



THE NUTCRACKER

Champaign Urbana Ballet

Thursday, December 4, 2025
7:30pm

Friday, December 5, 2025
7:30pm

Saturday, December 6, 2025
2pm and 7:30pm

Sunday, December 7, 2025
2pm and 6pm

Tryon Festival Theatre



PROGRAM

The Nutcracker

A ballet in two acts after the story *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* by E.T.A. Hoffmann

Music by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Choreography by Deanna Doty Warfel

PRESENTED BY

Champaign Urbana Ballet

Deanna Doty Warfel, Artistic Director

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

Mike Ross, Director

THE NUTCRACKER

Overture

ACT I

The Party

The Battle

The Land of Snow

20-minute intermission

ACT II

The Land of Sweets

A classical ballet in two acts, *The Nutcracker* is based on E.T.A. Hoffmann's tale *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* (1816). Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky created the music for the ballet of this charming story in close collaboration with Marius Petipa, the renowned choreographer who, due to illness, turned the project over to his assistant Lev Ivanov. *The Nutcracker* was first performed in 1892.

THE ACT OF GIVING

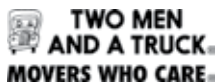
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The Bill Bass Foundation



PROGRAM

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

On Christmas Eve, the Stahlbaum household prepares for a grand holiday party. Clara, her brother Fritz, and their parents have invited guests to dance and celebrate. The arrival of Clara's eccentric godfather, Herr Drosselmeyer, brings a sudden air of surprise to the party. Drosselmeyer gathers the children and presents each with a special gift, including a nutcracker for Fritz and two magical life-sized dolls for Clara. While the guests are enamored with all Drosselmeyer's creations, Clara is only interested in the nutcracker. A playful Fritz seals the key to the life-sized dolls, and his mischievous behavior causes them to dance frenetically and frighten the guests. Afraid that the party has gone awry, Mrs. Stahlbaum calls for the adults to assemble in the dining room for a holiday feast. No longer under the watchful eye of his parents, Fritz and his friends disrupt the girls at play, causing the nutcracker doll to break in two. Drosselmeyer reappears and, to console his goddaughter, repairs the broken doll before leaving in a dash. After a final dance, the guests depart and the family retires for the night.

Just before midnight, Clara steals down to the eerily darkened room to find her nutcracker. She falls asleep, and the events from the day slip into her dreams. The Rat Queen and her legions of rodents appear, threatening Clara. As the nightmarish taunting escalates, Drosselmeyer shows his power by casting the rodents and furniture away and making the Christmas tree grow

to enormous heights. The Nutcracker, grown to life size yet trapped in toy form, appears with his army of soldiers and cavalry at his side. A fierce battle with the rats and mice ensues. The Rat Queen and the Nutcracker fall injured, despite Clara's bravery in defending the Nutcracker. Ice fairies appear and revive the fallen Nutcracker who comes to life in his true princely form. The Nutcracker and Clara begin their journey to his homeland and dance among snowflakes in the Land of Snow before they are magically carried away.

ACT II

Clara and the Nutcracker travel across a lemonade sea toward his homeland, the Land of Sweets, where they are greeted warmly by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier. Clara recounts her heroic tale, after which the Sugar Plum Fairy presents Clara with a magnificent crown and flavorful dances of foreign confections, including the beautiful waltz of flowers, before the entire court joins in a final gavotte. Drosselmeyer reappears, and Clara's reverie begins to fade as she is magically returned to the comforts of home and the memory of a fantastic dream.

CAST

ACT I PARTY

Drosselmeyer

Kevin Burnside*
Rob Rypka^

Clara

Elise Yang*
Belle Lewis^

Fritz

Jackson Ridlon*
Alaina Davis^

Mrs. Stahlbaum

Ava Teague*
Eleanor Kraatz^

Mr. Stahlbaum

Brett Feddersen

Party Mothers

Annika Drasgow
Janie Lee
Daisy Grace Lewis
Victoria Mahaffey
Janaki Rajamannar-
Underhill

Party Fathers

Finnegan Cochran
Odin Cochran
Dan Ogwal*
Lark Runkle
Dane Torbeck
Greg Underhill^

Party Girls

Helen Kim
Isabella Ramirez
Soleil Saenz^
Rebecca Stevens
Olivia Swanson
Cora Torbeck-Sliwa*
Avery Trout

Party Boys

Foster Hartman*
Thomas Hayes^
Graham Jensen^
Quinn Klavohn^
Paul Schneider*
Tate Sowers^
Sebastian
Summerville*
DJ Trinkle-Hague*

Boy Doll

Lydia Stevens

Girl Doll

Claudia Lundsgaard

Footmen

Leo Lewis^
William Shunk*
Seth Stevens

ACT I BATTLE

Nutcracker

Leo Lewis*
William Shunk^

Rat Queen

Channon Goodrum

Rats

Finnegan Cochran
Odin Cochran
Leo Lewis^
Jackson Ridlon
Lark Runkle
William Shunk*
Seth Stevens

