcome and applauds them all. Bidding farewell, Klara and the Nutcracker fall asleep as they are escorted out of the forest by two bears. When Klara wakes, she is alone, back in the school house. It was all just a dream! She runs to the window, but sees no one, as she disappointedly turns back she notices her old wooden Nutcracker on the school desk and remembers her dream — she is not alone — her new world is full of beauty — places, people and creatures to meet!

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The Cast

In order of appearance, program & cast subject to change.

ACT I

WELL- TO-DO-FAMILY	
DAUGHTER	Chabi Arauz
FATHER	Matthew Jordan (2pm), Ilia Dogudovskii (7pm)
MOTHER	Taisiya Zamula (2pm), Anna Turkington (7pm)
MAID	Akari Fujiwara
FARMING FAMILY	
MOTHER	Natalie Dixon
FATHER	Garreth Chapple
**CHILDREN	Max Lehman (2pm) Adam Davidson (7pm), Evelyn Lorrison, Selma Konukoglu
LUMBER JACKS	Ryusei Nagafuchi & Eugene Pang
**WOOD CHOPPING CHILD	Danica Hunter
YOUNG WOMAN	Mandi Bryce
**YOUNG CHILD	Charlotte Sutherland
GRANDMA	Esther Zignaigo
GRANDPA	Omar Hernández
IMMIGRATION AID	Anna Turkington (2pm), Taisiya Zamula (7pm)
**KLARA	Lyrik Alkema
SCHOOL TEACHER	Lydia-Laure Germain
PAINTER	Adrián Ramirez Juárez
**SOCK BUNNY	Evelyn Lorrison
**RATS	Danica Hunter, Charlotte Sutherland
HORNED OWL	Mandi Bryce
** NUTCRACKER PRINCE	Garreth Chapple (2pm) Max Lehman (7pm)
RED FOX	Natalie Dixon
SKUNK	Eugene Pang
WOLF	Adam Davidson
SKIPPING ROPE HANDLES	Anna Turkington & Taisiya Zamula
MOUNTIES	Lydia-Laure Germain & Omar Hernández (2pm), Chabi Arauz, Matt Bryce & Marco Alessandro Corcella (7pm)
KING BAT	Ilia Dogudovskii
SNOWMAN	Adam Davidson
**WHITE TAILED DEER	Danica Hunter, Selma Konukoglu, Evelyn Lorrison
SNOW QUEEN & CAVALIER	Risa Takeshima & Marco Alessandro Corcella (2pm) Akari Fujiwara & Matthew Jordan (7pm)
SNOWFLAKES	Chabi Arauz (2pm), Mandi Bryce, Matt Bryce (2pm), Natalie Dixon, Ilia Dogudovskii, Matthew Jordan (2pm) Lydia-Laure Germain (7pm), Eugene Pang (7pm), Ryusei Nagafuchi (7pm), Anna Turkington, Taisiya Zamula

ACT II

BEAVERS	*Emily Watson & Adam Davidson
*FROGS	Opal Bernier, Quinne Lesage
*SQUIRRELS	Charlotte Jagosky, Adessa MacDonald, Keira Mosley, Laney Robertson
*BEAR CUB	Etta-Rose Naiman Merleau
LORD & LADY BIRCH	Akari Fujiwara & Adrián Ramirez Juárez (2pm) Risa Takeshima & Omar Hernández (7pm)
RACCOONS	Lydia-Laure Germain & Omar Hernández (2pm), Mandi Bryce & Ryusei Nagafuchi (7pm)
LOONS	Anna Turkington & Matthew Jordan (2pm) Akari Fujiwara & Adrián Ramirez Juárez (7pm)
*YOUNG DRAGONFLIES	Danica Hunter (2pm) Selma Konukoglu (7pm) Charlotte Sutherland
DRAGONFLY	Risa Takeshima (2pm), Lydia-Laure Germain (7pm)
BEARS	Adam Davidson (2pm) Ilia Dogudovskii & Eugene Pang (7pm)
COTTONTAIL RABBITS	Chabi Arauz & Natalie Dixon (2pm), Matthew Jordan & Anna Turkington (7pm),Taisiya Zamula
MOTHER SPRUCE	Esther Zignaigo
*CHIPMUNKS	Collins Evenden, Blair Griffiths, Emmett James, Emily Watson
TRILLIUM FLOWER	Risa Takeshima (2pm), Akari Fujiwara (7pm)
FLOWERS	Matthew Jordan, Eugene Pang, Anna Turkington & Taisiya Zamula (2pm), Chabi Arauz, Matt Bryce, Marco Alessandro Corcella & Lydia-Laure Germain (7pm), Natalie Dixon, Ilia Dogudovskii & Ryusei Nagafuchi

*Local Youth Participant Role
**Touring Youth Participant Role

GEORGE BROWN POLYTECHNIC

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Register to Audition!

