

**MEDIA CONTACT:**  
**Scott Horton Communications**  
**510-735-9200**

**[Bluescott260@hotmail.com](mailto:Bluescott260@hotmail.com)**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OAKLAND BALLET PRESENTS FIVE PERFORMANCES OF GRAHAM LUSTIG'S  
THE NUTCRACKER**

**Dec. 22-24 at the Paramount Theatre, Oakland Features Intimate  
Holiday Spectacle Set in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Viennese Splendor  
and Enchantment**

**Music Performed Live by Oakland East Bay Symphony, Conducted  
by Michael Morgan**

Oakland, CA, November 14, 2011 – Oakland Ballet Company Artistic Director Graham Lustig's *The Nutcracker* returns to the Paramount Theatre stage in Oakland with live music courtesy of the Oakland East Bay Symphony, conducted by Michael Morgan, for five performances December 22-24 after its popular and acclaimed premiere in 2010. Mr. Lustig's version of the holiday favorite is a freshly nostalgic look at *The Nutcracker* story set in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Vienna with loving and intelligent attention to details of story and characters. Finished off with plenty of bravura dancing and reverence for the perennial tale of a young girl's dreamy adventures in the Kingdom of Sweets, Lustig's *The Nutcracker* was universally acclaimed as a welcome addition to the Bay Area holiday performance calendar when it premiered last season. Performances will be given Thursday, December 22 at 2 and 7 pm; Friday, December 23 at 2 and 7 pm; and Saturday, December 24 at 11 am at the Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway in Oakland. Sweet Dreams Parties follow the 2 pm matinees and allow children and families to meet characters from the ballet and enjoy sweets, refreshments and holiday cheer for an additional ticket price.

Oakland Ballet Artistic Director Graham Lustig's *The Nutcracker* brims with the kind of cheery holiday enchantment that is a requirement for the seasonal ballet, but where it truly shines is in the ebullient details and charming re-setting of the enduring tale in Vienna in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Zack Brown's crisp, bright sets, stylish yet delightfully modern costumes and the restrained elegance of period interiors replace gaudy bric-a-brac and engage audiences in the athleticism of the choreography and the details of the traditional story. Details that have caught the attention of media and audiences include the expansive snowball scene in the first act where Company members are joined by a storm of energetic young snowballs careening merrily

about the stage in a full-on blizzard of dancing. Lustig's production is full of smart details that delight *Nutcracker* aficionados and amuse newcomers to ballet.

Music for the performances will be provided live by the Oakland East Bay Symphony conducted by Music Director Michael Morgan and features local choral groups: Mt. Eden High School Women's Ensemble and Pacific Boychoir Academy.

Tickets for Graham Lustig's *The Nutcracker* are priced \$20-\$59 with a \$5 discount for a donation of a canned food item (supporting the Alameda County Community Food Bank). Sweet Dreams Parties with OBC dancers and refreshments follow the 2pm Matinees and are priced at an additional \$12. Tickets may be purchased at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). For more information, visit [www.oaklandballet.org](http://www.oaklandballet.org).

In partnership with the Oakland Unified School District, onsite educational performances of Graham Lustig's *The Nutcracker* will be delivered to eight low income schools in December, 2012. Additionally, 1,000 tickets will be distributed to low income students and their families to attend a performance at the Paramount Theatre. Community outreach tickets will be distributed through the Community Access Ticket Service (CATS) organization, reaching hundreds of underserved families, adults, and youth throughout the East Bay.

Oakland Ballet is proud to announce its partnerships with the following 2011-2012 corporate and foundation sponsors: Bank of America, Chevron, Clorox Company Foundation, Nestle/Dreyers Grand Ice Cream Foundation, Safeway, Douglas Parking, and Mechanics Bank with special thanks to the City of Oakland Cultural Arts Funding Program, The San Francisco Foundation, The Fleishhacker Foundation, and the A&B Foundation.

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