Mice

Lenora Ackerson*
Eleanor Anderson
Bliss*
Axel Delaney^
Jalayah Evans^
Elodee Gunderson*
Maybree Hayes*
Thomas Hayes^
Leia Howard-Gill*
Fritz Junkins-Curry^
Avi Kelly^
Journie Lathan^
Leonor Lemus^
Dorothy Maher*
Emma Markovich*
Harper Martin*
Abry Olson^
Beatrix Peelman*
Caroline Ruud*
Teigan Sanderson^
Samantha Scharf^
Miriam Schneider*
Reya Sinha^

Sebastian
Summerville*
Sujin Yoo^

Cavalry

Nora Croop
Alaina Davis*
Cindy Fu
Emma Lan
Stefhanie Loaiza^
Jeannette Saenz
Lydia Simonton

Captains

Macy Catterson
Foster Hartman
Tate Sowers
DJ Trinkle-Hague

Soldiers

Jazell Anderson*
Amelia Bice
Tessa Cain*
Mattison Carter*
Felicity Dombrowski^
Caylee Dudley^
Bonnie Sanchez
Faire^
Anna Giurgea^
Aspen Hays^
Evelyn Hiner^
Graham Jensen^
Winona Kerins*
Ava Kim
Quinn Klavohn^
Marcos Lambert^
Olivia Maxwell*

PROGRAM

Hazel Mossberger*
Frances Nappo^
Avary Ogwal*
Julia Park*
Abilene Ruhter*
Amelia Schell*
Paul Schneider
Addison Singh^
Hadley Sondag^
Liliana Sosnowski*
Ruth Weyerhaeuser*
Iris Wilson^
Seyah Won*

ACT I SNOW

Ice Fairies

Eleanor Kraatz
Janie Lee
Janaki Rajamannar-
Underhill*
Lydia Stevens^
Ava Teague

Snowflakes

Mia Beeton
Lenora Donohue
Annika Drasgow
Lillian Hinds
Belle Lewis*
Daisy Grace Lewis
Kate Lippert
Claudia Lundsgaard
Victoria Mahaffey
Sameena Rajamannar-
Underhill
Rachel Riha

Elizabeth Seong
Elise Yang^

ACT II

Lemonade Sprites

Mia Beeton
Lenora Donohue
Annika Drasgow
Eleanor Kraatz^
Belle Lewis*
Daisy Grace Lewis
Kate Lippert
Claudia Lundsgaard
Janaki Rajamannar-
Underhill*
Elizabeth Seong
Lydia Stevens^
Ava Teague*
Elise Yang^

Lead Herald

Tate Sowers

Heralds

Foster Hartman
Graham Jensen
Isabella Ramirez
Paul Schneider
DJ Trinkle-Hague

Sugar Plum Fairy

Janaki Rajamannar-
Underhill^
Lydia Stevens*

Cavalier

Leo Lewis^
William Shunk*

Spanish Dancers

Sameena Rajamannar-
Underhill
Jackson Ridlon

Chinese Butterfly

Victoria Mahaffey

Chinese Dragon

Alexandra Warwick

Dragon Legs

Mattison Carter
Macy Catterson
Aspen Hays^
Ava Kim
Quinn Klavohn
Hazel Mossberger*
Soleil Saenz
Olivia Swanson
Cora Torbeck-Sliwa

Arabian Princess

Kevin Burnside
Eleanor Kraatz*
Ava Teague^

Arabian Bearers

Brett Feddersen
Dan Ogwal
Dane Torbeck
Greg Underhill

Arabian Corps

Nora Croop
Cindy Fu
Lillian Hinds^
Stefhanie Loaiza
Rachel Riha*
Jeannette Saenz
Lydia Simonton

Ribbon Candy

Annika Drasgow*
Daisy Grace Lewis^
Seth Stevens

with Boys

Foster Hartman
Graham Jensen^
Tate Sowers
DJ Trinkle-Hague
Paul Schneider*

with Girls

Alaina Davis
Helen Kim
Rebecca Stevens
Avery Trout

Dairy Queen

Channon Goodrum
Kim Robeson Schwenk+

Cat

Emma Lan

Dutch Dairy

Adele

Maya Dande*
Elle Drake^

Betsy

Brinley Ellis*
Liviana Hightower^

Brandy

Audrey Kim*
Margot Jensen^

Brooke

Anna Mette
Owen Klavohn

Gemini

Meredith Millington*
Ella Maxwell^

Moonboy

Johanna Sander*
Oliver Mercer^

Pasta

Bryleigh Sanderson*
Alexandra Salirrosas Silva^

Reese

Laney Shearn*
Birdie Scheidemantel^

Saturn

Saviah Slowikowski*
Calvin Skuse^

Venus

Olivia Tian*
Doreen Yang^

Rose Queen

Claudia Lundsgaard*
Elizabeth Seong^
William Shunk^

Rose Buds

Janie Lee
Kate Lippert

Flowers

Mia Beeton
Lenora Donohue
Annika Drasgow
Lillian Hinds*
Eleanor Kraatz
Belle Lewis*
Daisy Grace Lewis
Claudia Lundsgaard^
Victoria Mahaffey
Janaki Rajamannar-Underhill*
Sameena Rajamannar-
Underhill
Rachel Riha^
Elizabeth Seong*
Lydia Stevens^
Ava Teague
Elise Yang^

^ denotes performances on the evening of December 4
and matinees of December 6 and 7

*denotes performances on the evenings of December
5, 6, and 7

+denotes performance on the evening of December 6

PROFILES

COMPANY ARTISTS



KEVIN BURNSIDE returns in his 14th season with CU Ballet. Burnside's repertoire includes, *Cinderella*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, selections from *La Bayadère*, and several productions of *The Nutcracker*. He continues to study with

Deanna Doty Warfel at Champaign Ballet Academy, where he also teaches adult ballet. Burnside serves as Chairperson for Community Engagement and Company Merchandising with CU Ballet. He is founder and CEO of I-Power School of Gymnastics, where he serves as head coach.



