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SHIRA GREENBERG'S NUTCRACKER ON THE ROCKS

What you are about to see is a reinvented version of the traditional Nutcracker Suite. If you are familiar with the ballet, then this may be a bit of a shock for you! Just sit back and enjoy!

► For the safety of the dancers, the use of flash photography during the performance is prohibited. Thank you for your cooperation.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR TANYA W. CALL

Welcome to the 11th staging of Shira Greenberg's *Nutcracker on the Rocks* in Helena! Created and choreographed by Shira Greenberg, Artistic Director of Keshet Dance in Albuquerque, NM, it has been an honor and privilege to carry on the legacy of this inspiring rock-n-roll production which Shira has generously shared with the Helena community since 2013.

The dancers you see tonight joined the cast through open auditions in September and come from all walks of life—some training to be professional dancers, others having not danced since high school (40+ years ago), and many having never stepped foot or wheel on a dance floor prior to auditions.

Each year, all who audition are cast in the show and together, along with the professional visiting artists who join us from across the country and world, create a beautiful family that will never be the same after this performance weekend. This diverse family is what makes *Nutcracker on the Rocks* so special, and it is my favorite part of the production each year.

Our 2025 rehearsal directors, Laura Brown, Jessica Partridge, Melinda White, and Amber Wilke, are all community dancers who have been a part of the Helena production for several years, if not all eleven. Their thoughtful, compassionate leadership has nurtured this family. Their integrity, heart, and humility have permeated all aspects of the production and radiate from the stage through every performer you see today. To the rehearsal directors, administrative staff, interns, costume helpers, Board members, and team of volunteers who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help make everything run smoothly—*Thank You*. This production truly would not be possible without each and every one of you!

A huge thanks to YOU as well, our incredible audience. Because of you, dance and the performing arts are thriving in Helena. We invite you to visit our website, cohesiondance.org, and join us for more exciting events throughout our 2025-26 season.

As you watch the performance today, may you be enriched and inspired, and may your heart be opened to the unlimited possibilities in the world around you.

Tanya W. Call, *Founder and Artistic Director, Cohesion Dance Project*



Conceived and choreographed by Shira Greenberg with much input, inspiration and improvisation from Sarah Elizabeth Bennett and the entire, wonderful, and dedicated casts, past and present. Very special thanks to Loyce Houlton for her inspiration, magic and influence on *Nutcracker on the Rocks*.



“If you obey all the rules, you miss all the fun.”

—Katherine Hepburn

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHOREOGRAPHER

SHIRA GREENBERG

The year 1996 was both an instant and a lifetime. It was the year I scribbled notes feverishly into the night, slowly awakening an ambitious idea: to create a funky, modern version of the Nutcracker. Out of humble beginnings, this idea has grown and blossomed into what you will see today; the transformative story of a young girl who embarks on a journey filled with love, joy, peril, adventure, magic, and unlimited possibilities.

Over time, the New Mexico cast grew from 13 to over 150 dancers; the audience expanded from 250 to over 5,000; and we at Keshet decided after a 20-year run of *Nutcracker on the Rocks* it was time for something new. While saying goodbye to our annual production of *Nutcracker on the Rocks* was a hard decision to make, we knew that the magic of the production would live on in the beautiful hands of Cohesion Dance Project.

What remains constant, whether in Albuquerque or Helena, is the passion and courage residing in each dancer. Whether these artists have grown up dancing in a formal setting or have busted their share of moves in the living room, their dedication, creativity, and teamwork, is why this show continues to spread its magic. I am incredibly honored and thrilled to know that the magic of *Nutcracker on the Rocks* will live on here in Helena for many years to come! And I am continually inspired by the increasing exchange of thoughts, ideas, dreams, and friendships that have and will continue to develop between Keshet and Cohesion!

This show is a culmination of hard work, self-discovery and abandonment of fears, in exchange for moments of pure joy and aliveness, which I am delighted you will get to experience today thanks to the passion and dedication of the Cohesion Dance Project staff, board, volunteers, and incredible dancers!

As you watch the story unfold, it is my hope that the magic and joy created on stage gives you chills of excitement and finds its way warmly into your heart. *Enjoy the ride!*