Nutcracker Youth Community Program Credits

Local Youth Participants:
Adessa MacDonald, Blair Griffiths, Charlotte Jagosky, Collins Evenden, Emily Watson, Emmett James, Etta-Rose Naiman Merleau, Keira Mosley, Laney Robertson, Opal Bernier, Quinne Lesage
Understudies: Collins Evenden – *Frog,* Opal Bernier – *Chipmunk,* Blair Griffiths – *Squirrel*

Local Youth Participants Courtesy of: Muskoka Dance Academy, The DanceRoom

Local Volunteer Rehearsal Direction: Sue Kirwin-Campbell

Local Rehearsal Space Courtesy of: Muskoka Dance Academy

Jörgen Dance Rehearsal Directors:
Clea Iveson, Zoë Kindrachuk, Tia Marinakis, Valentina Polanco, Lily Villeneuve, Aria Lara Wilton
Jörgen Dance Rehearsal Assistants & Chaperones:
Chabi Arauz, Garreth Chapple, Rose Juliette, Natalie Kempton

Touring Youth Participants:
Lyrik Alkema - Orillia Ballet Academy & Rebel Dance Company
Gabi Calhoun-Wearn - IDA & Sabucco's Dance Company
Eliza Domzella - The Fifth Dance
Danica Hunter - 3m Dance Works & Lindsay Rose Dance Company
Selma Konukoglu - Creative Children's Dance Centre
Evelyn Lorrison - Charb Arts Studio
Max Lehman - Lindsay Dance Studio
Sophia Parkhouse - Charb Arts Studio
Maggie Smith - The Guelph Academy of Dance
Charlotte Sutherland - Creative Children's Dance Centre

Local Volunteer Rehearsal Directors: WE THANK YOU!
Huntsville - Sue Kirwin-Campbell - Muskoka Dance Academy
Regina - Monica Ventura - Class Act Studios
Saskatoon - Shannon Menon, Hazel-Ann Stark & Tatum Sparks - La Danse
Keswick - Amber Gaston & Avery McEachnie - Port Perry Dance Academy
Hamilton - Miss Sam Watson – Smithville Dance Academy
Brantford - Andras Gorzo & Emma Onifrichuk - Jörgen Dance Academy & Lisa Naves Dance Company
London - Karin Hobby, Naomi Jenkins & Ainsley Morgan – Karin Hobby Dance Academy
Guelph - Brandi Matheson & Amanda Tarrero – Royal City School of Ballet and Jazz
Ottawa - Lisa Brooks – Brocadie Dance
Kitchener-Waterloo - Caden Drewett & Carousel Dance Centre
Markham – Anna Cormier – George Brown Dance & Jörgen Dance Academy, L'Arabesque Ballet & Wonderland Dance Co.

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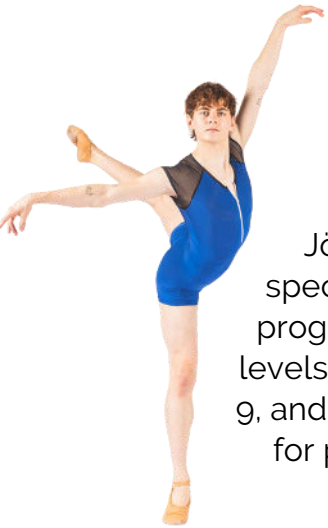



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Meet Your Dancers



Chabi Arauz
Panama City, Panama
Company Member
since 2024



Mandi Bryce
Maple Ridge, British Columbia
Company Member
since 2025



Marco Alessandro Corcella
Cerignola, Italy
Company Dancer
since 2026



Matthew Bryce
Maple Ridge, British Columbia
Company Member
since 2026
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Adam Davidson
Zephyr, Ontario
Company Member
since 2019



