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A 1940s Nutcracker

A Findlay Holiday Tradition!

Findlay, OH, October 30, 2017– The Marathon Center for the Performing Arts is pleased to welcome Neos Dance Theatre in A 1940s Nutcracker Sunday, December 3, 2017, for two show, 2:00pm and 7:00pm.

Findlay’s holiday season begins on December 3 with the return of Neos Dance Theatre’s “A 1940s Nutcracker.”

The performance at the Marathon Center for the Performing Arts, with shows at 2 and 7 p.m., is fast becoming a Findlay tradition for all ages. By blending classic elements of The Nutcracker story with Hancock County history, the ballet offers a tale of Christmas Eve magic that heralds the holidays.

Tickets are $25, and include a pre-show visit in the lobby with Santa Claus. Selected dancers dressed in their Nutcracker costumes will also be available for pictures and questions. Live holiday music beforehand will complete a day of treats that would delight even the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Neos now performs its Nutcracker version around the state, but will always consider Findlay its holiday home. The ballet premiered here five years ago at Central Auditorium, which was later renovated to become the main stage at the performing arts center. This will be the third time Neos has performed its Nutcracker in Findlay, linking the heritage of both venues.

“It’s extremely special to come back to Findlay,” said co-founder and artistic director Bobby Wesner. “While we have performed “A 1940s Nutcracker” in different places, it’s always good to come back to where it was first performed.”

The performance is an updated version of the traditional Nutcracker many are familiar with. A Nutcracker doll given to a young girl comes alive on Christmas Eve, and rescues her from an evil Mouse King. She is then whisked away to a magical kingdom where she is entertained by enchanted dolls presented by the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Using the recognizable music of Tchaikovsky, Wesner has tweaked the story to reflect the communities where it is performed. Images showcased in Findlay’s version include the old courthouse, Patterson’s Department Store, the Harris Theatre, Malabar Farm and Ohio Oil. The Chinese dance is performed by Rosie the Riveter-style rubber workers reflecting Cooper Tire & Rubber’s history. The Russian dance is now the adventure of a Courier newspaper delivery boy, complete with bicycle.

More than 40 local dancers will participate in the production, including those from the Findlay Academy of Ballet. The performance will be anchored by Neos’ 13 professional dancers, who this year will perform versions of “A 1940s Nutcracker” in Findlay, Mansfield and Elyria.

While Wesner has kept many traditional elements of the ballet, he has also used technology to enhance the story. At the beginning of the Waltz of the Snowflakes, for example, visual effects will help make clear that the dancers are really snowflakes come to life. Other effects will be used to portray the passage of time and change of setting.

“We are pushing the envelope of how to combine the visual effects and animation,” he said. “I’m really excited that we can help explain the story through that technology again, and we are setting the stage for doing more in the future.”

“The Nutcracker” has been performed countless times around the world since it first premiered in 1892. Wesner estimates that, as a dancer, he has been a part of more than 500 Nutcracker performances. No matter how many times it is performed, however, “The Nutcracker” is a Christmas tradition that endures.

“We are looking at the show not just as a show but as an event where people can build memories and traditions with their families,” he said. “It’s an experience of Christmas.”

For more information, visit [www.marathoncenterarts.org](http://www.marathoncenterarts.org) or call the box office at 419-423-2787.