

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** TERRENCE S. ORR  
**PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Meghan Swartz  
Associate Director of Communications  
412-454-9117 | [mswartz@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:mswartz@pittsburghballet.org)

**Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Presents 'Nutcracker' Performance for Patrons with Special Needs**



**PITTSBURGH, PA (Dec. 12, 2016)** – As part of the show's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre will present a sensory-friendly performance of "The Nutcracker," adapted for patrons with special needs, at **2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 27**, at the Benedum Center.

The performance features extra support and adaptations for people with sensory sensitivities, autism spectrum disorders and other special needs.

"Our goal is to create a supportive place for families to enjoy the joy of live dance and take part in a tradition that's been part of Pittsburgh's holiday season for 15 years," said Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr. "We want everyone in our community to feel comfortable attending a show and just being themselves. It's one of our favorite performances of the year."

Sensory-friendly accommodations include:

- Specially trained staff, dancers, ushers and volunteers
- Quiet break areas and activity stations in the lobby
- Relaxed theater rules, including dimly lit lights and the freedom to come and go from seats as needed
- Availability of fidget items and earplugs
- Permission to use iPads and other electronics for therapeutic uses
- Adjustments or elimination of potentially startling light, sound and special effects
- Pre-performance guides that acclimate patrons to the storyline, theater and production

PBT began presenting sensory-friendly programming in December 2013, when it became the first professional ballet company in the country to present a sensory-friendly performance of "The Nutcracker."

Since then, PBT presented a second sensory-friendly performance of "The Nutcracker" in 2014 as well as adapted performances of "Beauty and the Beast" in 2015 and "Peter Pan" in 2016. All performances are presented with the support of Autism Connection of PA and the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.

In addition to sensory-friendly performances, PBT offers adaptive dance classes designed for high school and elementary students with special needs. Students learn ballet basics and modified choreography from "The Nutcracker" and other upcoming story ballets.

**Single tickets** for the sensory-friendly performance are available at [www.pbt.org/performances-tickets/sensory-friendly-performances](http://www.pbt.org/performances-tickets/sensory-friendly-performances) or by calling 412-456-6666.

**Group tickets** for eight or more patrons are available by calling 412-454-9101 or emailing [groupsales@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:groupsales@pittsburghballet.org).

**For questions** about accommodations, please call 412-454-9105.

### **ABOUT PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE'S *THE NUTCRACKER***

*The Nutcracker* is "nothing short of magical" (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette). Propelled by Tchaikovsky's iconic score, this soaring story captures the awe and expectation of the night before Christmas when a mysterious gift sparks a wondrous adventure. As the colossal tree shoots skyward and snowflakes blanket the stage, the journey glides into a radiant Land of Enchantment brimming with virtuosic dances from faraway lands. Set in turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh, this holiday tradition resounds with more than 150 dancers, radiant scenery, astounding magic tricks and new surprises each season.

Tickets start at \$28, and are available at [www.pbt.org](http://www.pbt.org), 412-456-6666 or by visiting the Box Office at Theater Square.