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NUTCRACKER 1971: A REVIEW

William Baskin

On December 10, 11 and 12 the School of Dance, in cooperation with the School of Design and Production and the Winston-Salem Symphony Orchestra, provided the community with another delectable, moveable feast in their annual production of Tchaikowsky's *The Nutcracker*. This reviewer attended the dress rehearsal program on Thursday night, December 9, to which a number of state legislators were invited as special guests, and the Saturday night performance on December 11. Several of the leading roles were covered by different dancers for these two programs.

Of particular note for both performances was the splendid pacing of the long opening sequence. This is set in the home of Dr. Silverhaus with the

Christmas party, arrival of the guests, trimming of the tree and distribution of gifts to the children. In the past, this scene has sometimes seemed overly long and slow moving. This year quite the contrary was true. One almost regretted the end of the party and of the festivities. The crisp pace perhaps was due to the presence of Duncan Noble as Dr. Silverhaus, his wife (Janet Hamerly), their son Fritz (Noland Dingman, Jr.) and a lively performance by William Dreyer as Dr. Drosselmeyer. The presence of these able performers throughout the scene kept things moving refreshingly and with spirit. The antics of the young boys, with their newly acquired drums and trumpets, were especially humorous and mischievously engineered by the young Dingman as Fritz. A show-stopping sequence of ex-

ceptionally fine quality in the dancing of Charles Devlin (on Thursday night) as the Toy Soldier was a highlight of the first half of the program. Equally enjoyable was the fine performance of Lauren Eager as the Mouse King. I have watched Mr. Eager develop this year into a splendid dancer with a wide range of accomplishments. He is remembered for his very crisp and excellent dancing in October for the Evening of Dance program in "Workout." To this performance in *Nutcracker* Lauren has brought a very lively interpretation of the Mouse King whose death scene is a remarkably funny and enjoyable moment. The closing scene in the first half of the ballet is the lovely pas de deux of the Snow Queen and Snow King with their entourage of Snow Flakes. On Thursday evening the leading roles were danced by Janie

Parker and Jerry Tibbs. Miss Parker, who is a stunningly beautiful dancer, performed with exceptional distinction and was ably assisted by Mr. Tibbs. Endowed with a magnificent pair of exquisite legs and the accompanying knowledge of what to do with them, Miss Parker captivated the audience with her remarkable turn out, extensions precision and superb timing. She has a crystalline quality that was very much in keeping with the entire scene, though her dancing is warm, fluid and poetic and far from marmoreal. This is unquestionably a first-rate young dancer from whom we are sure to hear more in a short time. Her loss to the School will be considerable. Unquestionably, too, is the fact that this closing scene for the first half of the program is one of the loveliest moments in

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