Natalie Dixon
Calgary, Alberta
Company Member
since 2025



Ilia Dogudovskii
Moscow, Russia
Company Member
since 2025



Akari Fujiwara
Aichi, Japan
Company Member
since 2017
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Lydia-Laure Germain
Montréal, Québec
Company Member
since 2021



Omar Hernández
Pinar del Rio, Cuba
Company Member
since 2022



Matthew Jordan
Adelaide, Australia
Company Member
since 2024



Adrián Ramírez Juárez
México City, Mexico
Company Member since
2014



Rose Juliette
Montréal, Québec
Company Member
since 2026



Rinka Matsuura
Kumamoto, Japan
Company Member
since 2026



Ryusei Nagafuchi
Aichi, Japan
Company Member
since 2025



Eugene Pang
Hong Kong, China
Company Member
since 2025
Sponsored by Kevin Goldthorp



Risa Takeshima
Nagoya, Japan
Company Member
since 2024
Sponsored by Hitoshi Ohtsuji.



Anna Turkington
Katrine, Ontario
Company Member
since 2025
Sponsored by Mary and Graham Hallward



Taisiya Zamula
Moscow, Russia
Company Member
since 2023



Esther Zignaigo
Lima, Péru
Company Member
since 2021



Emma Courish
Halifax, Nova Scotia
RBC Apprentice



Courtney Yun
Edmonton, Alberta
RBC Apprentice
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Garreth Chapple
Toronto, Ontario
Ballet Jörgen Mentee



Natalie Kempton
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
Ballet Jörgen Mentee

Learn More About Our Dancers

Production Credits

Choreography Bengt Jörgen C.M.
Composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Costume & Set Design Sue LePage
Lighting Design Bonnie Beecher
Stage Direction Heinar Pillar
Creative Assistant Clea Iveson
Scenic Carpentry Hamilton Scenic Specialty
Backdrops
Act 1 – Snow in the Woods Hamilton Scenic Specialty
Scrim and Act 2 Scenic Back Drop Studios, Richard Mongiat, Elizabeth Bailey, Katherine Lilley
Set Electrics Wireless Automations & Control Scenic Electronics Refurbished (2026) Hamilton Scenic Specialty
Costume Coordinator Industry Costumes
Wardrobe Buyer Susan Rome
Costume Coordinator and Wardrobe Buyer Refurbishment (2026) Glynis Bateson
Costume Construction Industry Costumes, Brenda Clar, Assisted by Adriennce Baker, Geoffrey Davis, Angela Arana, Yeo Lan Kwee, Linda Kirby, Maria Colella, Avril Stevenson
Costume Construction and Refurbishment (2026) **Raccoons** Brenda Clark assisted by Nancy Turner **Loons** and Trillium Flower Kim Crossley (cutter), assisted by Karen Merriam, Kaz Maxine, and Evan Stillwater **Chipmunks, Frogs, Squirrels and Bear Cub** Susan Dicks and Koji Leclair
Millinery Monica Viani, assisted by Katie Spreitzer
Frog and Skipping Rope Millinery (2026) Monica Viani
Dyeing Chrome Yellow
Props Builder Viola Frazier

BALLETJÖRGEN

Co-Founders Susan Bodie & Bengt Jörgen C.M.
Artistic Director & CEO Bengt Jörgen C.M.
Artistic Working Group Lydia-Laure Germain~`, Matthew Jordan', Esther Zignaigo
Company Dancers Chabi Arauz~`, Mandi Bryce, Matt Bryce, Marco Corcella, Adam Davidson~`, Natalie Dixon, Ilia Dogudovskii, Akari Fujiwara`, Lydia-Laure Germain~`, Omar Hernández, Matthew Jordan`, Adrián Ramírez Juárez`, Rinka Matsuura, Rose Juliette, Ryusei Nagafuchi`, Eugene Pang, Risa Takeshima, Anna Turkington`, Taisiya Zamula'~, Esther Zignaigo
RBC Apprentices Courtney Yun, Emma Courish
Mentorship Students Garreth Chapple, Natalie Kempton
Principal Character Artist Clea Iveson
Resident Choreographer Hanna Kiel
Resident Stage Direction Heinar Pillar
Stage Manager Amanda Caliolo
Production Coordinator Leah Totten
Technical Coordinator Catrina Albee
Lighting Coordinators Kit Norman
Wardrobe Supervisor Glynis Bateson

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