

AUTISM-FRIENDLY PERFORMANCES  
2021-2022 SEASON



# THE NUTCRACKER

SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 2022  
11:00 AM

Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab  
at Houston Ballet Center for Dance



Houston Ballet's Autism-Friendly performances are modified for audiences with neurological differences. Trained volunteers staff the event to ensure a positive experience for all.

**Generously funded by**



Texas  
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**HOUSTON** Livestock  
Show and Rodeo

**EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**  
EXPOSE.EDUCATE.INTEGRATE.

I am going to see Houston Ballet Academy perform *My First Ballet: The Nutcracker* at Houston Ballet Center for Dance.

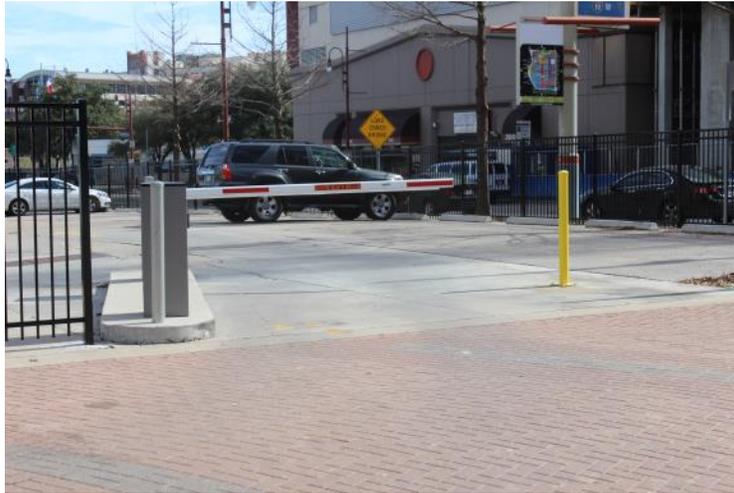


Going to see a ballet is like watching t.v. or going to the movie because it tells a story.



Going to see a ballet is different than watching t.v. or a movie because the dancers perform live in front of you on the stage. And in ballets, there are no words. The dancers tell the story with movement.

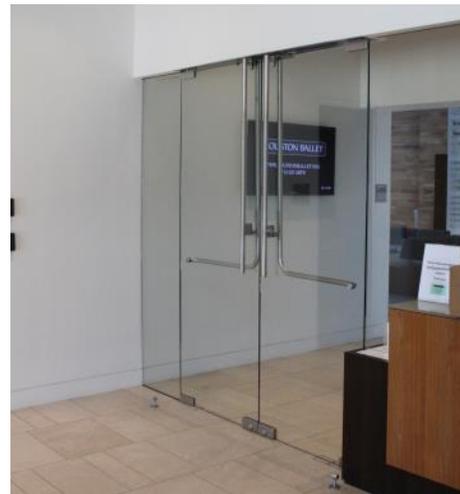
*My First Ballet: The Nutcracker* will be performed at Houston Ballet Center for Dance. When I arrive, I will park in the parking lot, next to the building. There will be people there to help show the way.



We will walk from the parking lot to Houston Ballet Center for Dance and put on our face masks.



We will walk through two set of doors.





I might need to get my tickets from the box office.



Once I have my tickets, I can go into the theater. An usher will take my ticket and give me a program.



My family and I can sit in any available seat in the Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab.



Once I am seated, I will be able to see the stage.

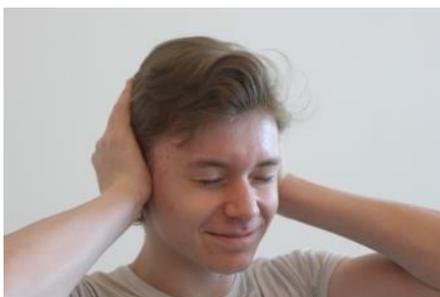


Top Photo: Nic Lehoux  
Bottom Photo: Cameron Durham

When it is time for the show to start, someone will ask for everyone to turn off their phones. The theater will get darker and everyone will get quiet. I will try to sit still and be as quiet as I can during the show so that I can hear and see everything.



