Pacific Symphony

ALEXANDER SHELLEY ARTISTIC & MUSIC DIRECTOR

2026-27 SEASON

DECEMBER

Farmers & Merchants Bank
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presents
Pacific Symphony's Family Musical Mornings



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Segerstrom Center for the Arts®
Celebrating 40 Years

Pacific Symphony
ALEXANDER SHELLEY ARTISTIC & MUSIC DIRECTOR

THE NUTCRACKER FOR KIDS!

Sat., Dec. 5, 2026 @ 10 a.m.
Sat., Dec. 5, 2026 @ 11:30 a.m.

Moon Doh, conductor
American Ballet Theatre
William J. Gillespie School at
Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Susan Brooker, artistic director
Peter Basch, narrator
Pacific Symphony

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THE DIGITAL PROGRAM BOOK



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Performance at Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall.

PROGRAM

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893)

The Nutcracker, Op. 71

Overture
The Christmas Tree
March
Gallop of the Children and Entrance of the Parents
Arrival of Drosselmeyer
Scene and Grandfather Dance
Clara and the Nutcracker
The Battle
The Kingdom of Sweets
Clara and the Nutcracker Prince
Divertissement:
- Chocolate (Spanish Dance)
- Dance of the Reed Flutes
- Tea (Chinese Dance)
- Trepak (Russian Dance)
- Mother Ginger and the Clowns

Waltz of the Flowers
Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy
Apotheosis



WELCOME TO *NUTCRACKER FOR KIDS!*



Hello, Friends!

Welcome to *The Nutcracker for Kids!* Can you believe December is already here? I can already feel the holiday spirit in the air! This is my very first winter in Southern California, and I'm excited to experience 70-degree weather without a snowflake in sight!

Do you love presents, toys, yummy treats, and a little bit of magic? I sure do! Today, we're going on an extraordinary adventure with one of the most beloved stories of all time, *The Nutcracker!*

We'll travel to an enchanting world filled with dancing dolls, the Sugar Plum Fairy, and all kinds of wonderful surprises! You'll hear some of the most exciting music ever written for orchestra, brought to life by your friends at Pacific Symphony, our wonderful narrator, and the talented young dancers from the American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School!

I still vividly remember attending my very first ballet performance as a child growing up in Russia. The beauty and grace of the dancers made such a lasting impression on me that I can still picture them today. Oh, and did I mention the four feet of snow piled up along the streets? Quite a different winter from Southern California!

Along the way, we'll discover how words, music, and dance come together to tell a story and spark our imaginations. So, get ready for a little magic, lots of wonderful music, and an unforgettable journey into the world of *The Nutcracker!*

Happy Holidays and see you in the New Year!

Moon Doh

Moon Doh

Assistant Conductor

MEET THE CONDUCTOR

Moon Doh
Assistant Conductor for Pacific Symphony
Music Director for Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra
Mary E. Moore Family Assistant Conductor Chair

Moon Doh begins his tenure as assistant conductor of Pacific Symphony with the 2026–27 season, working closely with Artistic & Music Director Alexander Shelley. He also serves as music director of Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra and conducts the Farmers & Merchants Bank Family Musical Mornings and Frieda Belinfante Class Act Youth Concerts.

Doh is also music director of the Butler County Symphony Orchestra in Pennsylvania. Since 2021, he has served as associate conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, leading subscription, education, family, and film concerts, as well as performances with artists including Sting, Laufey, and Nas.

Connecting young people and communities with music is an important part of Doh's work. He has conducted children's concerts, worked with youth orchestras and brought music into libraries, museums, and other community spaces.

Born in South Korea, Doh spent much of his childhood in the Philippines, Russia, and the United States. He began studying cello and piano at age 9 and later studied music composition and orchestral conducting in South Korea and Germany.

His conducting work has taken him to orchestras throughout Europe and the United States, including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, The Syracuse Orchestra, and the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra.

Follow Moon on Instagram: @doh.moon

MEET THE ARTISTS

Peter Basch, Drosselmeyer (Narrator)



Peter Basch is a native New Yorker. At the Manhattan Punch Line Comedy Theater he performed in plays by David Ives, Laurence Klavan, and many others. Peter was a writer and performer in the MPL's sketch comedy group, Another Fine Mess. At the Ensemble Studio Theater (NY and LA), he did sketches in their group, Hell's Kitchen Sink. He wrote a one-act play, English (*it's where the words are*) that was produced in EST's Marathon of One Acts in New York, then the Aspen Comedy Festival, the Seattle Bumbershoot Festival and the HBO Workspace in LA. He appeared in plays at EST LA and sang in a Tom Lehrer musical at Caltech. He appeared in a short film, *The Art Thieves*, as Otto Vandelay, and a vertical video as the hospital director, Dr. Cunningham. He is managed by Robbie Ezratty at Stapleview.