Shira Greenberg,

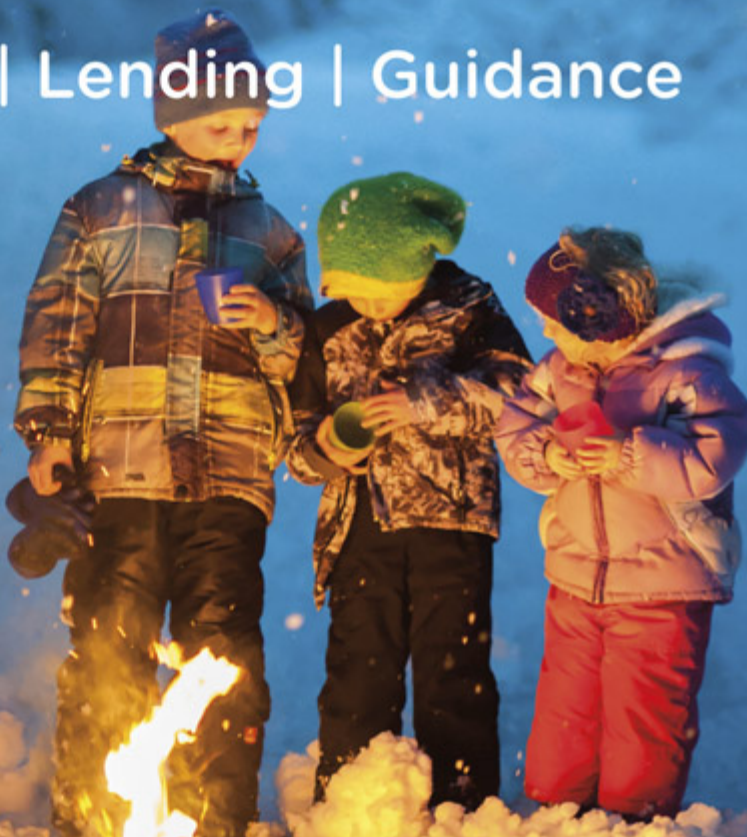
Founder and Artistic Director of Keshet Dance and Center for the Arts, Creator and Choreographer of Nutcracker on the Rocks



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NUTCRACKER ON THE ROCKS: THE STORY

ACT I, SCENE I: The Party

Marie, her mom, and the hired help are preparing for their annual holiday party. (It's hard to find good hired help these days!) The guests arrive and the party begins. The mean lady from across town has found out about the gathering and crashes the party, much to the dismay of the guests. But that soon is forgotten when the new handsome fella in town arrives. The party is going full swing when the magical Madame Drosselmeier arrives. Drosselmeier is known for her terrific gifts and is always the life of the party. She brings life-size toys to entertain the guests, young and old, and wonderful gifts for each of the children. This year she has created a special gift for Marie—a Nutcracker doll with an extra kiss of magic. That yucky mean lady has never liked Marie and really can't stand her excitement for the new Nutcracker. Eventually, the party comes to an end. After the guests finally leave and Marie is sent to bed, she sneaks back to the living room to be with her Nutcracker, and falls asleep with the doll in her arms. Enter Drosselmeier, who in her love for Marie, wishes to send her on a special journey in the form of a dream. She kisses her with magic to send her on her way....and the dream begins.

ACT I, SCENE II: The Dream Begins

It starts with just a few little mice checking out the living room, and becomes an army of rats, invading Marie's dream. She tries to wake herself, but apparently it's real and there's no waking up. Suddenly, the Rat Queen appears and is intent on having Marie for dinner. In order to protect her Nutcracker doll, Marie hides him behind the bar. Just when it seems all hope is lost, a shot rings out and much to everyone's surprise, the Nutcracker doll has become real! A battle follows, but Marie and the Nutcracker are outnumbered. As the Rat Queen prepares to finish off the Nutcracker,



Marie breaks free from the rats and saves his life by wounding the Rat Queen. The Nutcracker thanks her by removing the crown from the Rat Queen's head and giving it to Marie. Together they celebrate their victory and dance into the night.

INTERMISSION: 15 MINUTES

ACT II: The Dream Continues

Drosselmeier leads Marie and the Nutcracker further into their dream, introducing them to her friends, the snowflakes. The snowflakes welcome Marie and the Nutcracker into their beloved land of magic and possibilities. The duo finds a comfortable place to rest, while different folks from different times come and entertain them. First, the 20's folks appear, dancing and flapping and spreading their smiles. Next, the 50's folks arrive, hand-jiving their way into Marie and the Nutcracker's hearts. The two are enjoying themselves immensely when suddenly the rats appear, celebrating the recovery of their beloved Queen. A frightened Marie and Nutcracker hide throughout the rats' celebration, until Drosselmeier returns, coaxing them out of

hiding. The two are truly beginning to fall in love! Their flirting is interrupted by the 60's folks who dance their hearts out, wishing the two endless love.

As the 60's folks fade away, Marie and the Nutcracker realize their love and kiss at last. In their joy, they neglect to notice the Rat Queen who has been searching for the couple and has come back to reclaim her crown. The Nutcracker chases after the Rat Queen but Marie is held back by the rats. As she finally breaks free to follow her Nutcracker, the dream has begun to fade. All those who have been part of her dream are slowly fading away, and the Rat Queen, who now holds the crown, taunts the Nutcracker as he too slowly fades, and returns to his original form...a mere doll. As Marie frantically chases after her dream, and her true love, she ends up back in her living room, asleep where she began. When her mom wakes her, it is impossible to explain the places she has been and the love she has felt. She holds her Nutcracker close and can still feel their love with all of her heart.

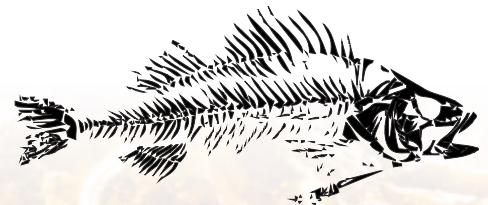
Now it is up to you to decide, was this only a dream... or was it magic?