When the show starts, I will hear music begin. There will be a lot of dancers on the stage. Sometimes the music will be loud. If it is too loud, I can cover my ears or ask an adult for help. I can bring ear defenders or something small to hold from home. I know that even though loud music can feel scary, none of the noise can hurt me.



If it's too loud, I can let my family know that I need a break, and I can go to a quiet area.



I may come back to my seat when I am ready, I can do this while the dancers are on stage.



Top Photo: Amitava Sarkar  
Bottom Photo: Nic Lehoux

After some of the dances, people will clap.



Clapping is nice because it tells the dancers you think they did a good job. If I want to clap, I can. I don't have to clap if I don't want to.

I know that even though the clapping can be loud and feel scary, none of the noise can hurt me.



At the end of the show, all of the dancers will come out on stage. This is called a curtain call. Many people will clap so the dancers know how much they liked the show.



If I want to clap, I can. I don't have to clap if I don't want to. If the clapping is too loud, I can cover my ears or ask an adult for help. I can bring ear defenders or something small to hold from home. I know that even though the clapping can be loud and feel scary, none of the noise can hurt me.



Top Photos: Cameron Durham  
Bottom Center Photo: Amitava Sarkar

When the show is over, we will exit the theater and go out of Houston Ballet Center for Dance. I am excited to see *My First Ballet: The Nutcracker!*



\* This document is based on the social story created by Dr. Bryant Shaw, PhD, for THE RADIO CITY CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR.

# MY FIRST BALLET— THE NUTCRACKER

## THE STORY

I get to join Clara in a dream-like story where she and her Nutcracker prince fight rats and travel through the Land of Snow to meet the Sugarplum Fairy.



In the Land of Sweets, dancers from all different countries celebrate with dance. Even the flowers join in!



Houston Ballet Academy  
Photos: Amitava Sarkar

# YOU TRY IT!

Ballet dancers use 5 positions of the feet when they dance. Their legs are turned out, meaning their toes point to the side instead of the front.

Boys and girls use the same positions. Can YOU make all 5 positions?



FIRST POSITION



SECOND POSITION



THIRD POSITION

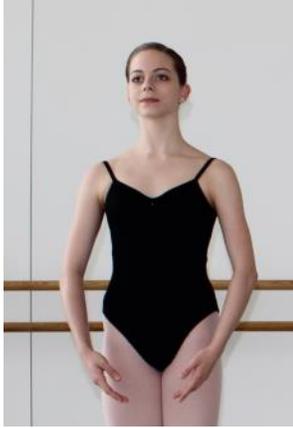


FOURTH POSITION



FIFTH POSITION

# YOU TRY IT!



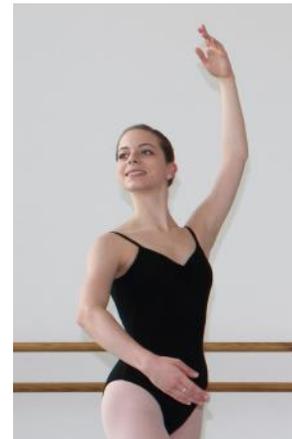
FIRST POSITION



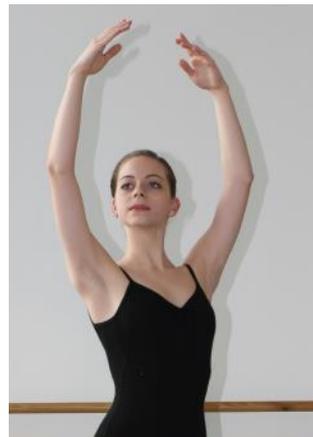
SECOND POSITION



THIRD POSITION



FOURTH POSITION



FIFTH POSITION

**NOW YOU TRY IT! CAN YOU MAKE ALL 5 POSITIONS?**