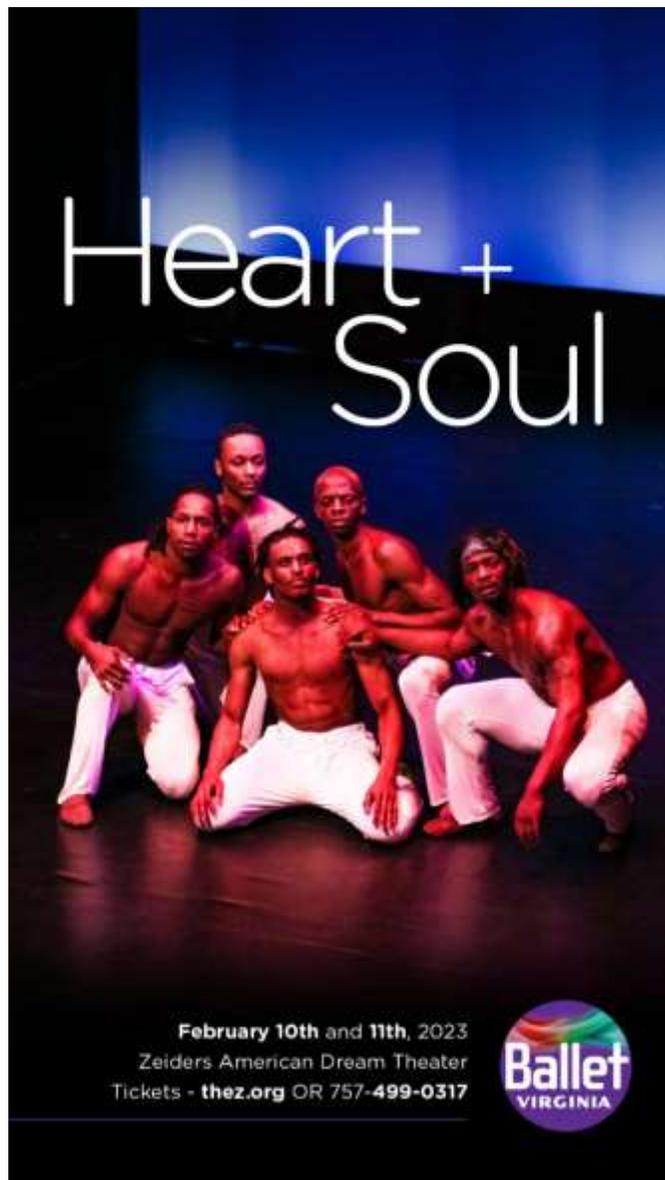


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**Ballet Virginia presents**

**“Heart + Soul”**

**Zeiders American Dream Theater**

**February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

From Ballet Virginia: (Norfolk, VA —January 3, 2022

Dance, with its profound ability to evoke emotions through movement, is all about “Heart + Soul”. Whether it’s a sweet love story, a joyful meeting or deep and complex issues, dance can express and explore it like no other art form.

Ballet Virginia’s professional company will perform a variety of themed classical and contemporary works with a focus on diversity. The production will include Lydia Roberts Coco’s acclaimed “FIVE”, along with “Dark Instincts”, “A Seed of Faith” as well as an uplifting new work. “FIVE” is Coco’s work of historical significance which tells the moving story of the Central Park Five. Our second company, BVII, will perform under the direction of Suzanne Lownsbury and Janina Michalski.

Founded in September 2019, this company of diverse and talented artists continues to raise the level of dance performances in Hampton Roads. The Winter Repertoire 2023 performances, “Heart + Soul”, will continue to offer an exciting variety of dance at Zeiders Main Stage.

“This group of professional dancers has a wide range when it comes to styles of dance. They can go from classical to contemporary with amazing ease and skill” says Lydia Roberts Coco, Ballet Virginia’s professional company artistic director and choreographer.

The signature piece of these performances is a work by Roberts Coco that premiered last year. “FIVE” will bring the story of the Central Park Five alive with hard truths of injustice and the beauty of integrity and redemption. Two guest artists will be added to the company’s roster to enhance the story. The production will also feature Roberts Coco’s “A Seed of Faith” and an uplifting new work.

Rounding out the program, BVII (the second company), will perform both classical and contemporary ballet with choreography by Suzanne Lownsbury and Janina Michalski.

“Through the growth and success of our academy and pre-professional company, we have been able to build a foundation for a professional company. Having the professional company allows us to do more outreach and perform inspiring and challenging repertoire,” said Suzanne Lownsbury, Ballet Virginia co-director.

To end this successful season the company will present “Coppelia” on March 11th at The Sandler Center. Additional community events will be posted on social media and our website.

“In our 15th season, repertoire performances, collaborations with other local arts groups, and our beloved full-length productions, gives Ballet Virginia the opportunity to bring a wide and diverse range of professional quality dance performances to Hampton Roads,” said Janina Michalski, Ballet Virginia co-director.

Performances are Friday, February 10th at 7:30 PM and Saturday, February 11th at 2 PM and 7:30 PM. Tickets for Ballet Virginia’s “Heart + Soul” are on sale at [thez.org](http://thez.org) or Zeiders Box Office. Information including the new professional company members can be found on our website, [www.balletvirginia.org](http://www.balletvirginia.org).

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### About Ballet Virginia

Ballet Virginia is a professional ballet company with an associated academy. The organization provides professional quality performances and training for the Hampton Roads community. 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 performance art.

### Our Mission

At Ballet Virginia, we are committed to fostering a lifelong passion for dance through nurturing education, invigorating performances and artistic excellence. Our Norfolk and Virginia Beach academies teach the whole student by instilling discipline, self-confidence, joy and sense of teamwork. Our performances are of the highest caliber as academy students perform side-by-side with professionals. We uphold the highest standards and strive to maintain artistic excellence in all our endeavors.

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