

The Nutcracker

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The Ballet of *The Nutcracker*



track 08

The Nutcracker is a famous ballet in two acts. The beautiful music is by the Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893). His music is very lively.

A lot of theatres give performances of *The Nutcracker* at Christmas time. Children and young people like this ballet a lot. It is fun to watch because there are a lot of dancers with colourful costumes. Some of the people in the ballet are not dancers; they are children at the Stahlbaum's Christmas Eve party.



Children in this travelling theatre company star in *The Nutcracker* in Massachusetts, USA.



Colourful costumes and modern dancing in Mathew Bourne's version of *The Nutcracker*.

The Nutcracker is very popular in America. At Christmas you can see three traditional versions of the ballet. The San Francisco Ballet performs William F. Christensen's version. This is the original version in America – the first performance was ¹ in 1944. Another version is by George Balanchine – you can see this at the theatre in New York. Mikhail Baryshnikov's version is on television, with dancers from the American Ballet Theatre.

There are also many modern versions of *The Nutcracker*. Mathew Bourne's ballet, for example, is very colourful and very different to the traditional versions.

1. was : past of *to be*.



Ballet dancers Mikhail Baryshnikov and Gelsey Kirkland perform in *The Nutcracker*.