

# Christmas Two-Fer

Looking for a bit of Christmas spirit (not THAT kind of spirit)? My nephew Alex, Megan, and I found a smattering at the Huber tonight as the Village Players presented a duo of one act plays. Things got started with an adorable retelling of the immortal Nutcracker story. Most of the cast was made up of children with a few adults in the mix to keep things under control. There were whole families taking part in some of the roles! And what would the tale of little Clara and her Prince on a magical Christmas Eve be without the classic music of Tchaikovski's ballet. There were also some of the dances thrown in: The Waltz of the (ADORABLE) Snowflakes, The Chinese (Tea) Dance, and of course The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy. And the Snow Queen really sent shivers down my spine.

BRRRRRRRRR! And WHO was behind the Owl Clock who kept popping up in rhyme?

After intermission, O. Henry's classic tale of unselfish, sacrificial gifting was presented. What better way to remind us all what the Christmas season is all about than by seeing a young couple give what they "think" is their most valued possession in order to purchase a gift for their true love.

Be it by reading the printed story, seeing it presented on stage, or watching the Mickey and Minnie version, *The Gift of the Magi* has always been a personal favorite of mine. And the narration wasn't bad, either ☐

After the performance, my trio greeted the cast... most of whom I have either worked with previously, been directed by, or been reviewed by ("a raised eyebrow speaks volumes" still cracks me up!). Travis received his giant nutcracker director's present... very appropriate. No present for Amber, yet. And of course, my young companion had to endear himself to everyone. Calling Miss Mare "a gift from God?!" Honestly...

I did forget how much I adored the two sets. The Nutcracker

was full of fun colors, a giant tree, over-sized sweets, and the razzle-dazzle of the season. The polar opposite was true of the second show. The young couple's (by the name of Young, coincidentally) abode was dark and dreary. Both sets captured each tale beautifully.

A really fun evening full of friends and Christmas magic.

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## The Lights Filled The Sky

Ok... so I am a few minutes late posting a 4th of July entry, but I had an absolutely wonderful end of my day. I started out by putting in a fun-filled 10 hour day at work. Somehow for the most part it went by relatively fast especially when we had those few major rushes when I had 4 people in my line with carts and needed to call for reinforcements. Finally, the shift ended and I got to rush home (not before I overheard a few opinionated people loudly complain that we were closed already). Clearly marked on the door that we would indeed be closing at 6PM and it was 6:05 when we stepped out.

I ran home, changed into some other more comfortable clothes and headed to the country home of some other theatre cronies where we congregated, had a cookout, and enjoyed watching the sky light up with some very cool fireworks. I missed our local display last weekend for some strange reason. They usually run them the SUNDAY before the hoilday. This year, they decided to have a two day celebration and had the fireworks on Saturday night. However, I think the display presented tonight was quite exceptional and rivaled some of the best I have seen produced in our local park. I think the only thing missing was some great accompaniment of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* with its thundering cannon or John Phillip Sousa's *Stars and*

*Stripes Forever, Liberty Bell, Washington Post*, or any other grand march. Maybe next year we can have the sound system hooked up. But the chance to congregate with a large group of friends to celebrate our freedom, a birthday, and the coming birth of a special guy was such a thrill.