

Fall Dance Is En Pointe

While August gives way to September, area dance companies are busy preparing for their 2016/2017 season. Leading the way is Providence's resident professional ballet company **Festival Ballet Providence**.

Their season gets underway Halloween weekend with the popular "chatterBOXtheatre," a dance series geared toward children, with an encore presentation of the "spooky *Hansel and Gretel*." This will be followed by the first installment of audience favorite "Up Close on Hope," a mixed repertoire of dance featuring world and company premieres. Both performances take place in the company's intimate Black Box Theatre located in their Hope Street studio. Then the troupe moves into PPAC for their annual presentation of the holiday classic *The Nutcracker*.

After a brief winter break, they return with a world premiere of Shakespeare's tragic story of the star-crossed lovers, *Romeo and Juliet*. It has been over 10 years since the company last staged this ballet and artistic director Mihailo Djuric promises to present a cutting-edge vision of this iconic classic. Gamm Theatre artistic director Tony Estrella and choreography Ilya Kozadayev collaborate to create a multidisciplinary production weaving together theater and dance. Djuric observes, "I'm thrilled to bring together Tony and Ilya, and cannot wait to see how they will draw on their combined talents and experiences to create a fresh and new retelling of this famous story."

The second installment of "Up Close on Hope" features Viktor Plotnikov's feisty and provocative *Carmen*. As a relative unknown, Plotnikov first staged this ballet for FBP in 2003. Since then, he has gone on to receive national and international critical acclaim for many original productions. Djuric gushes, "Viktor came out of the gate with a bold and unique choreographic style [audiences] immediately embraced."

Frequent FBP contributor Boyko Dossev will then create the newest premiere for "chatterBOXtheatre," a charming adaptation of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's children's story *The Little Prince*. Dossev, a former dancer with Boston Ballet, will also be joining FBP as a dancer, a very welcome addition to the company following Mindaugas Bauzys' retirement; for eight seasons he thrilled audiences with his technical virtuosity and athleticism.

FBP's season concludes with *Cinderella*, featuring the choreography of FBP co-founder and long-time artistic director Wintrop Corey. "It's an honor to bring back a towering figure in Rhode Island dance to set his magnificent ballet on the company he helped create and led for many years," notes Djuric. Corey, who is currently the artistic director at Mobile Ballet, adds, "It's always a joy to return to FBP and set my ballets on the company. The quality and the work ethic of the company is always a pleasure to work with. *Cinderella* will really show off the company and their skills."

For tickets or additional information visit: festivalballetprovidence.org.

Newport's **Island Moving Company** will continue presenting exciting, one-of-a-kind onsite productions starting with *Second Star to the Right: A Tale of Hook and Pan*. This premiere will feature dancers performing on the docks at Fort Adams and aboard the Oliver Hazard Perry accompanied by live music and an original score by Tobias Andrews.

They will then take up residence at Rosecliff Mansion for their annual holiday treat *The Newport Nutcracker at Rosecliff*. This magical production allows audience members to move from room to room throughout the mansion, getting so close to the action that you almost feel as if you are part of the performance; these shows sell-out quickly!

For tickets or additional information visit: islandmovingco.org.

Further north, **The State Ballet of Rhode Island** is preparing for their remarkable 57th season, but they do so with mixed emotions. Due to renovations, they will bid what they hope is a temporary *adieu* to Robert's Hall on the RIC campus; it has been their home base for decades. But they are excited to be moving into one of the state's newest theaters, Park Theatre in Cranston. This exciting venue also features several bars and restaurants all under one roof. SBRI will debut there with their annual holiday production of *Coppelia*. Featuring colorful costumes, Delibes' festive score and dozens of talented young dancers, this enchanting ballet is great fun for all ages.

Be sure to check the company's website for exciting in-studio events including Project Coffee Hour, a series of discussions/performances detailing how a ballet goes from studio to stage. Refreshments are served.

For tickets or additional information visit stateballet.com.

Other performances of note:

Heritage Ballet: *The Nutcracker*, December 18-20; *Cinderella*, March 19 & 20. Both performances at the Stadium Theatre. heritageballet.com.

FirstWorks: Paul Taylor Dance Company, February 3. Rennie Harris Puremovement: Living Legacy Tour, February 24. Both performances at The Vets. first-work.org.

Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker: December 5 & 6. Park Theatre. parktheatrerri.com.

Fusionworks: Fusion Fest 2016, September 25 at Burr's Hill Park. NECF Performance, November 5 at McVinney Auditorium. fusionworksdance.org.

Providence Ballet Theatre: "Twas the Night Before Christmas." providenceballet.com.

Rhode Island Ballet Theatre: Holiday Show, December 18. CasinoTheatre. riballet.org.