Tuesday & Wednesday, December 12 & 13, 2017, 7:30pm

Adapted by
MIKE FITELSON
Based on The Nutcracker by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

With Special Guest MC
KURTIS BLOW

Produced by
NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
John Schreiber, President & CEO
David Rodriguez, Executive Producer
Julia Kraus, Producer

Lighting Designer
BURKE WILMORE

Video Designer
MOE SHAHROOZ

Production Supervisor
JUSTIN SPAETHE

Company Manager
KIMBERLY SHAW

Production Stage Manager
ANGIE MCCORMICK

Original Beats & Remixes
DJ 800

Associate Director & Choreographer
RANDI "RASCAL" FREITAS

General Manager
MAXIMUM ENTERTAINMENT

Exclusive Tour Direction
INHOUSE BOOKING

Directed & Choreographed by
JENNIFER WEBER

Featuring freestyles by the company

Powered by Panasonic

Originally produced by the United Palace of Cultural Arts (Mike Fitelson, Executive Director)
CAST

Maria-Clara......................................................................... Ann-Sylvia Clark
The Nutcracker................................................................. Josue “Beast” Figueroa
Mom.................................................................................. Allauné Blegbo
Dad..................................................................................... Micah “Just Jamz” Abbrey
Drosselmeyer.......................................................................... SHEstreet
Mouse King/Ensemble.............................................. Randi “Rascal” Freitas
Toy/Ensemble....................................................................... Joel Maisonet
Toy/Ensemble....................................................................... Liliana Frias
Russian/Ensemble.................................................. Ramone “Mone Swiff” Wilkinson
Russian/Ensemble................................................................ Alex Laya
Tea/Ensemble......................................................................... Ayano Ito
Flute/Ensemble...................................................................... Evan Moody
Violinist................................................................................ Emily Simone
Performance DJ...................................................................... DJ Boo

PLACE

New Year’s Eve – Uptown, USA

The Hip Hop Nutcracker will have a 20-minute intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF CREDITS

Dance Captain......................................................... Randi “Rascal” Freitas
Original Company Associate Director/Choreographer........... Taeko Koji
Original Costume Design ............................................ Whitney Adams
Wardrobe Supervisor..................................................... Elida Donat

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

MAXIMUM ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS
  Eva Price    Carl Flanigan
  Andrew Hartman    Danielle McGarry Morales
  Avram Freedberg    Mary Beth Dale

EXCLUSIVE TOUR DIRECTION

INHOUSE BOOKING
  Tracey McFarland    Barbara Cooley
  Robin Mishik-Jett    Monica Smith
  www.inhousebooking.com

Physical Therapy by Neuro Tour Physical Therapy, Inc.
PLOT SYNOPSIS

ACT I
During the annual uptown holiday street party, Maria-Clara is upset by her parents’ constant bickering. The mysterious Drosselmeyer appears, bringing magical toys to the party. He introduces Maria-Clara to a street vendor selling roasted nuts, who catches her eye because he is different from the other boys on the block. After the party breaks up, Maria-Clara heads home, but on her way, she runs into the menacing Mouse Crew. The Nutcracker, aided by a magic pair of sneakers, defeats the Mouse King and the couple enjoys the romance of winter’s first snowfall.

ACT II
Drosselmeyer meets Maria-Clara and the Nutcracker and takes them back in time to the Land of Sweets nightclub on New Year’s Eve, 1984. Invisible, the couple watches the party-goers show off the dance styles of the day. Suddenly Maria-Clara realizes she is witnessing the night her parents met and is overcome by how they were once deeply in love.

Back in the present, and with a little more magic, Maria-Clara and The Nutcracker help Mom and Dad reconcile. The community joins them in the celebration.

BIOGRAPHIES

KURTIS BLOW (Special Guest MC) is one of the founders and creators of recorded rap. A timeless artist and hip-hop legend, Blow blazed the trail for early hip-hop artists and continues to carry the torch for hip-hop music in new arenas. Blow is credited with many accolades, and was the first rapper to ever be signed to a major label, release a certified gold rap album (The Breaks), tour the United States and Europe, record a national commercial (Sprite), use the drum machine, sample and sample loop, release a rap music video, and become a millionaire. In 1979, at the age of 20, Blow became the first rapper to be signed by a major label. He released Christmas Rappin’, which sold more than 400,000 copies and became an annual classic. Its gold follow-up, The Breaks, helped ignite an international “rap attack,” solidifying the new art form. He released 10 albums over 11 years and his early projects made him an instant success at home and across Europe. Pioneering records like Party Time introduced the fusion of rap and go-go. Hi songs like “8 Million Stories,” “Ad,” and “Basketball” were simply ahead of their time, and still get spins by DJs today. Fellow rap legend Nas debuted at #1 on the Billboard Charts with a cover of Kurtis “If I Ruled the World” in 1997. Beyond his own hits, Blow contributed to the success of The Fat Boys and Run DMC. In fact, Run began his career billed as “The Son of Kurtis Blow.” Among countless others, Wyclef Jean, Love Bug Starski, Sweet Gee, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Full Force, and Russell Simmons all have been produced by or have worked with Blow in the past. Blow’s multi-disciplinary skillset has taken him across the country and overseas to score, produce, and act in various films. Most notably, he played a large role in the production of the hit film Krush Groove. The New York Daily News called his cinematic works a “noteworthy, dynamic presence.”