ELEANOR KRAATZ trained with Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors for 12 years, and has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *The Little Mermaid*, selections from

Giselle, and 11 productions of *The Nutcracker*. Kraatz is a sophomore at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign majoring in biology on a pre-dental track, and currently teaches at Champaign Ballet Academy.



JANIE LEE began her ballet journey at Champaign Urbana Ballet in 2015 as a trainee and was promoted to Senior Company in 2018. Her repertoire includes *Swan Lake*; *The Little Mermaid*; *Cinderella*; selections from *La Bayadère*; *Aurora* in

The Sleeping Beauty; and *Ice Fairy*, *Clara*, and *Sugar Plum Fairy* in *The Nutcracker*. Lee is a ballet instructor at Champaign Ballet Academy. A junior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign majoring in speech and hearing science, Lee hopes to pursue a career working with children as a speech-language pathologist.



LEO LEWIS has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *Cinderella*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*. He has trained at Champaign Ballet Academy for over a decade and is currently employed at the

Academy as a teacher. Lewis, a sophomore at the Gies College of Business at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, enjoys the athletic challenge and artistic beauty of ballet.



WILLIAM SHUNK has trained with Champaign Ballet Academy for over five years and was recently promoted to Company Artist at CU Ballet. He has performed in many CU Ballet productions, including *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*,

The Sleeping Beauty, *The Little Mermaid*, *Cinderella*, and selections from *Giselle* and *Le Corsaire*. Shunk is in the Parkland Pathways to the Grainger College of Engineering Program at the University of Illinois. He teaches the boys ballet class at Champaign Ballet Academy and is the Props Manager for CU Ballet.



AVA TEAGUE has trained at Champaign Ballet Academy and performed with Champaign Urbana Ballet for a decade, and was recently promoted to Company Artist. Teague has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *Cinderella*,

The Little Mermaid, *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, selections from *Paquita*, and several productions of *The Nutcracker*. She is a teacher at Champaign Ballet Academy, and employed at CU Ballet as Administrative Assistant to the Artistic Director. A student at the University of Illinois, Teague is majoring in biochemistry in pursuit of a career in forensic science.

ALUMNI DANCERS

We are delighted to welcome back many talented CUB alumni who are performing on stage as well as filling major roles off stage.

CLAIRE DALY (Photographer, Graphic Designer, Publicity and Marketing Coordinator) joined Champaign Ballet Academy in 2000 and performed in Champaign Urbana Ballet productions from 2003-2011 and in 2014, dancing the roles of Clara and Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, Aurora and Bluebird in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Swanhilda in *Coppélia*, and Pas de Trois in *Paquita*. She works as an artist in Champaign-Urbana, is a recipient of a 2024-2025 grant from the Illinois Arts Council, and was a 2025 Fellow at Lesley University's Low Residency Program.

GINA MODICA (Production Assistant) was among the first group of company dancers, performing from 1999-2003 in various ballets including *Pas de Quatre*, *La Bayadère*, and *Arensky Variations*. She currently serves on the CU Ballet Board of Directors in addition to her role backstage as Production Assistant. Modica is employed in the system office at the University of Illinois.

ALEXANDRA WARWICK (Dragon Head, Backstage Assistant) performed with Champaign Urbana Ballet from 2001-2010, dancing in ten productions of *The Nutcracker* and numerous spring ballets. During her six seasons as a senior company dancer, Warwick danced the roles of Clara and Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, Swanhilda in *Coppélia*, and the title role

PROFILES

in CU Ballet's premiere of *Cinderella* in 2009. She also served as children's rehearsal assistant with the company from 2006-2010. More recently, Warwick has enjoyed the opportunity to dance the role of the wicked fairy Carabosse in CU Ballet's production of *The Sleeping Beauty* and as the head of the dragon in *The Nutcracker*. She currently teaches fourth and fifth grade at University Primary School.

DANCERS

MIA BEETON is a sophomore in high school and has trained at Champaign Ballet Academy for three years under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors. A first-year senior company member, she has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and two productions of *The Nutcracker*.

CONNOR CROOP is an eighth grader at Edison Middle School and is in his third year of training with Champaign Ballet Academy. He is honored to be a first-year company member and has previously performed in Champaign Urbana Ballet's productions of *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and four performances of *The Nutcracker*, dancing the role of Fritz in 2024.

ANNIKA DRASGOW is a senior at Urbana High School and a fifth-year company member. She has trained with Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors for over a decade, and attended the 2025 Louisville Ballet Summer Intensive. Drasgow has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *Swan Lake*; *The Sleeping Beauty*; *Cinderella*; *The Little Mermaid*; selections from *Coppélia*, *Paquita*, and *Giselle*; and ten productions of *The Nutcracker*.