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MEET THE CAST

ACT I, SCENE I

MADAME DROSSELMEIER

Jessica Partridge

MARIE

Harley Hollibaugh

MEAN LADY/RAT QUEEN

Nina Murphy

PARTY HOTTIE/NUTCRACKER

Patrick Higgins

MARIE'S MOM

Laura Brown

COOL BIKER DUDE

Sean Cawley

MAIDS

Ella Hansen
Melinda White
Rebecca White

TOY DOLLS

Millie Dassinger
Diadra Goldes

TOY SOLDIERS

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Julynn Wildman

MEAN LITTLE KIDS

Gus Boesdorfer
Lily Carter
Emmy Sagan

TRASHY LADY

Samantha Strom

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Theo Wilke

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Layla Bullington
Jojo Lamping
Kalissa O'Neill
Amber Wilke

OLDER COUSINS

Rosie Dassinger
Vincent LeRette
Juliet Mahar
Makenna O'Neill
Tecla Schmitt
Grace Spencer

TWEEN COUSINS

Emma Meisner
Ainsley Otterstrom
Kerrigan Verlanic



YOUNGER COUSINS

Shaylee Felsman
Audrey Hawkaluk
Wallace Hecht
Maggie McFarlane

ACT I, SCENE II

RATS

Jenny Andersen
Noah Bennison
Beth Brenneman
Laura Brown
Ella Hansen
Jojo Lamping
Vincent LeRette
Genesis Morgan
Kalissa O'Neill
Emmy Sagan
Rebecca White

MICE

Jane Boesdorfer
Maryn Gates
Cece Kelley
Emma Meisner
Ainsley Otterstrom
Isabelle Smith
Margaret Smith
Kerrigan Verlanic

★

ACT II

SNOWFLAKES

Jane Boesdorfer
Liz Bowen
Laura Brown
Layla Bullington
Lily Carter
Hailey Chaney
Brielle Cole
Rosie Dassinger
Shaylee Felsman
Betty Franklin
Maryn Gates
Audrey Hawkaluk
Wallace Hecht
Karri Jones
Harlei Knuth
Juliet Mahar
Maggie McFarlane
Inara Naranjo
Kalissa O'Neill
Makenna O'Neill
Ainsley Otterstrom
Tyler Putnam
Grace Spencer
Kerrigan Verlanic



THE MUSIC

ACT I

Tchaikovsky
James Brown
Van Morrison
The Velvet Underground
Medeski, Martin & Wood
Aretha Franklin
Billie Holiday
Danny Elfman
Rusted Root
Donovan

ACT II

Hans Zimmer
Mychael Danna
Squirrel Nut Zippers
The Nylons
The Rolling Stones
Morphine
Janis Joplin
Tchaikovsky

Abi Warhank
Rebecca White
Amber Wilke
Faith Wilson

20s FOLKS

Liz Bowen
Layla Bullington
Betty Franklin
Amber Johnson
Jojo Lamping
Inara Naranjo
Celena Stoos
Samantha Strom
Chelsea Weidman
Amber Wilke
Theo Wilke

50s FOLKS

Noah Bennison
Lily Carter
Hailey Chaney
Cece Kelley
Vincent LeRette
Juliet Mahar
Makenna O'Neill
Emmy Sagan
Tecla Schmitt
Grace Spencer

60s FOLKS

Jenny Andersen
Beth Brenneman
Laura Brown
Ella Hansen
Jojo Lamping
Kalissa O'Neill
Melinda White
Rebecca White
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NUTCRACKER ON THE ROCKS: CAST & CREW

TANYA W. CALL

DIRECTOR

Tanya grew up dancing in Helena with Charlene White, Renee Kowalski, and Jane Smilie. After graduating from MSU and earning a Physical Therapy degree from Eastern Washington University, Tanya became further inspired by dance when she spent time at Keshet Dance Company in Albuquerque, NM. She fell in love with Keshet's welcoming spirit and opportunities providing access for all to experience the joy of dance. After serving in many performing and programmatic roles at Keshet, Tanya returned to Helena with her family and a dream to share this production and accessible dance programming with the Helena community. When not sharing her love of movement with youth and adults of all abilities throughout Helena and the state, Tanya can be found exploring the great outdoors, attending Bobcat football games, and spending precious time with her family.



PATRICK HIGGINS

PARTY HOTTIE/NUTCRACKER

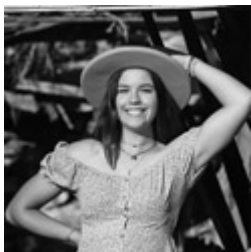
Patrick Higgins is a recent graduate of Montclair State University where he received his BFA in Musical Theatre! Some of his favorite credits include: Baby John (*Steven Spielberg's West Side Story*), Bert (*Mary Poppins*, Grandstreet Theatre), and Mark Anthony (*A Chorus Line*, Goodspeed Opera House). Patrick is so excited to be back in Montana and to be performing with Cohesion for the first time! @patrickshiggins



HARLEY HOLLIBAUGH

MARIE

Harley grew up in Helena and began dancing at the age of 5 where Allegro School of Dance formed her into a hardworking dancer. Learning jazz with the Capital High Dance Team sparked her love for teaching and choreographing. Cohesion broke her "bun head" into a passionate modern dancer. After joining Cohesion's Accelerated Contemporary Experience (ACE Program), she was able to explore her creativity. Harley currently teaches modern at Cohesion and Creative Arts Center. Outside of dance, she composes music for fun and created two pieces for *Resonance: an evening of Art inspiring Art* (2025). Being a part of Cohesion is one of the best decisions she has made as an artist and a human, allowing her to be inspired by various



people of all ages and abilities. When not in the studio (very rare), she loves to explore Montana, hang out with her multiple cats and dog, and enjoy a nice, sweet treat. This is her 3rd year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks!* and she is thrilled to perform as Marie. As this is her first lead role, she is beyond grateful for all the doors Cohesion has opened for her. Enjoy the show and rock on!

