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hello there



José Mateo

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
JOSE MATEO'S
BALLET THEATRE

José Mateo is the founder and artistic director of José Mateo's Ballet Theatre, Boston's second largest ballet company and school, now in its 17th season. The company is presenting *The Nutcracker* at its Sanctuary Theatre in Harvard Square during this holiday season.

What made you decide to start a ballet company in Boston?

Moving to Boston from New York City in 1980, I realized there was an apparent difference in the amount and caliber of dance, ballet in particular. I felt there was room to do something worthwhile and original here.

What is the process for choreographing a ballet like "The Nutcracker"?

I listen to the music with a fresh ear, and in the case of *Nutcracker*, look for clues from Tchaikovsky's masterpiece that might inspire a new idea or step. Then, I match that with the dancers' strengths to come up with material that's physically exciting, emotionally stirring, and intellectually stimulating.

What makes your *Nutcracker* production unique?

There's a real focus on the dancing in our company's hallmark spirited and elegant style. We treat *Nutcracker* like a real ballet, not just spectacle. The story is streamlined and not bogged down with a lot of mime. In fact, the dancing starts as the curtain rises!

What's the hardest part about producing "The Nutcracker"?

Achieving a real integrity in the production by making sure that every participant — whether it is a professional dancer, child cast member, or production team member — contributes to the overall magic and spirit of the show.

How can people find out more information about your organization and production of "The Nutcracker"?

They can find information at our Web site at www.BalletTheatre.org or just give our studios a call at (617) 354-7467 for performance and ticket information. The performances run Nov. 29-Dec. 29 at our Sanctuary Theatre in Harvard Square.

(Metro)