BRETT FEDDERSEN has appeared in 34 productions with CU Ballet; this is his 20th production of *The Nutcracker*. His credits also include *Swan Lake*, *Coppélia*, *Cinderella*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*. He is a senior research programmer with the Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

BELLE LEWIS is a freshman at Champaign Central High School. She began ballet at the age of three and has trained with Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors. A second-year company member, Lewis has danced in CU Ballet's productions of *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and selections from *Paquita*. This is her eighth year in *The Nutcracker*, and she is excited to be dancing the role of Clara.

DAISY GRACE LEWIS, a senior at Champaign Central High School, has trained with Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel since age three. A fifth-year senior company member, Lewis has performed in Champaign Urbana Ballet's productions of *Swan Lake*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, selections from *Giselle* and *Paquita*, and 11 productions of *The Nutcracker*.

KATE LIPPERT is a sub-freshman at University Laboratory High School. She began ballet at age four and has trained with Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors for four years. A first-year senior company member, Lippert has danced in CU Ballet's productions *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and four productions of *The Nutcracker*.

CLAUDIA LUNDGAARD is a senior at Champaign Centennial High School and has danced at Champaign Ballet Academy since age three. She is training under Deanna Doty Warfel and attended the 2023 University of Illinois Dance Summer Intensive. Lundsgaard is a fifth-year company member and has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *Swan Lake*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, selections from *Giselle* and *Paquita*, 11 productions of *The Nutcracker* (dancing the role of Clara in 2023), and two productions of *Cinderella* (performing as Autumn in 2025).

VICTORIA MAHAFFEY is a sophomore at Monticello High School. She has trained with Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors for 10 years. A third-year company member, Mahaffey attended the 2023 Ballet Chicago summer intensive program and the 2024-2025 Ballet West summer intensive programs at Salt Lake City and St. George, Utah. She has performed in Champaign Urbana Ballet's productions of *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Cinderella*, selections from *Giselle* and *Coppélia*, and seven productions of *The Nutcracker*.

JANAKI RAJAMANNAR-UNDERHILL is a senior at Champaign Centennial High School and has trained at Champaign Ballet Academy for 12 years under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors. She is a fifth-year company member and has attended summer intensives in New York City at American Ballet Theater and Joffrey Ballet School as well as Ruth Page Chicago International Dance Academy. She has performed in Champaign Urbana Ballet's productions of *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, *Coppélia*, and 12 productions of *The Nutcracker*.

SAMEENA RAJAMANNAR-UNDERHILL is a sub-freshman at University Laboratory High School and has trained at Champaign Ballet Academy for eight years under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors. She is a second-year company member and performed in CU Ballet's productions of *Swan Lake*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, and seven productions of *The Nutcracker*.

JACKSON KNIGHT RIDLON is an eighth grader and began training with Champaign Ballet Academy at the age of five. He is a first-year company member and currently training under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel. He has performed in Champaign Urbana Ballet's productions of *Cinderella*, five productions of *The Nutcracker*, and currently serves in the role of Props Assistant.

ROB RYPKA returns for his 11th season with CU Ballet. His past performances include *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*. Outside the theatre, Rypka works as a software engineering manager at NVIDIA, plays the trombone, and competes in amateur powerlifting.

ELIZABETH SEONG is a senior at Champaign Central High School and has trained at Champaign Ballet Academy for seven years under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors. She is a fifth-year company member and an intern at CU Ballet in the role of Costume Shop Assistant. Seong has performed in several productions of *The Nutcracker*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and selections from *Giselle* and *Coppélia*.

PROFILES

LYDIA STEVENS is a senior at Champaign Central High School. This is her fifth year of training at Champaign Ballet Academy under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors. As a fourth-year company member, she has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *The Nutcracker*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and *Cinderella*.

ELISE YANG is a sub-freshman at University Laboratory High School. She has trained under the direction of Deanna Doty Warfel and guest instructors for seven years at Champaign Ballet Academy. A first-year senior company member, Yang has performed in CU Ballet's productions of *The Little Mermaid*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and six productions of *The Nutcracker*.

DIRECTORS AND DESIGNERS

DEANNA DOTY WARFEL (Artistic Director, Costume Designer, Choreographer) was born in Chicago, Illinois, to ballet dancer Joan Marley Doty and graphic designer/photographer David Doty. She began her training at the Evanston School of Ballet and Ellis-Du Boulay in Chicago. At age 16, she moved to train and subsequently dance under Harvey Hysell of New Orleans Ballet. Doty continued her career with Robert Ivy Ballet in South Carolina, with Lexington Ballet in Kentucky, and as a guest artist with Ballet Alaska, Mississippi Ballet, and the Piccolo Spoleto Festival.

Throughout her years dancing, Doty enjoyed many opportunities to teach and continued to do so when she moved to Champaign. In 1998, she opened Champaign Ballet Academy, and, in the fall of that same year, she founded Champaign Urbana Ballet. She continues to serve as its Artistic Director. Although most of her students train

in ballet while pursuing academic excellence at regional schools, her instruction is credited for preparing others for professional careers in ballet, including Devon Teuscher of American Ballet Theatre and Kate Hosier of National Ballet of Canada.