NINA MURPHY

MEAN LADY/RAT QUEEN

Nina is a Helena native who spent the last four years living in the UK. She began her training at Creative Arts Center, obtained her BFA from the University of Wyoming and MFA from Trinity Laban Conservatoire in London. She has performed in works by José Limón, Colin Conner, Jesse Obremski, and had the honor of dancing in Julynn Wildman's dance film *Body in Motion* (2021). While based in the UK, Nina danced with Boy Blue for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (2022) and the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Young Composer Programme (2024). Most notably, Nina performed in *A Single Man* (2025) directed by Jonathan Watkins at the Royal Opera House in London. Nina is thrilled to be joining Cohesion and 2025 cast of *Nutcracker on the Rocks!*



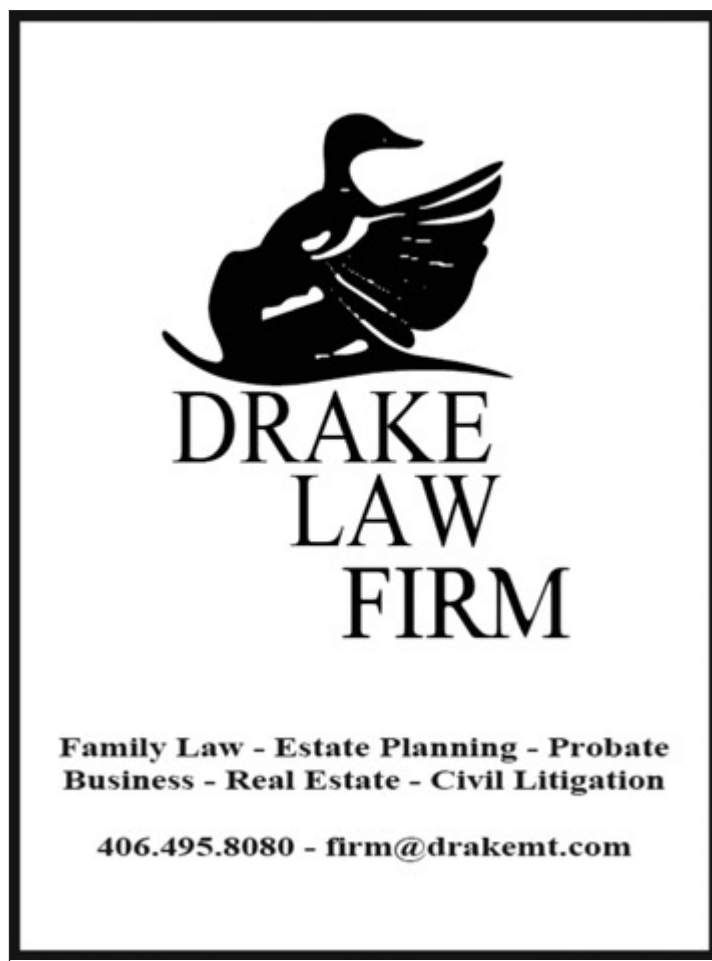
JESSICA PARTRIDGE

MADAME DROSSELMEIER;

REHEARSAL DIRECTOR- COUSINS, 20S, 50S

Jessica is a Helena-based dancer, choreographer and teaching artist. Having trained in a wide range of styles—including ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop, breakdance, and social dance—Jessica brings a deep passion for movement to her work. She has served as a teaching and guest artist in studios and schools across the state, and since 2020, has been a vital part of Cohesion where she teaches modern, creative movement, and adaptive dance, and contributes to the organization's school and community outreach initiatives. Jessica has danced a variety of roles in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* over the years and is thrilled to return to the stage this year as Madame Drosselmeier. Recent works include choreography contributions to *Fractals in Motion* (2024) and *Resonance ~ an evening of Art Inspiring Art* (2025). Outside of dance, you can find her exploring Montana's hot-springs and hiking trails, at the ski hill, trying out new soup recipes and starting (if not completing) at least several art projects at a time.





PAT CALL

STAGE MANAGER

Welcome once again to year 11 of *Nutcracker on the Rocks*! This is your friendly neighborhood Stage Manager reporting for duty. Just like the 20s exit off stage, time is really zipping by! I am super excited for you to see this year's show with this incredible and dedicated cast and crew. And now for an exciting and captivating update on the warmup act using a dust mop and a garbage can: the dust mop guild has made even more demands and supplied a new rider. Can you believe it? Maybe next year. Anyway, I hope you enjoy the show as much as your delicious Thanksgiving dinner!

JENNY ANDERSEN

PARTY GUEST, RAT, 60S

This is my first year dancing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* and I'm very excited to be a part of this cast. I danced growing up and am thrilled to be back dancing again. Thank you, Tanya and Cohesion, for this opportunity and for creating such a wonderful welcoming space!