MEET THE ARTISTS

Susan Brooker, Artistic Director



Susan Brooker is a member of the ABT's National Training Curriculum Artistic Board of Examiners and Instructors for the American Ballet Theatre, National Training Curriculum, and guest teacher in the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School. In 2000 Ms. Brooker was invited to the USA to teach on the faculty of the Hartt School Dance Division, University of Hartford, Connecticut, USA, she became Director of the School of Dance Connecticut in 2001 and Chair of the Dance Department of the Hartt School Community Division in 2004. From 2008 – 2014 she was Director of the BalletMet Dance Academy,Columbus OH.

Ms. Brooker is a Fellow, a Major Examiner of the I.S.T.D., and holds the Enrico Cecchetti Diploma. She taught for many years in Italy as: Director of the Scuola di Danza Hamlyn di De Vita, Lukens, Florence, Italian Examinations Organizer for the I.S.T.D., Honorary President of the Cultural Association, Ateneo Danza, Forli, and Vice President of Danzare Cecchetti, A.N.C.E.C. of which she is still Italian delegate for Cecchetti International Classical Ballet. Ms. Brooker is one of the Festival Artistic Directors for The Ballet Alliance.

Students of Ms. Brooker have won prestigious international dance competitions including the Prix de Lausanne and are dancing with companies in Europe, South America and the United States. Ms. Brooker has taught in schools in the USA, Europe, Canada, and Japan and is a specialist in Ballet Pedagogy and curriculum development.

The American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School at Segerstrom Center for the Arts



The American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School at Segerstrom Center for the Arts is an expansion of the longtime relationship between the Center and American Ballet Theatre. The school, which opened in September 2015, combines the resources of American Ballet Theatre, America's National Ballet Company®, and Segerstrom Center, one of the world's leading presenters of dance. It offers unrivaled opportunities for training and nurturing future generations of dancers and dance audiences as well as furthering the development and evolution of dance. Following American Ballet Theatre's National Training Curriculum, students are encouraged to reach their highest potential while building a safe and solid foundation in ballet technique. The school carries the name of Orange County philanthropist William J. Gillespie, who was a board member of ABT since 1999 and an enthusiastic and generous donor to the Center for much of the institution's history.

The ABT Gillespie School provides students with the highest quality of classical ballet training through the American Ballet Theatre National Training Curriculum. The ABT Gillespie School is modeled after the program used at the renowned ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School in New York. Classes include classical ballet technique, pointe, men's class, partnering, character, modern, body conditioning and more. All classes are held in the Center's studios that have been used for rehearsals by the world's leading international dance and ballet companies. The dance studios feature professional sprung floors, full length mirrors, ballet barres and modern technology (surround sound systems, virtual class equipment). Each class features live accompaniment by one of the ABT Gillespie School's accomplished pianists.

SYNOPSIS

The Nutcracker begins in a sitting room as the narrator, Drosselmeyer, looks through a book of old memories. Drosselmeyer begins to tell one of his favorite stories as it comes to life before our eyes!

At a family Christmas party, Drosselmeyer gives a toy nutcracker to Clara, his goddaughter. Clara loves the nutcracker toy and dances with it all evening. When the party guests leave, Clara is too excited to sleep, and she sneaks out of bed to the living room to be with her nutcracker toy.



At midnight, mice begin to fill the living room. Drosselmeyer rescues Clara from the mice and magically brings the nutcracker to life to fight the evil Mouse King. The Nutcracker leads a troop of toy soldiers into battle and defeats the Mouse King.

Tired from the battle, Clara falls asleep and soon awakens in the Land of Sweets, home of the Sugar Plum Fairy. To Clara's surprise, the Nutcracker has been transformed into a Prince! The Sugar Plum Fairy declares a celebration in honor of Clara and the Nutcracker Prince. Residents of the Land of Sweets dance for Clara and present her with gifts, including Spanish chocolate, Chinese tea, and Russian honey cake.

After the celebration, Clara returns home and awakens on Christmas day. As Drosselmeyer's story ends, he begins preparations for the next holiday party and wishes the audience a wonderful holiday season.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky is one of the most famous Romantic era composers from Russia. He was born in 1840 and began learning piano at the age of five. Although Tchaikovsky studied to be a lawyer, he eventually quit his job at the Ministry of Justice to pursue his love of music. After he went back to school to study music, Tchaikovsky started teaching at what is now the Moscow Conservatory. Although Tchaikovsky wrote all kinds of music, he is best known for his ballets: *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Despite the 1892 premiere of *The Nutcracker* being very unpopular, *The Nutcracker* is now one of the most beloved and frequently performed ballets in the world.



"Our collaboration with Pacific Symphony represents a natural and exciting partnership, as we both call Segerstrom Center for the Arts our home. Together, we're creating unique opportunities for ABT Gillespie School students to perform alongside professional musicians in the production of The Nutcracker for Kids! This creative alliance combines ABT's world-class dance training with the symphony's exceptional musical artistry, offering our young dancers an invaluable real-world performance experience. Watching our students bring this beloved holiday classic to life while dancing to live orchestral music has been truly magical. This partnership not only enriches our students' artistic development but also strengthens the cultural fabric of our arts community."