Doty describes her motivation in this way: "For 27 years, I've dedicated myself to the establishment of a nationally recognized school and company right here in Champaign. It's an honor and a privilege to make my living as an artist and teacher, and I feel lucky to be able to do it in a community like this. My hope is to be able to give back to our ballet families, and community, as much as they have given to me." She married the love of her life, Andy Warfel, on New Year's Eve 2022.

ANDY WARFEL (Creative Producer, Act II Set Designer) has been collaborating with Champaign Urbana Ballet for over 20 years, having designed previous productions of *The Nutcracker* and the current productions of *Cinderella*, *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Little Mermaid*. Holding degrees in scenic design and art direction for theatre, film, and television from both the University of Illinois and NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, Warfel has also designed sets for professional productions including *Dream – The Johnny Mercer Musical* on Broadway and two national tours of *Footloose – The Musical*; concerts such as Mariah Carey's *Butterfly* and *Rainbow* global tours; television shows including *The Queen Latifah Show* and ESPN's *Carrier Classic*; the upcoming feature film *Chili Finger* starring Brian Cranston and John Goodman; and countless retail, corporate, philanthropic, and consumer-activation events and environments around the world. But his most rewarding collaboration continues to be with CU Ballet Artistic Director Deanna Doty Warfel.

BLANE FRIEST (Technical Producer) was born in northern Minnesota some time ago and is super happy to have returned to Minneapolis in 2024. In true Norwegian bachelor farmer fashion, he received an above average education at Thomas Roberts High and then Luther College in Decorah, Iowa (BA in theatre and English).

Bitten by the theatre bug some time in his teens, once out of college, Friest began touring as a lighting designer and technical director, eventually doing every job in the business wherever he could: props for the first national tour of *The Rocky Horror Show* to special effects for *A Christmas Carol* to name a couple of his favs. Over the years, Friest has worked on shows in 49 states and Puerto Rico (currently fielding inquiries for Alaska... seriously!), six Canadian provinces, and internationally from Tashkent, Uzbekistan (with a troupe of students from Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin) to spanning the Caribbean from south to north for Morgan Stanley.

Transitioning to the New York City metropolitan area in 2000 and in a bit of a shift of professional gears, Friest was introduced to live event work serving as the technical director for the AOL-Time Warner merger. He's been producing and directing what he calls "corporate theatre" for a wide variety of businesses and not-for-profits. He is absolutely thrilled to have the opportunity to use the skills he's acquired over the last 40+ years to help make CU Ballet's *The Nutcracker* an amazing experience.

JAMIE K. FULLER (Production Stage Manager) is a freelance stage manager in dance, theatre, and opera. Originally from Henry, Illinois, Fuller earned her MFA in stage management from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has worked with CU Ballet since 2014, stage managing many years of *The Nutcracker* as well as the company's spring productions including *The Little Mermaid*,

The Sleeping Beauty, and *Swan Lake*. Other favorite stage management credits include *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival), *Elektra* (Minnesota Opera), and *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (Children's Theatre Company). www.jamiefuller.com

KEVIN GAWLEY (Lighting Designer) has designed lights for CU Ballet's productions of *Cinderella*, *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Coppélia*, and *The Little Mermaid*. Gawley earned a BFA and an MFA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and an MBA from DePaul University. His freelance work has been seen at the Lifeline Theatre – where he won the Jeff Citation for his design of *Jane Eyre* and the After Dark Award for his design of *Strong Poison*, the Organic, Porchlight, Theatre on the Lake, Metropolis, StoreFront, Loyola University Chicago, Revels Chicago, Midwest Jewish, and at the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival theatres. He taught at Loyola University Chicago, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire before joining the faculty at University of Louisville as Associate Professor, Resident Scenic and Lighting Designer.

CORY RODEHEAVER (Act I Set Designer) has been working as a freelance scenic designer for two decades, designing productions in theatre, musical theatre, opera, and dance. During that time, Rodeheaver also worked as a Technical Director and as an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. Beyond the world of theatre, Cory has worked both as the senior exhibit designer and art director at Taylor Studios Inc., designing award-winning museum exhibits and themed environments across the country for nine years. Currently, Rodeheaver is employed as a designer with the Spectrum Design Group based in Champaign, Illinois. He holds an MFA in scenic design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

PRODUCTION STAFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTION

Deanna Doty Warfel

MUSIC

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

CHOREOGRAPHY

Deanna Doty Warfel

CREATIVE PRODUCER/ACT II SET DESIGNER

Andy Warfel

ADMINISTRATION

Kay Greene

ACT I SET DESIGNER

Cory Rodeheaver

ASSOCIATE SET DESIGNER

Jerrold Smith, Red Mountain Creative

TECHNICAL PRODUCER AND ANNOUNCER

Blane Friest

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Kevin Gawley

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Jamie K. Fuller

MASTER ELECTRICIAN

Jeffrey Hannah

LIGHTING DESIGN ASSISTANT

Alyssa Charlesworth

PROJECTIONS SUPPORT

Alec LaBau

COSTUME CONCEPTUALIZATION

Deanna Doty Warfel

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Gina Modica

LOGISTICS

Brett Feddersen

LEAD COACHES

Eleanor Kraatz

Janie Lee

Leo Lewis

Ava Teague

COSTUME COORDINATION

Kari Croop
Mia Doh
Rachel Hinds
Amy Riha
Elizabeth Seong
Whitney Street
Candice Underhill
Wendy Yang