Blow’s reach transcends that of your typical entertainer. He has completed multiple world tours since the turn of the new millennium, and continues to work on other creative endeavors. His innate ability to reach people is evident in his work as an activist, radio personality, and most recently, an ordained minister and leader of the Hip-hop Church. Artists still pay their respects to Kurtis’ trailblazing in a number of ways. His influence has been mentioned in seemingly every important hip-hop film in the past decade, from Get Rich or Die Tryin’ to Notorious and Straight Outta Compton. He has a prominent presence on television as well, with his music appearing on shows such as Dancing with the Stars and SportsCenter. He also was an associate producer on the Netflix hit series The Get Down.

ANN-SYLVIA CLARK (Maria-Clara) was born and raised In Norway. Training: Flow Dance Academy (Copenhagen, Denmark), Broadway Dance Center (NYC). In DK, she performed with Snoop Dogg and Pharrell Williams at the 2006 MTV European Music Awards. As a member of Decadance theatre she has toured the U.S., UK, and performed on Good Day New York, Fox5, CBS, and was a contestant on TruTV’s Fake Off. She has performed at the Jacobs Pillow Festival and worked on music videos for artists like Alicia Keys, Styles P, F.Stokes, LEON, Ben L’Oncle Soul, and Fedez. She has also done commercial work for Samsung, Smirnoff, Sixt Car, and Digicel.
Josue “Beast” Figueroa (The Nutcracker) was born in Puerto Rico and raised in Florida. Figueroa discovered his passion for breaking and the performing arts at the age of 15. Through his continual pursuit and love for the arts, he’s earned work in the *Step Up* film franchise, numerous commercials, and several international breaking championship titles with his world renowned crews MIND180 and Skill Methodz. Figueroa is currently studying to create his next path as an actor.

Allauné Blegbo (Mom) is a French dancer, raised between Paris, France, and Abidjan, Ivory Coast. She is a member of the French hip-hop/house crews Wanted Posse and Paradox-sal. She also studied in New York at The Alvin Ailey School. After a year on tour with Madonna, Blegbo decided to move to the U.S. As a freestyler she loves to merge her hip-hop and technical background with acrobatics to create a unique and abstract style.

Micah “Just Jamz” Abbey (Dad) is an artist with a concentration in urban improvisational movement. Abbey specializes in movement innovation and total body integration methodologies with an emphasis in musical aural skills and meditative approaches to movement in order to heighten creativity and self-awareness. Currently, he works as a core company member of a site-specific modern dance company, Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre; and as a dance instructor at the infamous Movement Lifestyle dance studio. He spends most of his time traveling the U.S. teaching and competing using his style “the way of a million bounces.”

Shestreet (Drosselmeyer), inspirational movements artist and choreographer, has the ability to move the masses. Being raised in a city flourishing with talented singers and musicians was a great advantage in her eyes. Her love for movement and acting began at an early age and over the years, a sense of embodiment was placed in her world! After deciding to dedicate more time to hone her craft, SHEstreet spent the following years enhancing her craft and performing throughout the United States with various companies. A native of Memphis, Tennessee, she relocated to Los Angeles, California, where she continues to pursue her vision full time.

Randi “Rascal” Freitas (Associate Director-Choreographer/Dance Captain/Mouse King/Ensemble) is a member of The Beat Freaks Crew, and is a professional hip-hop dancer living in Los Angeles. Some of her credits to date include Nike, Anthropologie, Toyota, The Emmys, Kaytranada, and Mya. Freitas has toured Japan performing in a live battle theater show. This is her second U.S. tour dancing in and choreographing for *The Hip Hop Nutcracker*. Freitas also performs with an outreach program called Universoul Hip Hop, bringing hip-hop into schools for assemblies and after school curriculum. In addition to performing, she is the co-founder of a battle called The Dance Fight and is active in the underground battle world. Freitas currently teaches at Movement Lifestyle, a professional dance studio in Los Angeles.