NOAH BENNISON

RAT, 50S

Hello! My name is Noah and I am 13 years old. I am homeschooled by my amazing grandma. This is my third year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* and I love it (I'm so excited to be in rats this year!!). When I am not dancing, I love to hang out with my family and my dogs. I also love mountain biking. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for always supporting me. Enjoy the (long live the rat queen) show!

GUS BOESDORFER

PARTY - MEAN KID

Gus is a sweet and funny 3rd grader making his debut in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. He loves sports, especially baseball and basketball, and loves to run, make jokes, and play with his friends. Gus has endless energy, loves learning new things, and is not afraid of hard work, always finding a way to make it fun.

JANE BOESDORFER

MOUSE, SNOWFLAKE

Jane is a spunky, funny 5th grader and this is her 3rd *Nutcracker on the Rocks* production. She debuted as a mouse and then performed as a younger cousin. Jane adores reading and loves to try new things. She is an active and creative kid who loves getting lost in her imagination - a perfect fit for such a fun show.

LIZ BOWEN

PARTY GUEST SOLDIER, SNOWFLAKE, 20S

Hi! I'm Liz and I have been involved with *Nutcracker on the Rocks* for several years where I really enjoy getting to meet new people each year. Outside of dance I love to hang out with my friends and cook at home. I look forward to dancing in this show every year and hope you all enjoy it as much as I do.

BETH BRENNEMAN

PARTY - TOY SOLDIER, RAT, 60S

Beth has admired *Nutcracker on the Rocks* for years. She finally decided to audition this year after being urged by a friend and has loved the experience. The best part has been getting to know and befriend wonderful and talented fellow cast members of all ages.

LAURA BROWN

PARTY – MOM, RAT, SNOWFLAKE, 60S; REHEARSAL DIRECTOR - RATS
Laura has danced in the *Nutcracker on the Rocks* since the very first year, and this production will always be one of her favorite shows to be a part of. She loves that with this production you have a cast of dancers, some who have been dancing for years and some who are dancing for the very first time, all making this story come alive together. It's always such a unique and special experience, and she hopes you enjoy the show!

LAYLA BULLINGTON

PARTY GUEST, SNOWFLAKE, 20S

Cohesion has opened my eyes to the beautiful reality of inclusion and the endless possibilities we can achieve when ALL are cherished and allowed to thrive. This is indeed a family, and I am honored to take part in the vision, creativity and love that inspires this production. Thank you, Helena, for continuing to support us all. Enjoy the show!

LILY CARTER

PARTY – MEAN KID, SNOWFLAKE, 50S

Lily is a 10-year-old in the 5th grade at Smith Elementary. She enjoys spending time with her parents, 13-year-old brother, and two German short-haired pointers. Lily's favorite activities are dancing, horseback riding, playing tennis, and baking. She is thrilled to be participating in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* for the second year and truly loves the show.

SEAN CAWLEY

COOL BIKER DUDE

As a Helena native, I am pleased to have been a part of this amazing production over the past several years. I am excited, once again, to be involved with this awesome community project and look forward to spending time with all the great and talented people involved with Cohesion Dance Project. Thanks for coming.

HAILEY CHANEY

SNOWFLAKE, 50S

Hi, I'm Hailey and this is my first time performing in the *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. I love coaching Special Olympics basketball and spending as much time as possible hanging out with people of all abilities. You can find me talking to my friends or starting a new craft while binge watching a new show on Netflix. I am so thankful for this opportunity and have loved every second of learning the dances and talking to my new friends at the studio. Cohesion is such an amazing place full of loving and caring dancers, and I thank all of my instructors for getting me to this point. Enjoy the show!

BRIELLE COLE

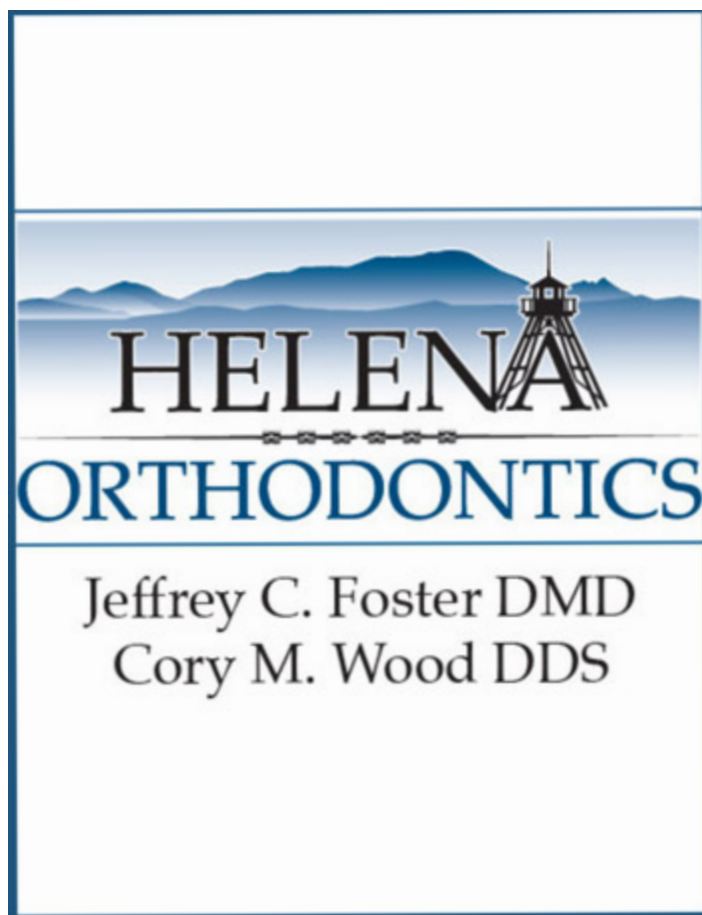
SNOWFLAKE

I am in 4th grade and am excited to be dancing in my first year of *Nutcracker on the Rocks*.