ADDITIONAL COSTUMING

The late Anne de Velder
John Dayger

PROP DESIGN

Kim Cochran
John Odum

PROPS MANAGER

William Shunk

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Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

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CHAMPAIGN URBANA BALLET

CHAMPAIGN URBANA BALLET

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Blane Friest, *Technical Producer and Announcer*

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Eleanor Kraatz, *Company Class Development
Supervisor*

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CHAMPAIGN URBANA BALLET was formed in 1998 to promote classical and contemporary ballet, to offer training and performance opportunities to talented youth, and to enrich and involve the community through the art of dance. Under the artistic direction of Deanna Doty Warfel, founder, the company has diversified its repertory and earned a reputation in the dance community as a superb training ground for pre-professional classical dancers. Through outreach programs, Champaign Urbana Ballet exposes children to the history and beauty of ballet. Champaign Urbana Ballet is sponsored in part by the generous support of the Illinois Arts Council, corporations, businesses, and individuals.

Champaign Urbana Ballet presents *The Nutcracker* each December and a full ballet each spring, including traditional works such as *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Coppélia*, *Paquita*, and *Le Corsaire*, as well as newly choreographed pieces including *The Little Mermaid*, *Cinderella*, *Arensky Variations*, *Peter and the Wolf*, and selections from *La Bayadère*. The 2025-2026 season marks the company's 28th and includes this production of *The Nutcracker*; *The Little Mermaid*, coming to the Virginia Theatre on May 1 and 2, 2026; and a student production at the Harold and Jean Miner Theatre at Parkland College on June 13, 2026.

COMPANY ARTISTS

Kevin Burnside
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Eleanor Kraatz
Janie Lee
Leo Lewis
William Shunk
Ava Teague

Victoria Mahaffey
Janaki Rajamannar-Underhill
Sameena Rajamannar-Underhill
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Annika Drasgow
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CHAMPAIGN URBANA BALLET

A black and white photograph of three ballerinas in elaborate costumes. They are wearing long-sleeved leotards with puffed sleeves, tutus, and headpieces that look like seashells. They are striking a dramatic pose with their arms raised. The background is a dark stage with curtains. The title 'THE LITTLE MERMAID' is overlaid in a large, stylized font.

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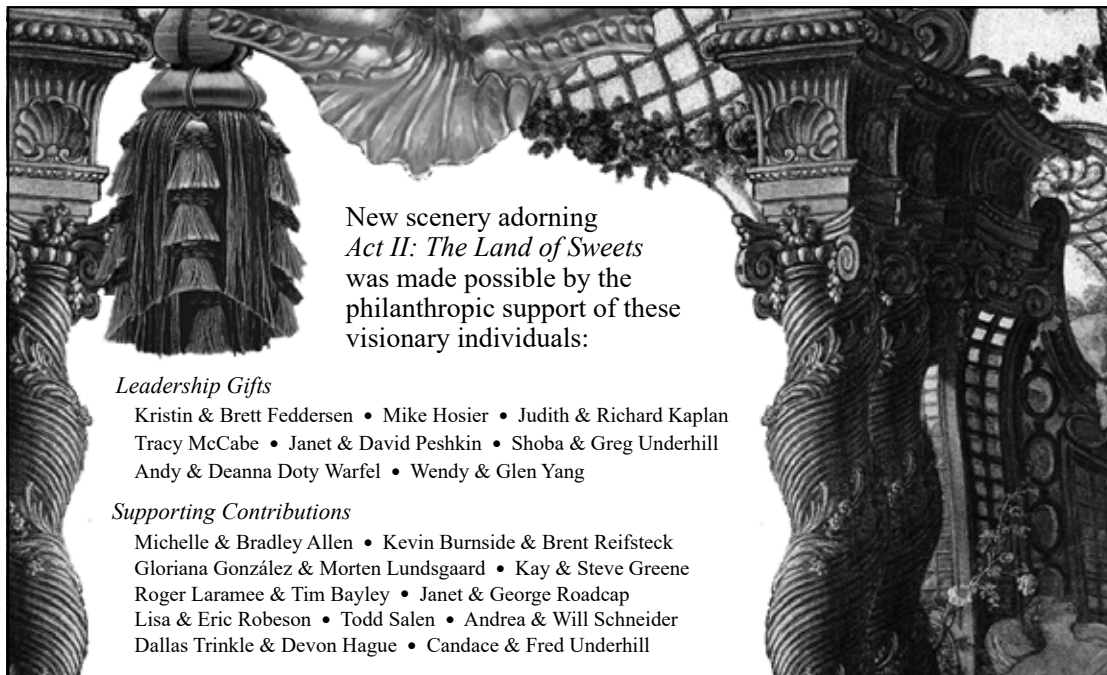


