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Ballet Virginia International Presents:

“The Nutcracker”

Guests artists from around the country join the company with full orchestra from Symphonycity.

(Norfolk, VA — November 28, 2018) – A young girl’s dream of a magical Nutcracker that comes to life will fill the stage when [Ballet Virginia International](#) (BVI) presents “The Nutcracker,” Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 15 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in Virginia Beach.

Celebrating their 11th anniversary, BVI’s company will join guest artists from around the country along with a cast of talented dancers from the Hampton Roads community to perform this beloved holiday classic. The dancers will be accompanied by full orchestra from [Symphonycity](#), with Daniel W. Boothe conducting.

BVI’S reputation for creating and producing professional quality performances has enabled the organization to attract acclaimed artists and train the next generation of dancers. Gracing the Sandler stage again will be [Nicole Graniero](#), as the Sugar Plum Fairy. Ms. Graniero is a member of The Washington Ballet and a former member of American Ballet Theatre. Daniel Roberge will perform the role of the Cavalier. Mr. Roberge is also currently a member of Washington Ballet. LeeAnn Elder, a BVI alumnus and audience favorite, will once again dance the role of Dream Clara. Ms. Elder currently is a member of [Roanoke City Ballet](#). Returning for the fourth year will be [Richard Villaverde](#) as The Prince. Mr. Villaverde is with [BalletX](#), Philadelphia’s premiere contemporary ballet company. Lydia Roberts, an esteemed BVI faculty member and former Alvin Ailey Dance Theater member, will reprise her role as the Arabian Princess with her partner Roscoe Sales, formerly with Dance Theatre of Harlem. Rounding out the distinguished cast of guest artists is Stephen Gregory, formerly of [Ballet West](#). Mr. Gregory will perform the role of Drosselmeyer.

Daniel W. Boothe, Symphonycity’s music director, will conduct the live orchestra of over 50 musicians in all four public performances at the [Sandler Center](#). The orchestra will perform Tchaikovsky’s original score and include strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, harp, celesta and more.

“BVI has been able to attract the same guest artists for several years now. Having this group of talented performers together for several years in a row brings a cohesiveness in style and connection between the dancers that the younger dancers and audiences can feel” said Suzanne Lownsbury, co-artistic director and choreographer for BVI.

This year, audiences will again notice new touches, including updated choreography, new characters, costumes and a new portal. The portal will frame the stage for the entire production and give the stage a rich artistic look. “We continue to make our ‘Nutcracker’ a true Hampton Roads creation,” said Janina Michalski Bove, co-artistic director and choreographer for BVI. “All of our new sets are locally designed and produced, the choreography is created right here in our Norfolk studios, the musicians are local and of course BVI’s dancers are growing up and training right here in our community.”

Collaborating with the [Chesapeake Humane Society](#) for the first time, BVI is bringing together Hampton Roads animal lovers with the local arts community by adding a dog to the Act I Party Scene. The part will be played by a different dog depending on the show. Each dog performer will have paid a \$25 fee to audition for “The Nutcracker”. Proceeds will be donated to the Chesapeake Humane Society and an adoption event will take place after the Saturday 2 p.m. show.

For many years, Bove and Lownsbury have produced an annual Hampton Roads “Nutcracker” as co-artistic directors. The duo’s past “Nutcracker” productions have graced the stages of Chrysler Hall, Harrison Opera House and now, for the ninth year, the Sandler Center. BVI is the resident ballet company at the Sandler Center. Last year’s “Nutcracker” performances, which included four public performances and three student matinees, drew more than 6,000 audience members.

Tickets for BVI’s production of “The Nutcracker” with live orchestra at the Sandler Center range in price from \$20 to \$57 and can be purchased at the Sandler Center Box Office, www.ynottix.com or 1-877-YNOTTIX. Student matinees will be offered at discounted prices at the Sandler Center Dec. 12th, 13th and 14th at 10 a.m., providing local students the opportunity to experience this classic holiday event. Further information and reservations can be found by [contacting BVI](#).

Please visit [Ballet Virginia International's website](#) for additional information and our season performance schedule.

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About Ballet Virginia International

Ballet Virginia International (BVI) is a regional ballet company with an associated academy. BVI strives to provide professional quality productions, performances and training for the Hampton Roads community. BVI upholds the standards for membership standing with the Southeastern Regional Ballet Association (SERBA) for 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.

BVI’s academy draws from a diverse ballet syllabus inspired by the American, Russian, Italian and French schools. This solid technical base ensures added success in modern, jazz, tap and character dance classes also offered at BVI. Musicality and artistry are developed joyously in our supportive environment. The professional quality productions allow selected students and community dancers the opportunity to experience dance as a performance art.