

**BALLETROX PRESENTS**

**ANTHONY WILLIAMS' URBAN NUTCRACKER©**

***The Holiday Dance Classic With An Inner City Edge*  
Returns to Dorchester's Strand Theater December 17 - 19**

BOSTON - BalletRox presents the fourth annual *Urban Nutcracker*© at Dorchester's Strand Theater for four performances Friday, December 17 through Sunday, December 19, 2004. Considered Boston's newest holiday tradition, BalletRox' *Urban Nutcracker*© celebrates the city's diversity, unites people and communities, and provides new opportunities to dancers of all skill levels and backgrounds.

Created by BalletRox founder and artistic director Anthony Williams, the *Urban Nutcracker*© is a collage of classical and contemporary dance, including ballet, hip-hop, urban tap, and swing. The colorful and contemporary costumes, sets and scenery are designed by the critically acclaimed artist, **Rebecca Cross**. Paced by a Duke Ellington infused Tchaikovsky score, the production sets E.T.A. Hoffman's 19th century holiday fairytale in 21<sup>st</sup> century Boston.

This year, the Urban Nutcracker will feature the famous 50's and 60's doo-wop group, the **G'Clefs**. **Ilanga**, one of the G- Clefs founding members, will also appear, for his third year, as the "Grandfather." The **G-Clefs** will be supported by drummers, Matt Steinberg, Berklee College of Music graduate and Alex Williams (Anthony Williams' son).

We are pleased to announce, that City Councilor At- Large, **Felix Arroyo** and State Representative, **Jeffrey Sanchez** will appear in cameo roles during the "Street Scene!"

Debuting in the role of *The Sugar Plum Fairy* is international ballet sensation **Ana Lobe**, a former principal dancer with the Cleveland Ballet. She has danced, as a principal dancer with the National Ballet of Cuba with Alicia Alonso and the English National Ballet under the direction of Ivan Nagy, performing in galas for Alicia Markova and the late Princess Diana. Ana was **Jose Manuel Carreno's** - American Ballet Theatre's star- partner, at the 1990 Jackson Ballet Competition, when he won the Grand Prix prize .

Her partner, **Ramon Thielen**, of the Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH), will return as the *Cavalier*. Hailing from Barquisimeto, Venezuela, Mr. Thielen joined DTH in 1998. He has toured extensively as a guest artist with national and international companies with leading roles in *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

Other notable dancers returning to this year's production are: **Michael Shannon**, MD, MPH, Chief of Emergency Medicine at Children's Hospital and one of Boston Magazine's **40 Favorite Bostonians**. **Yoel Cassell**, up and coming choreographer and character dancer, who is cast in the *title role of Julie Taymor's - of Lion King fame- new pre- Broadway production of Pinocchio*. Yoel dances the role of *Mini-meyer*, *Drosselmeyer's* trusty apprentice! Michael will appear as the magician, *Drosselmeyer* for his fourth year. Other performers include Roxbury native, **Khalid Hill**, who danced in **Savion Glover's** Broadway smash *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk*. Also returning to the *Urban Nutcracker*© is **Liem Nguyen**, Boston-based B-Boy (break dancer) who has shared the stage with artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, the Roots, The Berklee Jazz Hip-Hop Orchestra, KRS1, and Busta Rymes. Not only does Liem spin on his head, he amazingly does 360 degree spins on his elbow and wrist!

Another Cuban trained dancer, Fidel Garcia, will be making his first appearance, as the Snow Prince and in the sensuous Arabian Dance ("Desert Chiffon"). Fidel is a member of the Dance Theatre of Harlem.

## **BALLETROX, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 11/6/06**

Rounding out the cast of BalletRox' *Urban Nutcracker*,© is a corps of aspiring young professionals drawn from local dance schools and companies as well as from prestigious schools such as Juilliard, Harvard University the Boston Conservatory. Finally, more than 50 children, including the JP School of Dance, Walnut Hill and Boston Arts Academy will also take the stage together, reflecting the rich spirit and potential of Boston's varied communities. Look for the "Phenoms," such as Cyrus Brooks, and Jack Humsey.

Williams asserts, "The energy and exchange between this dynamic production and our audiences is palpable and, frankly, not something you experience at other Nutcrackers. That's why we are all thrilled to recreate the magic this year. We are excited to be forging a new Boston tradition with the *Urban Nutcracker*© at the Strand."

BalletRox' *Urban Nutcracker*© performances are Friday, December 17th at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, December 18th at 2:00pm and 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, December 19th at 3:00 p.m. Tickets are \$12 - \$29. The Strand Theatre is located at 543 Columbia Road, Dorchester, MA. Tickets are available 24 hours a day at [www.ticketweb.com](http://www.ticketweb.com) or by calling toll free at (866) 468-7619, at the Strand Theatre Box Office at (617) 635-1408 or visit [www.urban-nutcracker.org](http://www.urban-nutcracker.org). For more information about the 2004 *Urban Nutcracker*©, please call (617) 524-3066 or go to [www.balletrox.org](http://www.balletrox.org).