



Ballet Virginia

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From Ballet Virginia:

(Norfolk, VA — February 10, 2020) Ballet Virginia is excited to present *Diversity in Dance* for the professional ballet company's first season performances in Norfolk. This transcendent program will be performed at Ballet Virginia in Norfolk, Virginia on February 28th and 29th.

Diversity in Dance will showcase works by Ballet Virginia Resident Choreographer, Lydia Roberts Coco. Ms. Coco, a former Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Principal Dancer, will be tapping into the diverse cultural roots of the Hampton Roads community with a series of dances about the struggles, soul and spirituality of the African American community.

The performances will feature original works of African American historical significance. Soulful music will help to tell unique and moving stories through dance. The message will be one of unification and healing. By coming together and sharing our stories, we hope to bring about understanding and empathy.

For these performances, Ballet Virginia's Rehearsal Hall will be transformed into a performance space. This intimate venue allows us to have a pre-show "Sip with Soul" fundraiser where patrons can mingle and enjoy drinks along with an after show "Meet the Dancers". A cash bar, food and silent auction along with ticket sales will help Ballet Virginia with our mission of fostering a lifelong passion for dance through nurturing education, invigorating performances, and artistic excellence.

Diversity in Dance has a wide variety of dance genres, stories and emotions," says Lydia Roberts Coco, Ballet Virginia Resident Choreographer. "It's my hope that the program will not only entertain the audience but also touch their souls. Telling stories through dance has the potential to inspire, heal and bring us together as no other art form can."

The company has grown both artistically and technically in its' inaugural season with performances of *Masquerade*, *The Nutcracker* and many small venue appearances. After *Diversity in Dance*, the Company will perform *Sleeping Beauty* on April 4th and 5th at The Sandler Center. Educational outreach, small venue performances and collaboration with other local arts organizations, such as the Virginia Arts Festival, will add to an exciting first season.

"Thanks to the growth and success of our academy and pre-professional company we are now able to support a professional company. Having a professional company allows us to do more outreach and perform challenging repertoire," said Suzanne Lownsbury, Ballet Virginia Artistic Director and Choreographer.

"Working with a permanent group of professionals allows our artistic staff to create a look and style that is unique to Hampton Roads," said Janina Michalski, Ballet Virginia Artistic Director and Choreographer.

Tickets for Ballet Virginia's production of *Diversity in Dance* at Ballet Virginia range in price from \$15 to \$25 and can be purchased online at <https://diversityindance.eventbrite.com/>

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

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About Ballet Virginia

Ballet Virginia is a professional ballet company with an associated academy. The organization provides professional quality productions, performances and training for the Hampton Roads community. Ballet Virginia upholds the standards for membership standing with the Regional Dance America. The organization also provides opportunities for lighting, set and costume designers as well as choreographers while continuing education and outreach programs for our community-at-large.

The academy draws from a diverse ballet syllabus inspired by the American, Russian, Italian and French schools. This solid technical base ensures added success in other dance genres offered at the Academy. Our professional productions allow selected students and community dancers the opportunity to experience dance as a performance art.

Our Mission

Ballet Virginia is committed to our mission of fostering a lifelong passion for dance through nurturing education, invigorating performances, and artistic excellence. In this capacity, it is our vision to enrich the lives of all Hampton Roads residents through dance. We believe that diversity, equity and inclusion allow for more meaningful experiences, and that dance provides an opportunity to bring people of all backgrounds together to create a community that is richer, stronger and more innovative.