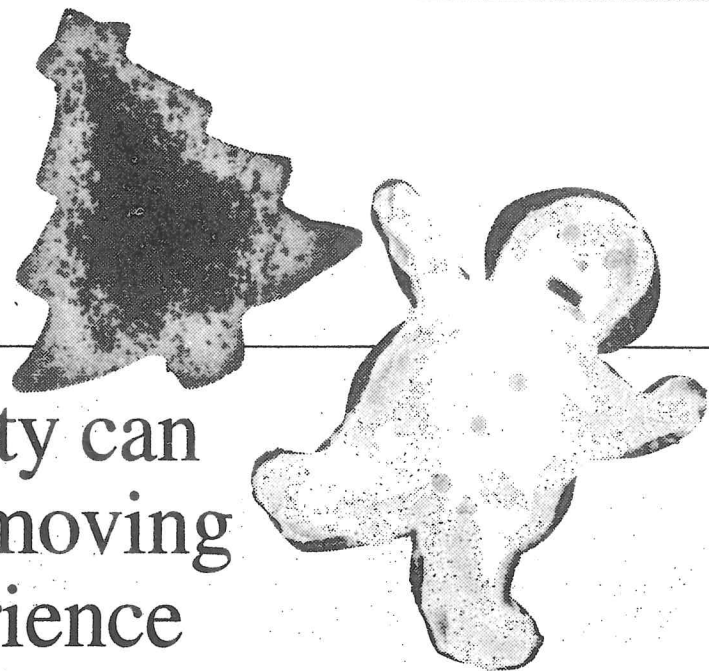


IN FULL FLOWER: Susan Endrizzi dances the role of Dew Drop in Jose Mateo's Ballet Theatre production of 'The Nutcracker.'



SUGARPLUM VISION: Jose Mateo's Ballet Theatre presents 'The Nutcracker' for its 15th year. Rebecca Power will dance the part of the Snow Queen with Sean Curtin dancing as the Snow King.

BOSTON Herald



Variety can be a moving experience

Instead of feeling overwhelmed by the immense variety of dance performances offered this December, why not give yourself a gift and go see at least three divergent programs? A basic dance "menu" could include one straightforward "Nutcracker" ballet, one of the many holiday-themed shows or "Nutcracker" derivatives (there are plenty this year) and one contemporary dance performance, to clear away any vi-

si, in addition to making other changes. It's a significant move, because this is the first choreographic effort by Nissinen shown in Boston. Those attached to the traditional production needn't worry much though, there is still choreography by Daniel Pelzig, Anna-Marie Holmes, Bruce Marks, Sydney Leonard and Gianni DiMarco.

A full-length "Nutcracker" by Jose Mateo's Ballet Theatre also opens tonight and runs through Dec. 29, at the elegant 250-seat Sanctuary Theatre in Cambridge. Mateo has promised "hundreds of set, costume and choreographic enhancements" in his production, which is now in its 15th year. "Our 'Nutcracker' is intimate, full of warmth and genuineness, and responds to a contemporary need to restore some meaning to the idea of holiday spirit," Mateo said.

There are a number of exciting new versions of the holiday favorite being presented as well. BalletRox has doubled its budget

Dance

THEODORE BALE

sions of sugarplums that might linger too persistently in your head.

Boston Ballet's spectacular version of "Nutcracker" opens tonight at the Wang Theatre and runs through Dec. 30. The company's artistic director, Mikko Nissinen, recently told the Herald he has "plenty of surprises in store this year."

Nissinen has announced formally that he will rechoreograph the Arabian dance in Act