—Susan Brooker



INSTRUMENT SPOTLIGHT: THE PERCUSSION FAMILY

Of all the instrument families in the orchestra, the **percussion family** has the widest variety of instruments. Percussion instruments include anything that makes a sound when it is **shaken**, **scraped**, or **hit**. Instruments like the **tambourine** and the **maracas** are **shaken**, while the **güiro** is **scraped** with a stick to make sound. **Keyboards** and **drums** are **hit** with **drumsticks**, **mallets**, or **hands.** Even more percussion instruments, like the **cymbals** or **castanets**, make sound when you **hit them together**. Everyday items—like **pots**, **buckets**, or even mechanical items like a **ratchet**—can also be used as percussion instruments!

The Nutcracker features many percussion instruments. Each instrument helps add to the story by representing different characters from the ballet. For example, a **ratchet** makes the Nutcracker's sound, while the **tambourine** helps make the dancing dolls come to life. Perhaps the most recognizable percussion instrument in *The Nutcracker* is the **celeste**, a **keyboard** instrument with a light, high-pitched sound. While writing *The Nutcracker*, Tchaikovsky heard the **celeste** for the very first time and immediately knew he wanted it for the sound of his Sugar Plum Fairy. Listen for these percussion instruments as you watch today's concert!



THE NUTCRACKER MUSIC DETECTIVE

The orchestra has some wonderful surprises in store for you today!
Use your ears to find these sounds during the performance:

- ❑ **Marching Soldiers**
  Listen for a strong, steady beat. Can you imagine toy soldiers marching?
- ❑ **A Musical Battle**
  Can you hear the excitement as the Nutcracker battles the Mouse King?
- ❑ **Dancing Flutes**
  Listen for the light, playful sounds of the flutes dancing together.
- ❑ **A Magical Twinkle**
  Can you hear the sparkling, bell-like sound of the celeste during the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy?
- ❑ **Waltzing Flowers**
  Listen for music with a ONE-two-three, ONE-two-three rhythm. Can you feel the swaying waltz?
- ❑ **The Whole Orchestra!**
  Can you hear a moment when lots of instruments play together to create one huge sound?

BONUS DISCOVERY
What was your favorite sound in today's concert?





DID YOU KNOW?

A Few Fun Facts About The Nutcracker

The Nutcracker is over 130 years old.

The **ballet** was frst performed in **St. Petersburg, Russia**, in 1892. People have been enjoying Tchaikovsky's music for generations!

The **Sugar Plum Fairy** has a special instrument. That magical, **twinkling sound** comes from the **celeste**, an instrument that looks a bit like a piano but sounds like tiny bells.

Tchaikovsky wrote more than one famous ballet. In addition to *The Nutcracker*, he composed the music for ***Swan Lake*** and ***The Sleeping Beauty***.

Today's **performance brings together two art forms**. The musicians of Pacific Symphony and dancers from the American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School work together to bring this holiday favorite to life!

LOVE THE SYMPHONY? BRING IT TO YOUR SCHOOL!

Did you know Pacific Symphony works with elementary schools throughout Orange County?

Through our **Frieda Belinfante Class Act program**, students get to know professional Symphony musicians through classroom visits, live performances, and a variety of musical experiences throughout the school year.

Interested in bringing Class Act to your child's school?

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE AND JOIN OUR INTEREST LIST!



DISCOVER THE JOY OF MUSIC!

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presents
Pacific Symphony Family Musical Mornings

Family Musical Mornings are 45-minute concerts perfect for families and designed to inspire a lifelong love of music. Enjoy an engaging multimedia experience featuring the Symphony, singers, actors, and dancers. Share the joy of music and create unforgettable memories. Scan the code to purchase tickets!



PIXAR IN CONCERT

Saturday, Mar. 20, 2027
10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

PRESENTATION LICENSED BY Disney CONCERTS PIXAR IN CONCERT

With full-scale cinematic visuals projected above live musical performances by Pacific Symphony, this memorable program features score highlights by Oscar® and GRAMMY®-winning composers Randy Newman ("Toy Story" films, "Monsters, Inc.," Pixar"Monsters University," "Cars") and Michael Giacchino ("The Incredibles," "Incredibles 2," "Ratatouille," "Up," "Inside Out," "Coco"), plus music by Thomas Newman ("Finding Nemo," "Finding Dory," "WALL-E").

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THE LITTLE PRINCE: OPERA FOR KIDS!

Saturday, May 22, 2027
10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

A magical family opera adventure based on the beloved story The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupéry and composed by Academy Award-winning composer Rachel Portman. In this charming, music-filled production, the Little Prince and his pilot friend travel through wonder and imagination, meeting marvelous characters like a wise fox, a proud rose, and other colorful creatures as they learn timeless lessons about friendship, caring, and seeing with the heart.

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