

December 17, 2013

**Boca Ballet Theatre's "Après" at Villagio Restaurant & Bar Celebrates**  
**A Spectacular Performance of *The Nutcracker***



Seth Marmor, Esq., President, Board of Directors, Aguinaldo Demelo, General Manager and part owner of Villagio, and Dan Guin, Executive Director and Co-Artistic Director



Boca Ballet Theatre's *The Nutcracker*, 2013  
Photo: Silvia Pangaro



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Boca Raton, FL - After a spectacular Saturday night performance of *The Nutcracker*, dancers, patrons, volunteers, and friends of Boca Ballet Theatre gathered at Villagio Restaurant & Bar in Mizner Park to dish, drink, and dine. A special thank you to "après" host, Villagio's General Manager and part owner, Aguinaldo Demelo, for his warm hospitality, helpful staff, and the delicious food and drinks that enhanced the celebration.

Prior to the après, Boca Ballet Theatre's annual production of *The Nutcracker*, presented by Marleen and Harold\* Forkas, was well-received by a full audience at Olympic Heights Performing Arts Theater. BBT was thrilled to feature special guest artists from American Ballet Theatre: Sarah Smith as the graceful Sugar Plum Fairy, and Roman Zhurbin as her stunning Cavalier.

Ms. Smith began her ballet training at Boca Ballet Theatre at the age of 11, under the tutelage of Executive Directors Jane Tyree and Dan Guin. She and Mr. Zhurbin previously graced the stage in BBT's 2007 production of *Romeo and Juliet*, dancing the lead roles with incredible elegance.

In *The Nutcracker*, Ms. Smith and Mr. Zhurbin were joined by a cast of more than 100 dancers, who dazzled the audience with unique choreography by Co-Artistic Director Dan Guin, paired with a score by Tchaikovsky. The production was further enhanced by several guest artists who returned to Boca Ballet Theatre's stage, contributing their talent and flair to each performance. The renowned stars included Mauricio Cañete (the Nutcracker Prince), Giuseppe Carriero (Drosselmeyer), Alexey Kulpin (Soldier Doll and remarkable Russian lead), Ted Negus (Mother Ginger), Samuel Beckman, Shannon Smith (the Spanish Dance), Taurean Green (Arabian Dance), and Thiago Silva (Columbine). The men were among the show's many highlights - literally, with their flawless flips and triumphant jumps.

Also shining onstage was the glorious "Grand Dame", Marleen Forkas, who, along with Harold\* Forkas, has generously sponsored *The Nutcracker* for the past 15 years.

In addition to the divine dancers, the beloved holiday classic boasted a myriad of magical sets and sparkling costumes, all which awed the audience. Both adults and children alike seemed enthralled with the special pyrotechnics that were custom-created to infuse the stage with magic throughout the show.

Many families who attended brought their children to the post-matinee “Gingerbread Ball” festivities. Children were invited onstage after the show to meet Clara, Sugar Plum Fairy, and the other magical characters. With twinkling eyes and big smiles, they got autographs and photographs with the dancers. Surrounded by sweet treats and sparkling costumes, the children were in awe to experience the stage, the set, and the stars up close. Helen Peck, the mother of two young girls, watched with a smile as they enjoyed the festivities. “My daughters love Boca Ballet Theatre’s annual production of *The Nutcracker*”, she gushed. “They look forward to it every year, as it really ushers in the holiday season in a perfect way”. Mrs. Peck even mentioned that her girls gave the show a standing ovation.

The level of joy and excitement was equally visible as children lined up to enter the theater for the “Student Matinee”, presented in loving memory of Lon D. & Lucille Barton and their son, Lon William Barton. Each year, BBT holds this special showing of *The Nutcracker* as a field trip for elementary schools in the Boca Raton area. Hundreds of second grade classes are invited to experience this introduction into the world of arts and culture, and for many young students, this is their first exposure to live theater. One student from Sandpiper Shores Elementary School was overheard expressing that she couldn’t sleep the previous night because she was so excited! All students seemed entranced by the show’s special effects, evidenced by their loud applause and squeals of amusement. This goes hand-in-hand with BBT’s outreach programs, designed to expose, inspire, and educate children from local housing authorities to the world of dance.

A special thanks to the incredibly helpful Board Members, Guild Members, family, friends, and volunteers, whose positive energy and helpful assistance contributed to the smoothness of each performance.

*The Nutcracker* was generously presented by Marleen and Harold Forkas\* who have graciously continued to keep the legacy of dance alive.

\*in loving memory



Sarah Smith & Roman Zhurbin  
at *The Nutcracker*’s “Gingerbread Ball”



2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Students from Sandpiper  
Shores Elementary School

About Boca Ballet Theatre:

Established in 1990, BBT is a nonprofit, award-winning civic ballet company that trains dance students, entertains audiences, and inspires the community through successful outreach programs. Under the guidance of Co-Artistic Directors Dan Guin and Jane Tyree, the mission is to enrich the cultural landscape of our community and educate its youth in classical ballet and concert dance through focused training, interaction with professional dancers and participation in full-length ballets and contemporary choreography. For more information please visit [www.bocaballet.org](http://www.bocaballet.org) or call 561-995-0709.