World Premiere

Queensland Ballet Premieres a Dazzling New Production *The Nutcracker*

Christmas classic reimagined by internationally acclaimed choreographer, Derek Deane OBE





Principal Artist Lucy Green as Snow Queen, First Company Artist Vanessa Morelli as party guest with nutcracker doll, Principal Artist Neneka Yoshida in flowers headdress. Photos Jakob Perrett.

Brisbane, 1 December, 2026: Queensland Ballet will mark the festive season with a brand-new, specially commissioned production of the world's most beloved ballet classic, *The Nutcracker*. Choreographed by internationally acclaimed dance-maker Derek Deane, OBE, this dazzling new interpretation will premiere from 9 – 19 December, 2026, Glasshouse Theatre, Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC).

Deane has reimagined the treasured story, creating several new characters and subtle plot twists that promise to surprise and delight. Set against breathtaking new designs and costumes by renowned designer, Lez Brotherston, OBE, (*Adventures in Motion Pictures*), the production will transport audiences into a world where magic comes to life on stage.

"My team and I want to honour the rich history and tradition of *The Nutcracker* while simultaneously inviting audiences on a fresh, unexpected adventure," Deane said.

"Striking that balance between reverence for the past and introducing new elements was challenging, but I believe we've achieved something timeless and fresh for audiences and dancers alike," Deane added.

Queensland Ballet's Artistic Director Ivan Gil-Ortega said Derek is a master storyteller, and Lez is renowned for his imaginative designs and costumes which immediately transport audiences into worlds of wonder and emotion.

"Together, Derek and Lez have created a sparkling production, filled with extraordinary scenery, exquisite sets, and glorious costumes, breathing imaginative life into every scene. This is truly a must-see production, one that preserves all that is most loved about this timeless ballet while infusing it with fresh vitality and theatrical magic.," Gil-Ortega added.

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Brotherston said designing a new version of such a treasured storybook ballet is an exciting challenge.

"Starting from scratch with a ballet loved by generations means finding the right balance between nostalgia and discovery. Our goal is to create a world that feels both familiar and full of wonder," Brotherston said.

Queensland Ballet Chairman, Brett Clark, highlighted that the investment in a new production is as much about the community as it is about the company's artistic future.

"*The Nutcracker* is part of every ballet company's DNA, but it's also part of Queensland's holiday tradition. This new production is our way of thanking our supporters and celebrating Ivan's first season as Artistic Director. It's a thrilling milestone for Queensland Ballet."

A timeless celebration of family, fantasy, and growing up, *The Nutcracker* has been central to Christmas memories for generations. Queensland Ballet's new production promises to enchant audiences of all ages and reaffirm its place as a beloved festive tradition.

Deane, celebrated for his elegant storytelling and grand productions, has enjoyed a long and fruitful collaboration with Queensland Ballet, most notably with *Strictly Gershwin* and *Lady of the Camellias*. His deep understanding of the company and its artists ensures a fresh, vibrant vision for this timeless ballet, while remaining true to the beloved narrative arc.

Acclaimed designer Lez Brotherston, brings his extraordinary eye to the sets and costumes, reimagining *The Nutcracker* with stunning theatricality. Brotherston's accolades include the 1999 Tony Award for Best Costume Design for Broadway's *Swan Lake*, and he continues to shape the global stage as Associate Artist for Matthew Bourne's renowned company, New Adventures.

New production made possible through the generous support of The Nutcracker Giving Circle.

Ends

Performance Dates: 9 December – 19 December, 2026. **Tickets**: available here $54 child - $108 Adult
Venue: Glasshouse Theatre, Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC)
Duration 2 hours and 10 minutes including one 20-minute interval
Centre Stage experience: Join us for a ballet and adapted repertoire class inspired by Derek Deane's *The Nutcracker*. 9:30am – 12:15pm, 12 December 2026 at QPAC's Glasshouse Theatre. Tickets available here.
Children's Workshops: For ages 2 – 6 years and 7 – 12 years. Various sessions available from 9 – 19 December at the Thomas Dixon Centre. Limited bookings available here.

Creatives:
Choreographer: Derek Deane, OBE
Set and Costume Designer: Lez Brotherson, OBE
Lighting Designer: Damien Cooper
Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Performed by Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Voices of Birralee and St Peters Lutheran College Choir.
Conductor: Nathaniel Griffiths
Illusion Designer: Lee Cohen

Editors' Note:
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Images and biographies here

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About Queensland Ballet: Queensland Ballet's mission is to contribute to Australia's cultural landscape by being an integral part of the national and international ballet ecology - striving for artistic excellence, pathways for emerging artists, and impact through our community outreach, education, and dance health programs. We aim to enrich lives and contribute to wellness across society through the magic of ballet.

About Academy of Queensland Ballet:
Queensland Ballet provides industry-informed ballet and dance training pathways through our world-class Academy, developing dancers towards professional careers in Australia and overseas. Together, we are nurturing the dancers of the future. Under the direction of Academy Director, Christian Tátchev, Academy of Queensland Ballet provides comprehensive professional ballet and dance training programs and events for students from age 6 through to career Employment.

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