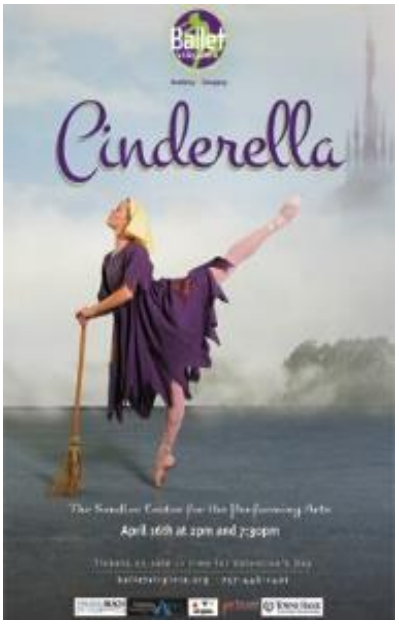

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Ballet Virginia International Presents

"Cinderella"

with guest choreographer and dancers

(Norfolk, VA—February 26, 2016) -- A delightful and contemporary new staging of "Cinderella" from Ballet Virginia International (BVI) with guest choreographer Ginger Thatcher will come to life at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in Virginia Beach on April 16 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Join Cinderella as she dances her way from sweeping the cinders to waltzing with the Prince. In this rags-to-riches tale, there is something for everyone to enjoy. Cinderella herself as the underdog who wins in the end, the comically played step sisters plus a handsome and determined Prince perform in this witty, innovative contemporary classic.

The production features a talented cast of local dancers and guest artists including Ballet Virginia International's "home grown" ballerina LeeAnn Walker as Cinderella. Since leaving BVI, she has earned her B.F.A in dance from Radford University, while dancing lead roles with the university company. Ms. Walker has also danced other roles with BVI including Dream Clara in "The Nutcracker" and Princess Aurora in "Sleeping Beauty". She is currently dancing her second season with Roanoke Ballet Theatre. Maximilien Baud will dance the role of Prince. Baud has danced with Carolina Ballet and Pennsylvania Ballet, as well as working in film and stage. Other guest dancers include BVI favorites Lydia Roberts Coco as the Stepmother, Helen Watson as Fairy Godmother and Cornelius Bartlett as the Messenger.

The original choreography dates to 1945 but since then has inspired many choreographers due to the timeless story and sweeping musical score by Prokofiev. Marking a first for BVI, Thatcher, as guest choreographer is creating original choreography and staging expressly for BVI's talented dancers. Her innovative staging, interpretation of the story and witty choreography will keep the audience entertained as they fall deep into this wondrous story.

Thatcher comes to BVI via New York City and a long and impressive list of accomplishments. Recently she was the Associate Choreographer/Assistant Director with Susan Stroman on the new musical "Little Dancer". Formerly with Houston Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Cleveland Ballet (soloist and principal), she joined the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company as a dancer and then became Lubovitch's assistant for many projects including on Broadway for "The Red Shoes", "Othello" (ABT, San Francisco Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Norwegian Nat'l Ballet); "The Red Shoes" (ABT, National Ballet of Canada); "A Brahms Symphony" (ABT); and Disney's "Hunchback of Notre Dame" Berlin, all with Lubovitch. With Susan Stroman, Thatcher worked on: "Take Five

More or Less" (Pacific Northwest Ballet); "But Not For Me" (Martha Graham Dance Company); and "For the Love of Duke" (New York City Ballet). Thatcher's own choreography has been set on Verb Ballets, Oregon Ballet Theater, Louisville Ballet, Sarasota Ballet and Minnesota Ballet to name just a few.

Since 2008, Janina Michalski Bove and Suzanne Lownsbury have brought to the stage many full-length ballets including "Snow White," "Alice in Wonderland," "Nutcracker" and many contemporary works as well. "Having the opportunity to work with a nationally recognized choreographer has been a wonderful opportunity for our dancers" said co-director Michalski Bove. "Hiring an inventive choreographer like Ginger Thatcher has brought new ideas and energy to our organization" added co-director Lownsbury.

BVI is the resident ballet company at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in Virginia Beach and a member of the Southeastern Regional Ballet Association (SERBA). Tickets for BVI's production of "Cinderella" at the Sandler Center range from $18 to $40 and can be purchased at the Sandler Center Box Office, www.ynottix.com or 1-877-YnotTix. Please visit Ballet Virginia International's website for additional information and the 2016 season performance schedule.

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About Ballet Virginia International

Ballet Virginia International (BVI) is a regional ballet company with an associated academy which provides professional quality productions/performances and training for classical ballet dancers in the Hampton Roads community. BVI will uphold the standards required to maintain membership standing with the Southeastern Regional Ballet Association (SERBA) of Regional Dance America. BVI will also provide opportunities for professional dancers, lighting, set and costume designers as well as choreographers while continuing education and outreach programs for our community-at-large.