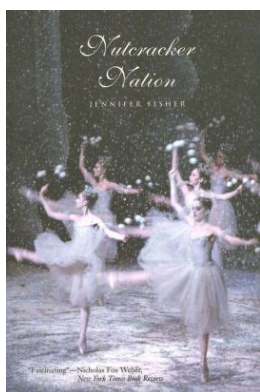


How An Old World Ballet Became Christmas Tradition In The New World

Christmas is a time of magic, joy, and traditions. From decorating trees to exchanging gifts, there are countless customs associated with this festive season. But perhaps one of the most enchanting and timeless traditions is the performance of the classic ballet, The Nutcracker. This beloved ballet has become synonymous with Christmas in the New World, captivating audiences of all ages for generations.

The origins of The Nutcracker can be traced back to the old world of Europe. It was first premiered in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1892, with music composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and choreography by Marius Petipa. The ballet was based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann, titled "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King," which was later adapted by Alexandre Dumas.

Initially, The Nutcracker received mixed reviews and failed to achieve immediate success. However, it gradually gained popularity over time and eventually became a holiday staple. Its journey to becoming a cherished Christmas tradition in the New World began with an unexpected twist.



Nutcracker Nation: How an Old World Ballet Became a Christmas Tradition in the New World

by Jennifer Fisher (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2061 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 256 pages



In 1944, the San Francisco Ballet introduced *The Nutcracker* to American audiences. Directed by Willam Christensen, this production marked the first full-length presentation of the ballet in the United States. The initial American reception was modest, but the seeds were sown for something extraordinary.

Eight years later, in 1952, George Balanchine presented his own version of *The Nutcracker* with the New York City Ballet. Balanchine's adaptation took the country by storm and quickly became a sensation. Its success paved the way for numerous American ballet companies to adopt their own renditions of the ballet, each adding their unique flair and interpretation.

The Nutcracker quickly captured the hearts of the American public, and its popularity soared to new heights. Spectators were enchanted by the sumptuous sets, the dazzling costumes, and the mesmerizing performances. Every year, families flocked to theaters across the nation to experience the magical tale of a young girl named Clara and her adventures in the Land of Sweets.

One can't help but wonder why *The Nutcracker* has become so intricately tied to the holiday season. Beyond its captivating storyline and brilliant music, the ballet itself embodies the spirit of Christmas. It evokes a sense of wonder, imagination, and childlike joy that resonates with people of all ages.

Moreover, the timing of *The Nutcracker*'s performances aligns perfectly with the holiday season. The ballet typically runs from late November through December, with its grand finale falling on Christmas Day or shortly after. This synchronization

allows audiences to immerse themselves fully in the festive atmosphere, transporting them to a magical world of dreams and holiday cheer.

Furthermore, The Nutcracker appeals to a wide audience. Its family-friendly nature makes it accessible for children and adults alike, fostering a shared experience that strengthens familial bonds. The ballet's evocative music, such as the instantly recognizable "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Waltz of the Flowers," creates a sensory delight that adds to its timeless allure.

As years passed, The Nutcracker's influence expanded beyond the United States. The ballet reached every corner of the globe, captivating audiences everywhere and solidifying its status as a Christmas tradition worldwide.

Today, countless ballet companies continue to perform The Nutcracker, ensuring its legacy endures. Whether it is the Moscow Ballet's Nutcracker or the Royal Ballet's production in London, the enchantment of this old world ballet sparks a festive spirit wherever it is performed.

So, as the holiday season approaches, the anticipation for The Nutcracker grows. From its humble beginnings in Europe to its transformation into a beloved Christmas tradition in the New World, this timeless ballet has become an integral part of the holiday festivities. Its magic continues to bring joy, wonder, and warmth to audiences around the world, making it a truly cherished tradition during the most wonderful time of the year.

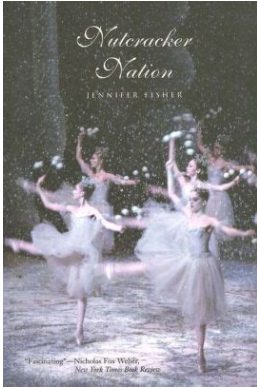
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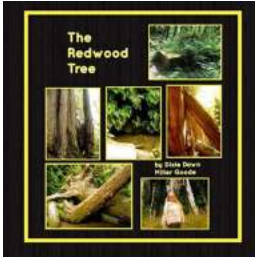


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The Nutcracker is the most popular ballet in the world, adopted and adapted by hundreds of communities across the United States and Canada every Christmas season. In this entertainingly informative book, Jennifer Fisher offers new insights into the Nutcracker phenomenon, examining it as a dance scholar and critic, a former participant, an observer of popular culture, and an interviewer of those who dance, present, and watch the beloved ballet.

Fisher traces The Nutcracker's history from its St. Petersburg premiere in 1892 through its emigration to North America in the mid-twentieth century to the many productions of recent years. She notes that after it was choreographed by another Russian immigrant to the New World, George Balanchine, the ballet began to thrive and variegate: Hawaiians added hula, Canadians added hockey, Mark Morris set it in the swinging sixties, and Donald Byrd placed it in Harlem. The dance world underestimates The Nutcracker at its peril, Fisher suggests, because the ballet is one of its most powerfully resonant traditions. After starting life as a Russian ballet based on a German tale about a little girl's imagination, The Nutcracker has become a way for Americans to tell a story about their communal values and themselves.



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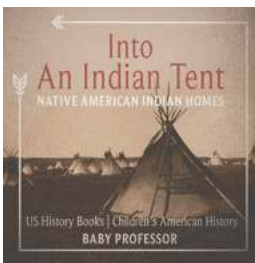
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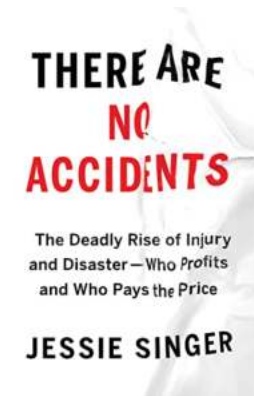
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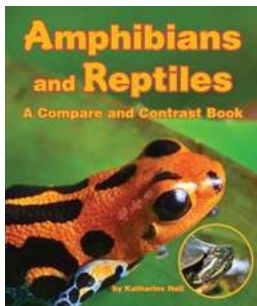
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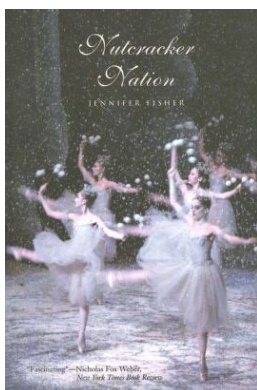
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