MILLIE DASSINGER

PARTY - TOY DOLL

I have been dancing since I could walk and especially enjoy ballet, jazz, modern and tap. I am very excited for *Nutcracker on the Rocks* because my mom was the Rat Queen for two years and my sister has been a mouse. I was born in Great Falls and moved to Helena last year. One fun fact about me is that my favorite food is spaghetti.



ROSIE DASSINGER

PARTY OLDER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE

When Rosie isn't spending time with her friends, she enjoys acting, dancing, parkour, and gymnastics. This is her second year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. Her favorite part about the production is that everyone is welcome to be a part of the show. Bread with jam and rice are some of her favorite foods.

SHAYLEE FELSMAN

PARTY YOUNGER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE

Shaylee is a 3rd grader at Jefferson Elementary, and this is her second *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. She will take any chance to be on stage but also loves to play soccer, ski, ride bikes, and taekwondo.

BETTY FRANKLIN

SNOWFLAKE, 20S

Betty began dancing at age 7 with Ballet Northwest in Olympia, WA where she performed in the *Nutcracker* ballet many years ago. Betty's passions now include spending time with her husband, four wonderful kids, and adorable grandson, as well as running marathons, half-marathons, and biking. Betty joined Cohesion last winter. She appreciates the inclusiveness of the program and amazing instructors. This is Betty's first year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*.

MARYN GATES

MOUSE, SNOWFLAKE

Maryn is performing in her second *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. She also does ballet. She is a fifth grader, and math is her favorite school subject. Maryn enjoys dancing, choreographing, contemporary ballet, and spending time with friends.

DIADRA GOLDES

PARTY - TOY DOLL

Growing up in the greater Seattle area, Diadra studied ballet, jazz, modern, contemporary, and hip hop before earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance from Western Washington University. Since then, her career has been focused on sharing her love of dance with all ages.

ELLA HANSEN

PARTY MAID, RAT, 60S

Hi, I'm Ella and I've been dancing since I was nine. After moving back to Helena from Dillon, I was excited to take dance classes again. This year, I'm thrilled to be in my first *Nutcracker on the Rocks*! Thank you, Tanya and Cohesion, for your support. I'm so grateful to perform with such a loving community of dancers. Thanks to everyone for coming!

AUDREY HAWKALUK

PARTY YOUNGER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE

Audrey is a 2nd grader at Jim Darcy school. This is her first year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* and she is so excited! Audrey enjoys traveling, especially on airplanes. When she isn't dancing, Audrey enjoys art, fostering animals, and playing soccer and basketball.



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WALLACE HECHT

PARTY YOUNGER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE

Wallace has been dancing for five years and he is excited to be dancing in his 3rd *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. That's really all he has to say about that. Enjoy the show!

AMBER JOHNSON

20S

This is my first year dancing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. If you've seen me dance before, likely it was in the role of "middle-aged woman shaking her thang at the brewery." A former dance teacher, I have danced and taught 18 varieties of Latin, Swing, and Country Western. It's fun to be a student dancer again in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*.

KARRI JONES

SNOWFLAKE

Hi everyone, I'm Karri and I love wheelchair dancing. This is my 3rd year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. We have so much fun and I love all my dance people. When I'm not dancing, I love to camp, fish, and actually I'm up for all adventures. I love doing scratch art, painting, and many other crafts. I also love Special Olympics where I bowl, play bocce, basketball and track and field.

CECE KELLEY

MOUSE, 50S

Cece is a 4th Grader at Central Elementary, and she is excited to be a part of her third *Nutcracker on the Rocks* performance. She has loved music and dancing, floating around the house since she could walk. This show brings everything she loves into one place. She hopes you enjoy the show!

HARLEI KNUTH

SNOWFLAKE

This is the 2nd year Harlei has danced in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. Harlei is in the 6th grade and enjoys bowling, Girl Scouts, Special Olympics and hanging out with her friends.

JOJO LAMPING

PARTY GUEST, RAT, 20S, 60S

I have been in the show for five years and for me dance has always been my way of expressing what words can't. Being part of this production brings me joy, freedom, and a deep connection to movement and storytelling. I hope you enjoy the show.

VINCENT LERETTE

PARTY OLDER COUSIN, RAT, 50S

Vincent is in 7th grade at CRA. He loves to dance and sing. He has danced with Cohesion since he was three and has participated in Winter Solstice performances, Montana Roots and the ACE program. He is excited to be in the *Nutcracker on the Rocks* for the fourth time!