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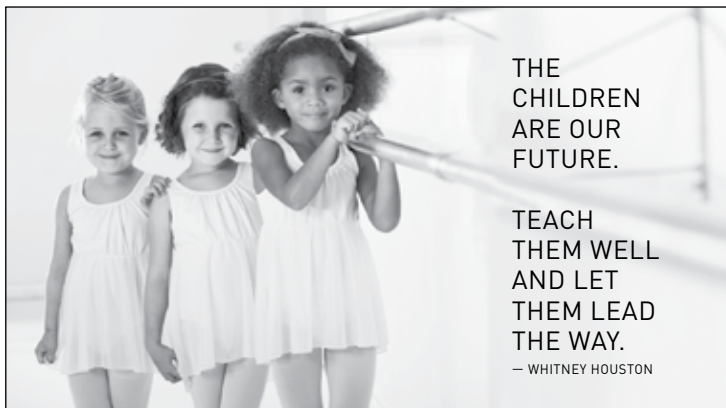
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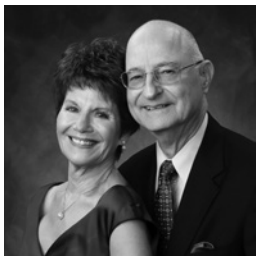
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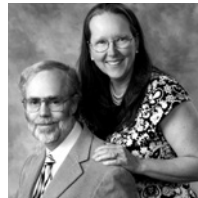
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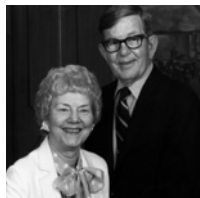
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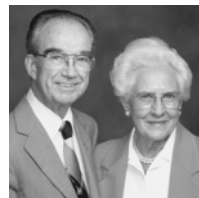
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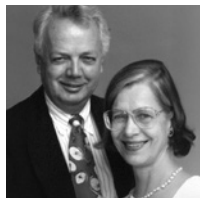
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September 2008



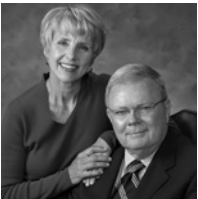
VIRGINIA R. IVENS
(1922-2008)
February 2009



The Susan Sargeant McDonald Endowed Fund for Youth Programming
Suzi was the founder/developer of the Krannert Center Youth Series
July 2010



MISAHO & RICHARD BERLIN
October 2010



DIANA & WARD McDONALD
March 2011



GRACE & JOHN MICETICH
March 2011



JO ANN TRISLER
(1946-2010)
November 2011



LEA GIESELMAN
(1932-2014)
BOB GIESELMAN
(1932-2015)
April 2013



JULIE & NATHAN GUNN
April 2014



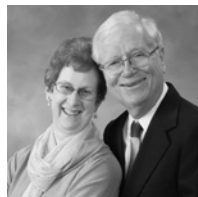
MICHAEL SWINDLE
April 2014



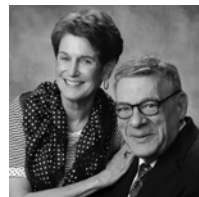
ANONYMOUS
November 2015



LINDA WEINER
(1944-2021)
.....
BARRY WEINER
February 2017



**ANNE MISCHAKOFF
HEILES & WILLIAM
HEILES**
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**CECILE & IRA
LEBENSTON**
December 2017



BURT SWANSON
(1939-2020)
.....
IRIS SWANSON
December 2017



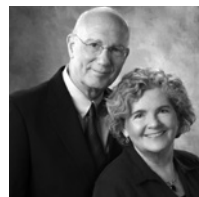
**TERRY & BARBARA
ENGLAND**
April 2018



**PHYLLIS ROBESON
& FAMILY**
February 2019
.....
KYLE ROBESON
(1929-2021)



**JAMES R. FRAME
& CANDACE PENN
FRAME**
April 2019



**MICHAEL &
MARGARET ROSSO
GROSSMAN**
July 2019



**PATRICIA & ALLAN
TUCHMAN**
April 2021



VICTOR FELDMAN
(1935-2018)
.....
JUDITH FELDMAN
(1938-2021)
September 2021



**SUSAN & RICHARD
SCHNUER**
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**JUDITH & RICHARD
KAPLAN**
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**KATHRYN I. SEYBERT
& MICHAEL J.
ANDRECHAK**
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KENNETH SUSLICK**
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**RICHARD & JAYNE
BURKHARDT**
January 2023



**SELMA K.
RICHARDSON**
(1931-2019)
March 2023



WILLIAM K. ARCHER
(1927-1997)
.....
FOROUGH ARCHER
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**KENNETH
BENGOCHEA**
(1937-2022)
.....
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**MELANIE LOOTS &
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2025-26

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PERFORMANCES



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Illinois Arts Council

The Illinois Arts Council Agency provides general programming support to ensure that audiences of all ages have direct access to world-class theatre, dance, and music.



The Augustine Foundation

The Augustine Foundation provides continued major support for ELLNORA | The Guitar Festival.



Chamber Music America

The Balourdet Quartet is the recipient of Chamber Music America's 2024 Cleveland Quartet Award. The quartet's performance has been made possible by the Cleveland Quartet Award Endowment Fund.