Joel Maisonet (Toy/Ensemble) is from Oceanside, California and has lived and trained all over Southern California. Coming from freestyling in styles such as breaking, krump, and hip-hop, Maisonet eventually found his love for musical theatre, tap, and hip-hop choreography while training in his teens at Temecula Dance Company.

Liliana Frias (Toy/Ensemble) was born and raised in Mexico and is currently working as a professional dancer in Los Angeles, California. She has been dancing for 13 years, starting as a technical dancer, then later mastering hip-hop styles and the art of freestyle. She has been featured on projects such as *So You Think You Can Dance* season 12, *America’s Best Dance Crew* season 7, Cirque Du Soleil, and Comedy Central. She is also an accomplished choreographer known for teaching and performing in the U.S., Europe, and Latin America.

Ramone “Mone Swiff” Wilkinson (Russian/Ensemble) is a professional dancer from Philly. After years of being a self-taught street dancer, he moved on to enhancing his knowledge of different styles such as hip-hop foundation and funk. His hard work and talent led him to work professionally in New York and Los Angeles. He’s worked with A-list artists and worldwide brands such as Gwen Stefani, Jennifer Lopez, Big Sean, Nike, and Apple. Wilkinson knew that hard work, dedication, and prayer would lead him to the life he dreamed of.

Alex Laya (Russian/Ensemble) grew up in the suburbs of Chicago and began his dance training in breaking at the age of 17. A graduate of Western Michigan University, Laya performed with DJ/producer Diplo while being featured in his music video for “Set Me Free” and with Soul Fresh Fam, directed by Ricky Cole of Mos Wanted Cru. He has also performed at many venues including World of Dance. Some of Laya’s other credits include Gala de Danza, Youth American Grand Prix, Establish Your Empire, Dance Stellar Productions, Chicago Dance Crash, and Culture Shock Chicago.
AYANO ITO (Tea/Ensemble) was born and raised in Kanagawa, Japan. She started to compete and perform with her crew at the age of 16. Her team won First Prize at a competition in Kanagawa. Her first job as a professional dancer was a movie called Pyu-To fuku Jaguar in Japan. She trained at Debbie Reynolds Dance Studio, Edge Performing Arts Center, and Millennium Dance Complex. Since she moved to Los Angeles, she has had opportunities to work with Nike, Lenovo, Hard Rock Cafe, Money Super Market, and many more. She continuously works hard to inspire people!

EVAN MOODY (Flute/Ensemble) is just a kid from Raleigh, North Carolina! Moody’s first musical theater stage debut was My First Bug Jar as a 5th Grader at North Carolina State University and his credits now include Miley Cyrus, Ariana Grande, Mountain Dew, Keke Palmer, Alvin and the Chipmunks 4, and Todrich Hall. Moody is so thankful for all the opportunities. He would like to thank his parents for helping him find a passion at such a young age, and then helping him focus and grow with it.

EMILY SIMONE (Violinist) is a classically-trained pop violinist and electronic music producer based in Brooklyn. A fixture in the NYC club scene, Simone has toured Germany with the Franco Dragone (of Cirque du Soleil) show Incredible India, and is regularly featured with cirque-nouveau group Quixotic. Simone has performed concerts in Pakistan to promote cultural exchange, enjoys remixing contemporary music to feature the violin (#thevmix), and released her first EP last year (We Are Ready by Kylian).

MIKE FITELSON (Writer/Co-Creator) is the executive director of the United Palace of Cultural Arts (UPCA), which originally produced The Hip Hop Nutcracker in 2014, and co-created the show with Jennifer Weber, adapting the story and supplying the images for the scenery. Fitelson has worked to build the arts community in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan for over a decade. He co-founded the community’s annual arts festival, the Uptown Arts Stroll in 2003, and served in every capacity of the Manhattan Times, the bilingual community newspaper of Washington Heights and Inwood, from 2002–2011.

JENNIFER WEBER (Director & Choreographer) is a Bessie-nominated choreographer and the founder of theatrical hip-hop company, Decadance theatre. Her work has been performed at Jacob’s Pillow, The Apollo, The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, London’s Southbank Center, New York City Center, and The Stanislavsky Music Theatre, Moscow. Choreography credits include KPOP (Ars Nova), Cruel Intentions The Musical (LPR), Bryony Lavery’s Stockholm (U.S. premiere/Stageworks, Hudson), PBS’s Odd Squad Live! (National Tour), James Brown: Get On the Good Foot (Apollo Theater/Tour). Commercial direction/choreography: Marc Jacobs, CK2, American Express, Uber, Ulta, L’Oreal Matrix, Reebok, Philosophy, and Fake Off (Season 2, TruTV). Weber directed the 2016 and 2017 national tours of Lifetime’s Bring It Live! jenniferwebernyc.com.