JULIET MAHAR

PARTY OLDER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE, 50S

Juliet is a 6th grader at HMS. She likes to read, sing, dance and hang downtown. This is her third year in the *Nutcracker on the Rocks*— she is having a blast dancing with her friends and being on the stage. She loves this show as much as she loves school (which is a lot!), so she hopes you love it too!

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MAGGIE MCFARLANE

PARTY YOUNGER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE

Maggie is a 2nd grader at Clancy Elementary. She loves to perform and has been dancing since she was 3 years old. Maggie is very creative and loves art, singing, dancing, and gymnastics. She previously danced with Image Dancing, acted with Grandstreet and Missoula Children's Theatre, and danced the Nutcracker with Premiere Dance Company. This is her first year performing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. When she's not dancing, Maggie loves hanging out with her dogs and family, and cartwheeling everywhere!

EMMA MEISMER

PARTY TWEEN COUSIN, MOUSE

Emma has performed with Cohesion in *The Nutcracker on the Rocks* for the past three years. Every year is such an amazing experience with outstanding friends! As a 4th grader this year, Emma has blossomed in her writing and reading pursuits, finishing writing her first book and starting in on two more. She loves dancing, drama, adventures, and seeing stories come full circle. We always look forward to this time of year.

GENESIS MORGAN

RAT

I am a freshman at Capital High and this is my fourth year performing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. I have been in rats, 50s, and in Party Scene as a younger cousin and an older cousin. I love being a part of the cast and in this show because you get to meet a lot of awesome people and use your creativity to bring your character to life.

INARA NARANJO

SNOWFLAKE, 20S

Born and raised in Brasil, Inara Naranjo started her dance journey at the age of 10, becoming a dedicated dancer in a variety of styles, including contemporary, ballet, and modern. With over 15 years of training and some performance experience, she was excited at the opportunity to join the *Nutcracker on the Rocks* cast. Being new to Montana, when she is not dancing, Inara enjoys discovering hiking trails and hot springs spots, and learning how to be an avid skier.

KALISSA O'NEILL

PARTY GUEST, RAT, SNOWFLAKE, 60S

I've been a dancer for around 8 years now, and it's how I spend a lot of my time! Outside of dance, I love to read, hang out with friends, and after nutcracker season I play volleyball. This show is super special to me, and I'm so excited to perform!!

MAKENNA O'NEILL

PARTY OLDER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE, 50S

My name is Makenna, and this is my third year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. It is such a fun and safe environment and truly something I look forward to all year! I have made so many friends, met such amazing people, and I'm so grateful I get to be in something so beautiful and fun every year!

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AINSLEY OTTERSTROM

PARTY TWEEN COUSIN, MOUSE, SNOWFLAKE

This will be Ainsley's third performance in the *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. Dancing and learning new dance moves are her favorite things to do. She finds it incredibly rewarding to see her body move in relation to other dancers around her. She loves fun, upbeat music, getting to do her hair and makeup and being in the lights with her friends. As a fourth grader she is excited to keep growing in the *Nutcracker on the Rocks* performance. She is being cheered on by her Mom, Dad, Sister, Grandma, Grandpa and many more friends and family this year! Go Ainsley!

TYLER JESSI PUTNAM

PARTY GUEST - GRANDPARENT, SNOWFLAKE

Hi Everyone! You are really going to enjoy *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. Dance has the ability to change lives in a lot of ways. We can't always choose the music, but we can choose how to dance to it in our lives. I enjoy dancing in the Helena community where the Cohesion Dance Family welcomes anybody no matter their level of dance experience, age or ability. It's been a lot of fun!

EMMY SAGAN

PARTY MEAN KID, RAT, 50S

My name is Emmy. I am in the 6th grade and love dancing so much - always dancing and choreographing to my favorite music. I've taken ballet, jazz and modern, as well as gymnastics and cheer over the years. This is my 4th year dancing with Cohesion and my third time performing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. Dancing in 50s and Party again

this year lets me bring out my fun personality and I am very excited for my first year dancing as a rat!

TECLA SCHMITT

PARTY OLDER COUSIN, 50S

Tecla is super excited to be performing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* for her second time. A fifth grader at St. Andrew School, she loves dancing, playing with her friends, and helping take care of her baby sister. She would like to thank her fellow cast members and her family for being so supportive. Enjoy the show!

ISABELLE SMITH

MOUSE

Isabelle is 8 years old and a 3rd grader at St. Andrew School. She loves giraffes, dinosaurs, reading, skiing, swinging, playing in the snow and swimming. Isabelle also enjoys spending time with her grandparents; BB, Pops & Mama D. This is her first appearance in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*.

MARGARET SMITH

MOUSE

Margaret is 7 years old and attends St. Andrew School. She loves cheetahs, reading, playing with her friends and all kinds of stuffies. Margaret also enjoys spending time with her dog, Kinsey. This is her first appearance in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*.



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GRACE SPENCER

PARTY OLDER COUSIN, SNOWFLAKE, 50S

Grace is a 6th grader at CRA dancing in her second *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. She has taken Jazz and Modern with Cohesion, and before that took ballet, Irish, and tap. She is also a drummer and a pianist and takes pleasure in all things dance and music-related. She is excited to expand into more roles this year and to be participating in the newest edition of this show-stopping performance. She'd like to encourage any aspiring performers to follow their dreams and hopes she can show you that anyone can dance and anyone can put on a show.