The Student Sustainability Committee

The Student Sustainability Committee provided funding for the Krannert Center Audiences Lighting Retrofit Project, which continues to increase energy efficiency, decrease labor requirements, and improve safety conditions.



Center for Advanced Study

George A. Miller Endowment Programs Committee
The George A. Miller Endowment Programs Committee supports CultureTalk and other special collaborative projects.

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We gratefully acknowledge these individuals and businesses for their generosity and commitment to the arts. Their support enabled the Center to welcome back in-person audiences for Music, Theatre, Dance, and visiting artist productions this past season. Krannert Center continues to make accessibility improvements, co-commission works to help support artist partners, and focus on engagement work within the community. If your membership has lapsed and you'd like to renew, please contact Krannert Center Advancement at 217.333.6700 or advancement@krannertcenter.illinois.edu.

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* Denotes former members of the Krannert Center Advancement Council.

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Memorial Gifts to the Loop

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Stanley O. Ikenberry
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Jean Weigel
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Zuzana Bielak
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Cheryl Snyder, Director of Advancement
Terri Anne Ciofalo, Associate Director for Production
Maureen V. Reagan, Associate Director for
Administration and Patron Experience
Lindsay Dalrymple, Assistant Director for Operations
Julianne Ehre, Assistant Director for Programming
and Engagement
Craig Miles, Assistant Director for Marketing and
Communications

EVENTS

Andrew Almeter, Senior Production Coordinator
for Events
Bree Brock, Production Coordinator for Events
Rachel Gladd, Performing Arts Events Coordinator

PROGRAMMING AND ENGAGEMENT

Julianne Ehre, Assistant Director for Programming
and Engagement
Jason Finkelman, Artistic Director of Global Arts
Performance Initiatives
Emily Laugesen, Director of Community Engagement
Sam Smith, Director of Civic Engagement and Social
Practice
Nick Wurl, Engagement and Programming Coordinator

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Cheryl Snyder, Director of Advancement
David Drake, Advancement Team Assistant
Frank Niemeyer, FAA Annual Giving Officer

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Assistant Director for Operations

Director's Office

Vanessa Lane, Office Manager
Zia Moon, Krannert Center Showcase Director, Office
and Communications Support Specialist

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John O. Williams, Facility Manager
Tony Mapson, Assistant Facility Manager
Joe Butsch, Building Electrician
Steven Lessor, Assistant Chief Building Operations
Engineer
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Sara Dietrich, John Ekstrom, Jessica Fancher, Bryan
Franzen, Salatheo Kindle, Jacob Lerch, Chabu Nsokoshi,
Chad Schwen, Robert Shaw, Attendants

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Craig Miles, Assistant Director for Marketing and
Communications
Sean Kutzko, Assistant Communication Director
Nicholas Mulvaney, Art Director

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Maureen V. Reagan, Associate Director for
Administration and Patron and Patron Experience

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Amy Thomas, Food Services Director
Michael Bunting, Hospitality Supervisor

Elizabeth Henke, Stage 5 Bar Manager
John Ingalls, Intermezzo Kitchen Lead

Ticketing and Patron Services

Whitney Havice, Ticketing and Patron Services Director
Ann-Marie Dittmann, Patron Services Assistant Director
Ty Mingo, Assistant Ticket Services Director
Jon Proctor, Ticket Sales Supervisor
Adrian Rochelle, Front of House Performance Supervisor

PRODUCTION

Terri Anne Ciofalo, Director of Production
Maria Miguens, Production Manager

Audio Department

Rick Scholwin, Audio Director
Alec LaBau, Associate Audio Director and Video Director
Tyler Knowles, Assistant Audio Director, Live Stream Engineer

Costume Shop

Andrea Bouck, Costume Director
Richard Gregg, Costume Rentals Director and Associate Costume Shop Director
Paige Stewart-Rankins, Hair and Makeup Supervisor
Julianna Steitz, First Hand
April McKinnis, EB McTigue, Cutters/Drapers
Kari Little-McKinney, Theatrical Stitcher
Chantel Renee, Costume Crafts

Lighting Department

Lisa Kidd, Lighting Director
David Krupla, Associate Lighting Director

Properties Department

Adriane Binky Donley, Properties Director
Kira Lyon, Assistant Properties Director

Scene Shop

Ryan Schultz, Technical Director
Tatsuya Ito, Associate Technical Director
Bill Kephart, Office Administrator
Bobby Reynolds, Theatrical Scene Shop Coordinator
Anna Atkinson, Theatrical Scene Shop Assistant
Rebecca Russell, Acting Crew Head
Kayley Woolums, Theatrical Scene Shop Assistant

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Jenell Hardy, Director of Business Services
Macauley Allen, Business Services Specialist
Debbie Delaney, Accounting Staff
Angela Wang, Business Services Specialist

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.

Necessaries

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location which will be announced to you.

Phones and Devices

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

Late Arrivals

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

Lost Items

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

Ticket Returns

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu or 217.333.6280). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

Accessibility

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit please contact patronservices@krannertcenter.illinois.edu or 217.333.9716 or visit go.KrannertCenter.com/Accessibility.

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a Land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.



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