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BURKE WILMORE (Lighting Designer) is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829 and an honors graduate of Wesleyan University. He has designed or adapted seven works for BODYTRAFFIC and has also lit the work of Camille A. Brown (Black Girl: Linguistic Play, Mr. Tol E. Rance, City of Rain). He was the resident designer for Battleworks (2001–2010) and to date has lit five of Robert Battle’s works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. For the Shakespeare Theatre of New
Jersey, he lit *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Red Velvet.* He frequently collaborates with Broadway star André de Shields, for whom he lit the Louis Armstrong musical *Ambassador Satch,* and designed scenery and lighting for de Shields’ production of *Ain’t Misbehavin’.* Wilmore designed scenery and lighting for *Apollo Club Harlem* and *Ellington at Christmas,* both at the Apollo Theater.

**MOE SHAHROOZ** (Video Designer) is a video artist based in New York City. He specializes in animation, editing, and interactive video design. He has worked on a wide variety of projects ranging from television shows, award shows, fashion shows, music videos, and numerous theatrical productions. His work has been showcased in more than 100 theaters throughout the world. He holds a Master’s Degree from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts. He is also known for performing and producing music under the moniker I. Sheik. He is proud to be working with *The Hip Hop Nutcracker.*

**ANGIE MCCORMACK** (Production Stage Manager) is so stoked to be working as the Stage Manager for this year’s *Hip Hop Nutcracker!* What an amazing opportunity to jump back into the world of stage management after taking a brief hiatus to work as a Gallery Director in Florida. Previous credits include; *Peter Pan 360,* *Yo Gabba Gabba! Live,* and *Scooby Doo Live.* Thanks to her family and amazing boyfriend for learning to accept the fact that she misses most major holidays. Enjoy the show!


**JUSTIN SPAETHE** (Production Supervisor and Lighting Director) comes to *The Hip Hop Nutcracker* from Seattle, Washington. For the last two years he served as the Master Stage Carpenter for the Village Theatre in Issaquah, Washington. Productions include *Billy Elliot,* *Singin’ in the Rain,* *Snapshots,* and *Aida.* He also recently has toured with *Sesame Street Live* in 2015.

**MAXIMUM ENTERTAINMENT** (General Manager) is a producing, developing, and management company founded by Avram Freedberg, Mary Beth Dale, and Eva Price; and is joined by Managing Director/General Manager Carl Flanigan. Select credits on Broadway, Off-Broadway and on tour include *Small Mouth Sounds; Cruel Intentions The Musical; Verso; Carefree: Dancin’ with Fred & Ginger; Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons on Broadway!; The Lion; The Hip Hop Nutcracker; 50 Shades! The Musical; Ivy + Bean The Musical; Voca People;* and *Colin Quinn: Long Story Short.*

**NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)** (Producer), located in downtown Newark, New Jersey, is America’s most diverse performing arts center, and the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey—where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day. NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the state’s and the world’s best artists while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city. Through its extensive Arts Education programs, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has attracted nearly 10 million visitors (including more than 1.5 million children) since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents.

**EVA PRICE** (Producer) is a Tony Award-winning producer of over 15 Broadway plays, musicals, and concerts. 2012 Crain’s New York Business 40 Under Forty Rising Business Stars and member of The Broadway League’s Board of Governors. Broadway: *Dear Evan Hansen* (6 Tony Awards including Best Musical); *On Your Feet!* (The Story of Gloria and Emilio Estefan); *Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons on Broadway!* *Peter and the Starcatcher* (5 Tony Awards); *Colin Quinn Long Story Short* (directed by Jerry Seinfeld); *Annie* (Tony-Nominated Musical Revival); *The Merchant of Venice* starring Al Pacino (Tony-Nominated Play Revival); Carrie Fisher’s *Wishful Drinking; The Addams Family* (starring Nathan Lane and Bebe Neuwirth); Off-Bway: *Cruel Intentions The Musical; KPOP; Drama Desk-nominated Found; The Lion* (Drama Desk-winner, Off-West End-winner); *Small Mouth Sounds.* Touring: *The Hip Hop Nutcracker; Carefree: Dancin’ with Fred and Ginger; The Magic School Bus Live! The Climate Challenge; Ella,* a bio musical about the life and music of Ella Fitzgerald. Upcoming: *Jagged Little Pill.*