

The Nutcracker Suite

For Late Elementary to Early Intermediate Pianists

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Arranged by Gayle Kowalchyk and E. L. Lancaster

Foreword

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893), a Russian composer, finished the Nutcracker ballet in 1892. It was based on Alexandre Dumas's adaptation of E.T.A. Hoffman's story *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*. The first performance of the ballet was at the Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on December 18, 1892. Tchaikovsky arranged selections from the ballet as an orchestral suite as well as for solo piano. The orchestral version is widely considered to be a masterpiece of orchestration. After Tchaikovsky first used the celesta in this work, it became a standard instrument in many orchestral scores.

The story of the Nutcracker begins at a Christmas party given by Clara and Fritz's parents. Herr Drosselmeyer brings gifts for both young children, Clara and Fritz. Clara's gift is a Nutcracker which, unfortunately, is broken during the party. After the party is over and everyone is asleep, Clara sneaks back into the room to find the injured Nutcracker. Suddenly, the Christmas tree magically expands to an enormous size and an army of mice appear from the corners of the

room. The mice, led by the Mouse King, challenge a company of toy soldiers, led by the Nutcracker, to battle. Just as the soldiers are about to lose the battle, Clara throws her shoe and hits the Mouse King. The mice flee and the Nutcracker is transformed into a handsome prince, who invites Clara to visit his kingdom. On the way, they are met by the King and Queen of Snow and then go to the Kingdom of Sweets. The Sugarplum Fairy greets them and leads them into the palace where a number of dances (Russian Dance, Arabian Dance, Chinese Dance and Dance of the Reed Flutes) are presented for them. The entire company joins in the final waltz and Clara dreams of living happily with the prince in the enchanted kingdom for the rest of her life.

Since its first performance in the United States in 1940, the Nutcracker continues to captivate audiences each Christmas season. These arrangements will delight late elementary to early intermediate pianists as they recreate scenes from the ballet at the piano.

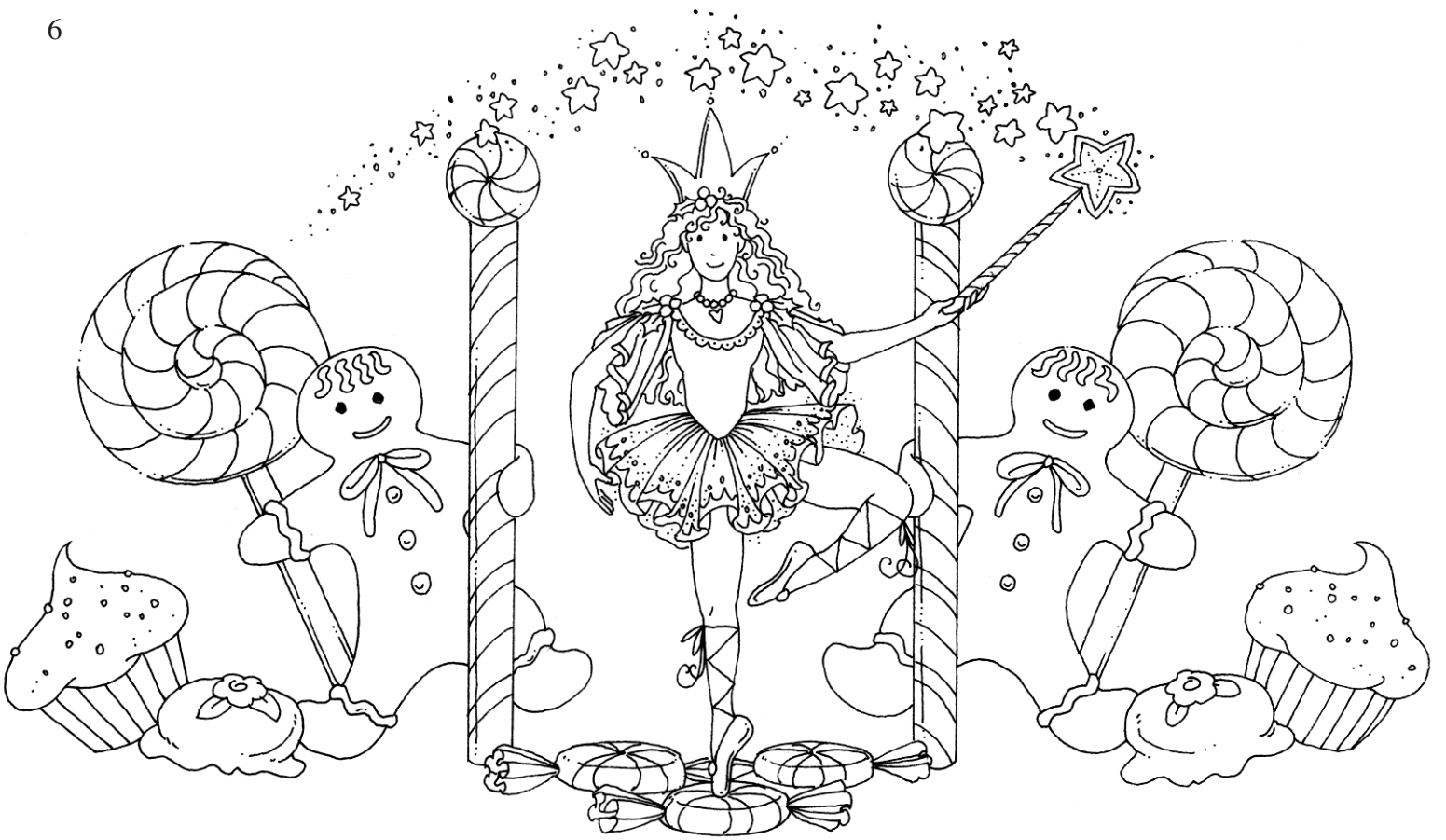
Contents

Miniature Overture	2
March.....	4
Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy	6
Russian Dance (Trépak)	8
Arabian Dance	10
Chinese Dance.....	12
Dance of the Reed Flutes	14
Waltz of the Flowers	17



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Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Arr. by Kowalchuk/Lancaster

Andante non troppo (A moderately slow tempo, but not too slow)

pp *leggero*

5 *mf* 8va



Dance of the Reed Flutes

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Arr. by Kowalchyk/Lancaster

Moderato assai (Very moderate tempo)

5 3 1 2

p *mf*

5 2 1 2

4 2

5 *sf* *mf* *p cresc.*

9 5 2 1 2

5 3 1 2

mf *sf* *p* *mf*

13 5 2 1 2

4 2

5 *sf* *mf* *p cresc.*