CELENA STOOS

20S

Being born in Helena and raised throughout Montana—I grew up snowmobiling, 4-wheeling, gopher hunting and enjoying everything outdoors this beautiful state has to offer. At a very young age, I found my passion in Ballet and Gymnastics, then in high school joined the CCDHS dance team, followed by the CHS Cadettes. Just over 9 years ago, I started my amazing career with Valley Bank. Two years ago, through our partnership with Cohesion, I learned about their mission and the people they serve. Enamored by the work they do, I promised myself one day I would be a part of it. This year, with the encouragement of my boss, family, friends, and Tanya herself—I made the decision to step out of my comfort zone and back on stage!

SAMANTHA STROM

PARTY GUEST – TRASHY LADY, 20S

Samantha is delighted to return to *Nutcracker on the Rocks*! In the two years since her last appearance, she opened Swing Out Helena, appeared in Moriarty at Grandstreet, acted in and wrote for the Last Chance New Play Fest and Helena SNL, wrote and directed two short films, and produced a pilot for The Sophomore Effect, a TV show she wrote. All while working by day as Director of Publications at Farcountry Press.

KERRIGAN VERLANIC

PARTY TWEEN COUSIN, MOUSE, SNOWFLAKE

This year will be my 3rd year dancing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*! I love Taylor Swift, floating the river, and hanging out with my friends.

ABI WARHANK

SNOWFLAKE

Hi, my name is Abi, and this is my third year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. I love dancing in this show! My two older sisters have danced in the show for years, so I have been watching it since I was a toddler. Outside of dance I love to hang out with my friends and do gymnastics.

CHELSEA WEIDMAN

PARTY GUEST - GRANDPARENT, 20S

I'm so happy to be dancing in my third year of *Nutcracker on the Rocks* and with Cohesion. We're so excited to share the production with all of you and hope you enjoy the show!

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MELINDA WHITE

PARTY MAID, 60S; REHEARSAL DIRECTOR - PARTY AND 60S

This is my 11th year dancing in *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. I enjoy meeting and making friends with all the dancers in this production and pulling all of our diversities together to make this incredible show. Enjoy!

REBECCA WHITE

PARTY MAID, RAT, SNOWFLAKE, 60S

Rebecca is excited to be back for another incredible year of *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. She earned her B.A. in Dance from the University of Montana in 2023 and has since performed in a variety of dance productions. *Nutcracker on the Rocks*, however, holds a special place in her heart as a show she has returned to year after year. Rebecca is grateful for the opportunity to share the stage once again and continue growing as an artist within this inspiring community.

JULYNN WILDMAN

PARTY - TOY SOLDIER, 60S

Julynn is a Helena-based artist and educator joining the 2025 cast for her eighth *Nutcracker on the Rocks*. She is a deep believer in and advocate for arts and community and is grateful for the myriad of ways *Nutcracker on the Rocks* and Cohesion have supported both over the years.

AMBER WILKE

PARTY GUEST, SNOWFLAKE, 20S; REHEARSAL DIRECTOR - SNOW

"Watching us dance is like a window into our souls." - Author Unknown

THEO WILKE

PARTY GUEST - GRANDPARENT, 20S

"I'm a Flashy, Glamorous Ladies-Man, So That's a No-Brainer!" - Tengen Uzui

FAITH WILSON

SNOWFLAKE

Faith loves hanging out with her friends, making art, and cuddling with her cat, Oreo, and dog, Forest. This is her first year in *Nutcracker on the Rocks* and she loves working as a whole group in Snow to make such a majestic scene.



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Dance Technique Classes

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School & Community Outreach

- Engaging movement experiences provided in the classroom and other facilities throughout the community.
- One-time and ongoing classes available for preschool ages through older adults, including those with disabilities.



More info at cohesiondance.org or call 406.422.0830



UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

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Performances



Community Choreography Showcase | February 21, 2026

Dancers and groups from across the community of all ages, styles and abilities share their creations at this fun, informal presentation.

ACE Showcase | March 14, 2026

Dancers from the ACE Training Program (see below) showcase new works they create on their peers and community dancers following expanded training during the program.



SPRING ARTIST RESIDENCY | May 15-17, 2026

Featuring Artist-in-Residence, **Nina Murphy**, the residency supports contemporary dance artists in the creative development of new work and connects them with wider audiences through performance, outreach, studio classes, and community engagement.

Expanded Training Opportunities

Accelerated Contemporary Experience (ACE) December 9-May 19

Furthering the growth and development of dancers, ages 10-adult, ACE provides expanded contemporary dance training and performance opportunities, fostering creativity, imagination, collaboration and mentorship.



Summer Workshops and Training Intensives

- June | July | August 2026 | Kids camps for ages 3-14 years
- Adaptive Dance Camps for people with disabilities
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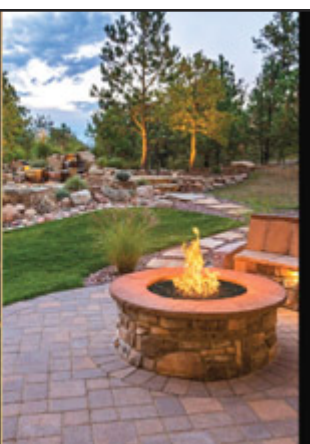


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