

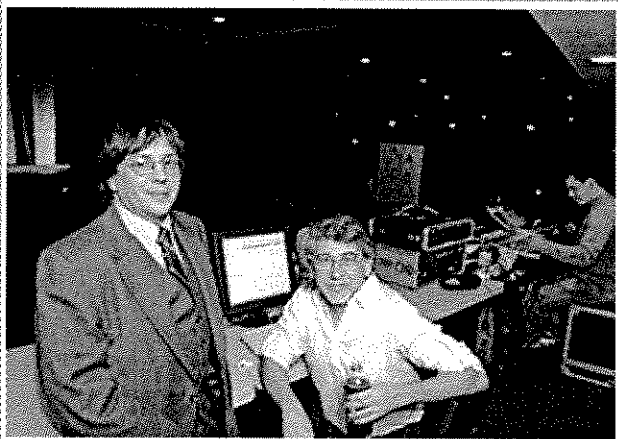
December 12, 2006

LA Ballet Opens Inaugural Season with Combo of Live & Virtual Players

Musicians' Union Approves Landmark Use of Garritan Personal Orchestra

BY NONE

DMN Newswire--2006-12-11--

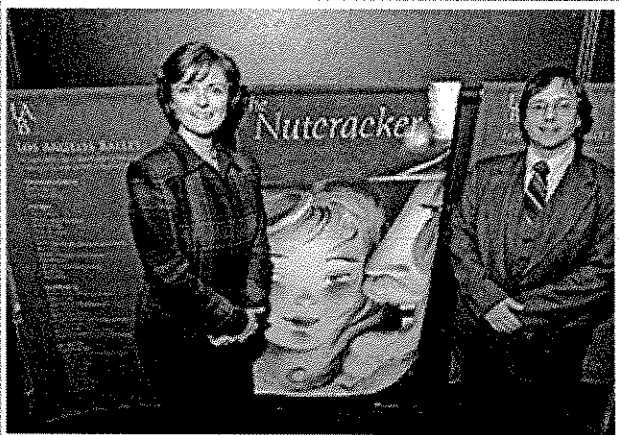


Pictured at the Wilshire Theatre L-R are Gary Garritan, creator of the Garritan Personal Orchestra; Michael Andreas, LA Ballet Music Director; and Benjamin A. Maas, music mixer. Photo by David Goggin.

Amidst a flurry of media attention and a personal commendation by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, The Los Angeles Ballet launched its inaugural season at the Beverly Hills Wilshire Theatre with an original production of "The Nutcracker." In a landmark first, 22 live musicians were augmented by 33 virtual players to round out the 55

musicians called for by the Tchaikovsky score.

"Without the Garritan Personal Orchestra we wouldn't have had musicians in the orchestra pit," explained Julie Whittaker, Executive Director of the LA Ballet. "We only had room for 22 players and we desperately wanted live musicians. We want that experience, we want that sound, so we found a way to make it work with Gary Garritan's kind help and his collaboration with our music director Michael Andreas."



Pictured L-R at the Wilshire Theatre are Julie Whittaker, executive director of the Los Angeles Ballet, and Gary Garritan, creator of the Garritan Personal Orchestra. Photo by David Goggin.

Music Director Michael Andreas added, "It is the first time that the Musician's Union has permitted the use of pre-programmed tracks in this way. They understood that playing a CD was totally unacceptable to the LA Ballet. We wanted to use a full orchestra, but the pit was too small, as is true of many regional theatres. When they realized that we were going to use the technology to provide work for musicians, they were pleased and the musicians were delighted to be here."

Gary Garritan, creator of the Garritan Personal Orchestra, explained: "We started working on The Nutcracker three years ago for a ballet company in Washington State. What distinguishes our software from other orchestral libraries is that we have a sample library made up of the individual instruments rather than sections for strings, horns, etc. Bear in mind the magnitude of this endeavor —100 minutes of music for a minimum of 55 individual players. One of our users, Jim Ortnier, sequenced every note with phrasing and articulation for every instrument in the entire ballet, using Cakewalk's Sonar program."

With the monumental task of sampling and sequencing complete, the tracks were delivered to music director Michael Andreas, who worked with conductor Eimear Noone to verify that all notes were entered correctly. Next, the proper tempo maps were developed to fit the movements of dance choreographers Thordal Christensen and

Colleen Neary, followed by the fine tuning of such elements as the dynamic range and expression with the proper articulations for the many scenes in the time-honored ballet.

Software was run on a Pentium 4 2.8 Gigahertz PC from Canyon Computers with 2 Gigabytes of RAM and a Frontier Tango sound card. During the performance, the programmed parts for the 22 live musicians were muted while their instruments were individually miked in the theatre. With programmer Craig Stuart Garfinkle on hand, mixers Bill Daly and Benjamin A. Maas deftly worked the console to blend the two sources into one singular event.

Conductor Eimear Noone summed up the ambitious project, "We couldn't have music that was stationary and pedantic. We had to interpret the piece and then produce results that sound absolutely live, with changing tempos and meters. We have a moving click that changes from quarter notes, to eighth notes, to triplet eights, and so on. It has been very exciting, very challenging, and we have been pushed to the limits of our wits and concentration. It's definitely a first, and it has taken the best musicians in Los Angeles to even attempt it. They have worked their brains out, and with Gary's help we've had the chance to make this all happen."



Pictured in the foreground is Gary Garritan, creator of the Garritan Personal Orchestra, with musicians and far right, Eimear Noone, conductor. Photo by David Goggin.

About Garritan Personal Orchestra

Garritan Personal Orchestra is an affordable tool for musicians and composers featuring high-quality software orchestral instruments. GPO has won numerous awards and has been used worldwide in a variety of film and TV soundtracks, audio CDs, video games, live concerts, ballet and multimedia applications. Numerous schools and universities have also chosen Garritan Personal Orchestra for use with their music curriculums. For more information about Garritan Libraries, visit <http://www.garritan.com>