

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

PRESS RELEASE

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11 October 2023

- HAVE YOURSELF A NUTCRACKER CHRISTMAS!
- BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET RETURN TO BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME STAGE WITH SIR PETER WRIGHT'S ACCLAIMED FESTIVE TREAT *THE NUTCRACKER*
- STEP INSIDE THE WORLD OF *THE NUTCRACKER* IN A UNIQUE IMMERSIVE WALKING TRAIL ACROSS BIRMINGHAM CITY CENTRE



Following the huge success of Black Sabbath -The Ballet this autumn, the award-winning Birmingham Royal Ballet make a spectacular return to the Birmingham Hippodrome stage this Christmas with another Birmingham iconic production - Sir Peter Wright's The Nutcracker.

The Nutcracker, which opens on 17 November, features 60 dancers accompanied by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia in what has become THE traditional festive treat for the whole family.

Set on Christmas Eve The Nutcracker, which features the music of composer Tchaikovsky, revolves around a young girl named Clara, who receives a Nutcracker doll as a Christmas gift from the magician Drosselmeyer. The Nutcracker comes to life as a Prince and the magical journey begins.

In 2022, after over 30 years, the production was given a much needed make over with new sets and costumes by designer John Macfarlane. This year BRB is once again ready to

dazzle audiences in an enchanting winter wonderland of dancing snowflakes, magical Christmas trees and of course the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Principal casting for The Nutcracker, which ends its 2023 run on 9 December, has now been announced and full details can be found at www.brb.org.uk

New to this year, and continuing The Nutcracker theme, BRB has partnered with RiVR, a UK-based virtual reality company to bring a new look to a much-loved favourite. The 12 Days of NutcrackAR is the world's first Nutcracker themed augmented reality walking trail around Birmingham.

Opening on 4 November at a special BRB Nutcracker themed free event at the Bull Ring, the NutcrackAR, part of the company's pioneering *Virtual Stage, offers everyone the chance to discover the hidden world of some of the props and costumes from the production.

Using a smart device such as a phone or tablet, viewers can see the Sugar Plum Fairy Tutu and its many hand-sewn pearls and sequins, the heavily embroidered coat of King Rat and the famous Christmas Tree where you can see graffiti from dancers and crew from over 30 years of shows!

Each day of the countdown to opening night will highlight a different AR site across the city. Content will be accessed through posters presented in various formats housing unique QR codes with AR content, descriptive text and voiceover, plus links to ticketing information.

After opening night of The Nutcracker at Birmingham Hippodrome on 17 November, BRB's NutcrackAR will also be accessible in and around Hippodrome Square so audiences leaving the 'reality' of a performance will be able to enjoy this 'augmented reality' for the duration of The Nutcracker season.

*Virtual Stage is a pioneering project featuring content developed in collaboration with Canon and RiVR funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies' Digital Accelerator Programme.

BRB's The Nutcracker opens at Birmingham Hippodrome on 17 November-9 December 2023.

Tickets can be purchased online at Birmingham Hippodrome
www.birminghamhippodrome.com

Touch Tour: Sat 25 Nov 2023, 12.15pm. Audio Described: Sat 25 Nov 2023, 2.30pm

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Media Enquiries:

Mandy Rose mandyrose@msevenpublicrelations.co.uk
07454 365421

Notes to Editors

Birmingham Royal Ballet Based at Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham Royal Ballet is the United Kingdom's leading touring ballet company performing a range of traditional, classical and heritage ballets as well as groundbreaking new works with the aim of encouraging choreographers of the future. The Company's Director since January 2020 is the internationally renowned Carlos Acosta. Birmingham Royal Ballet standardly performs at Birmingham Hippodrome for approximately ten weeks of the year and the remainder of the year tours throughout the United Kingdom and overseas. On average, the Company performs over 100 shows a year nationally and internationally. The Royal Ballet Sinfonia is Birmingham Royal Ballet's permanent orchestra, it is also Britain's busiest ballet orchestra. The Sinfonia also plays frequently for The Royal Ballet and other leading ballet companies, including performances with Paris Opéra Ballet, New York City Ballet, Australian Ballet, Les Grands

Ballets Canadiens, the Kirov, Norwegian Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, San Francisco Ballet and La Scala Ballet

