

SCOTTISH BALLET

PRESS RELEASE
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THE BELOVED FAMILY TRADITION SCOTTISH BALLET'S *THE NUTCRACKER*

Scotland's national dance company returns this Christmas and New Year with the most beloved of all festive classics, *The Nutcracker*. Opening in Edinburgh, *The Nutcracker* will tour Scotland and the UK visiting Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness and Newcastle.

Devised by Scottish Ballet's founder, Peter Darrell, and revived to widespread acclaim in 2014, *The Nutcracker* is renowned for its sumptuous costumes, striking chocolate box set and snowflakes galore. Tchaikovsky's magnificent score is performed live by the Scottish Ballet Orchestra. .

Darrell's production of *The Nutcracker* is unique in that the main character, Clara, is danced by a young girl performing alongside the Company's 40 professional dancers. The cast will also include talented young dancers from Scottish Ballet's Associates programme (for performances in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle) and Danscentre, Aberdeen (for performances in Aberdeen and Inverness).

These 35 (in total) lucky young dancers will gain the experience of a life-time working on stage with Scottish Ballet in this iconic classic. Over the past 40+ years, hundreds of children have participated in *The Nutcracker's* magic, and many have since gone on to have inspiring careers including choreographer Michael Clark, actress Ruth Connell (Rowena MacLeod, *Supernatural*) and current Scottish Ballet Principal dancer Christopher Harrison.

CEO/Artistic Director, Chris Hampson said:

'It is always a pleasure to bring Peter Darrell's *The Nutcracker* to the stage. This production has been at the heart of Scottish Ballet since the 1970's and has been delighting generations for decades. '

Peter Darrell's *The Nutcracker* follows the magical story of a little girl, Clara, who on Christmas Eve is given an enchanted nutcracker doll. As she drifts off to sleep, we follow her into dreamland where the nutcracker doll transforms into a Prince and comes to life. He dances the iconic *Pas de Deux* with The Sugarplum Fairy and embarks upon a journey to the Land of Sweets where we meet the Snow Queen and experience tastes of the Middle East and Russia. Clara then returns home to awaken from her beautiful slumber, but was it just a dream..?

Running time: The performance lasts approximately 2 hours, including one 20 minute interval

★★★★★ 'Joyous and magical' The Herald
★★★★★ 'Raised the roof' The Telegraph
★★★★★ 'Darrell would be proud' The Scotsman

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<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/event/the-nutcracker>

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2gmens7mg6r4vv5/AADMiZayHHkbq8D1p6avXW4Na?dl=0>

For further information, press passes and photography requests, please contact: Nicola Cutler, nicola.cutler@scottishballet.co.uk or call the Press Office on 07595 893089.

The Nutcracker UK Tour Dates and Times:

- **9-30 December 2017 - Festival Theatre, Edinburgh**
- **4-13 January 2018 - Theatre Royal, Glasgow**
- **17-20 January 2018 - His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen**
- **24-27 January 2018 - Eden Court, Inverness**
- **31 January – 3 February 2018 - Theatre Royal, Newcastle**

Matthew Bourne's Highland Fling

- **Glasgow 4-7 April 2018**
- **Edinburgh 10-14 April 2018**

Notes to Editors:

Peter Darrell's much loved version of *The Nutcracker* is loosely based on *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*, a fairy tale written in 1816 by German Author E. T. A. Hoffman. In 1892, the Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and choreographers Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov turned the Alexandre Dumas adaptation of the story into a ballet which then became one of Tchaikovsky's most famous compositions and perhaps the most popular ballet in the world.

Peter Darrell, The Nutcracker Choreographer / Founder Scottish Ballet

Peter Darrell was Artistic Director of Scottish Ballet from its inception until his death in December 1987. He was born in Richmond, Surrey, and studied at Sadler's Wells (now The Royal Ballet) School, becoming one of the original members of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet in 1946. He discovered an interest in choreography as dance theatre, left to dance in France and Sweden, and returned in 1950 as a Soloist with London Festival Ballet, for whom he staged his first professional ballet *Harlequinade* (1950). After further experience in musicals, cabaret and television (including the choreography for a successful TV series *Cool for Cats*) he became co-director with Elizabeth West of Western Theatre Ballet on its formation in Bristol in 1957, and sole Director after her death in 1962. For Scottish Ballet's debut programme, he choreographed *The Prisoners*, to Bartok's music (it continues to be revived), and made the first ballet to Beatles music - *Mods and Rockers* in 1963. Peter Darrell brought most of his dancers to Scotland in 1969 as the nucleus of the present Scottish Ballet and his later career developed in parallel with that of the company. As well as his own versions of the classic ballets of *Giselle*, *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, his full-length ballets have included *Sun into Darkness*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Tales of Hoffmann*, *Mary Queen of Scots*, *Cinderella*, *Chéri* and *Carmen*. In addition to his work at Scottish Ballet he produced numerous ballets abroad for companies in Australia, Bulgaria, the former Yugoslavia, Japan and the USA. He was awarded a CBE in 1984.