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Nutcracker* season kicks off with free family fun** ***Try your seat, dance along with the Nutcracker and friends

COLUMBUS, OH—BalletMet Columbus welcomes the holiday season and its annual production of *The Nutcracker* with two exciting new events for families as tickets to the production go on sale to the public November 2. Plus, BalletMet will partner with Kroger throughout the season for a food drive dear to the Nutcracker's heart to benefit the Mid-Ohio Food Bank. On Monday, November 2, BalletMet will host a Nutcracker extravaganza including an opportunity for patrons to try out seats in the Ohio Theatre. Later that week on November 8, fans will have a chance to step into the magic and dance with cast members at the BalletMet Dance Centre.

Feed the Nutcracker, Feed Columbus: Choreographing a Hunger-Free Community.

November 2 through December 23, BalletMet and Kroger join together for Feed the Nutcracker, Feed Columbus: Choreographing a Hunger-Free Community. All donations made through the food drive benefit the Mid-Ohio Food Bank. Children can 'feed' a peanut butter donation—one of the most requested food items at food banks—to the Nutcracker at the BalletMet Dance Centre; at Nutcracker performances at the Ohio Theatre, and at any Nutcracker community appearance through December 23. Participants will receive a gift or ticket discount in exchange for their food donation.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2: CELEBRATE WITH THE NUTCRACKER ON STATE

The sites and sounds of the holiday season will fill Capitol Square on Monday, November 2, as tickets for *The Nutcracker* go on sale to the public. Patrons are invited to test drive seats at any time from 11am to 2pm at the Ohio Theatre, 39 East State Street during an open house. Participants can get a inside look at the theater and decide which section would offer them the best viewing experience; then, they can purchase tickets at the theater box office. The Nutcracker, Clara and friends will greet patrons as holiday music welcomes passersby. Plus, the Nutcracker Boulevard street sign will be unveiled at the corner of State and High streets, officially kicking off the holiday season. Food donations will also be accepted for Ballet's Feed the Nutcracker, Feed Columbus food drive. Participants who 'feed' the Nutcracker a jar of peanut butter will receive a discount on tickets.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8: DANCING WITH THE NUTCRACKER

BalletMet will host **Dancing with the Nutcracker** Sunday, November 8 at the BalletMet Dance Centre, 322 Mount Vernon Avenue, with sessions at 1:30pm and 3pm. The first annual event is a special opportunity for kids and adults alike to step inside the magic of *The Nutcracker*. While dancing with celebrities has become a national sensation, Dancing with the Nutcracker participants can revel in the joy of dance by dancing along in their favorite

dare to be moved.

scenes with characters from the show. Also, children can listen to the story and watch memorable moments from the show such as the Sugar Plum Fairy variation. During the event, parents can take advantage of an exclusive ticket offer: buy three tickets to *The Nutcracker* and get one free or save \$5 off single tickets (seating restrictions apply).

Admission to Dancing with the Nutcracker is a donation of peanut butter for the Feed the Nutcracker, Feed Columbus food drive.

BALLETMET'S *THE NUTCRACKER* brings audiences memories to treasure forever, with an enchanting story, colorful characters, more than 100 dancers and spectacular sets and costumes. Families can share this extraordinary experience, a Central Ohio tradition for more than 30 years, Dec. 11 - 23 at the majestic Ohio Theatre.

Tickets start at \$29 and can be purchased through CAPA (614.469.0939), Ticketmaster (800.982.2787, ticketmaster.com) or balletmet.org. Group discounts available through BalletMet (614.586.8665). College students with ID can purchase \$15 Student Rush tickets at the theater beginning two hours prior to showtime. Students age 13 to 18 can purchase \$5 High Five vouchers at any Central Ohio Kroger Ticketmaster location.

SPONSOR SUPPORT: *The Nutcracker* production sponsor is Huntington Bank. Promotional partner is Kroger. Media partners are Capital Style, WBNS 10TV, The Columbus Dispatch and Sunny95. BalletMet Columbus receives support for its annual performance season from The Columbus Foundation, the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Ohio Arts Council, Classical 89.7 WOSU-FM, Time Warner Cable. Season partner is The Ohio State University Sports Medicine Center.

ABOUT BALLETMET COLUMBUS: BalletMet Columbus ranks among the nation's 15 largest dance companies, and its Dance Academy ranks among the five largest professional dance-training centers. Since its inception in 1978, BalletMet has added 147 company premieres to its repertoire and produced 122 world premieres. It has also developed DanceReach, a series of educational and outreach programs that serve nearly 30,000 people annually, as well as a scholarship program that awards scholarships based on a criterion of exceptional talent, dance learning progress and financial need.

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