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Ballet Rhode Island Expands Access Through Discover Dance Program

**Discounted tickets to annual holiday production of *The Nutcracker*
now available**

PROVIDENCE, RI – Ballet Rhode Island (Ballet RI) has announced that sales are now open for its Discover Dance performance of the beloved holiday classic *The Nutcracker*, which will take place on Thursday, December 17 at 10:00 am at Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Providence.

As part of Ballet RI's mission to make ballet accessible to all, these special performances welcome thousands of K-12 public, private, and homeschool students, as well as senior and disabled community groups, from across Southern New England to experience the magic of ballet.

Discover Dance tickets are offered at the deeply discounted rate of \$10 per ticket, to eligible groups, making this experience available to those who might otherwise not have access. 40% of the schools attending are Title I schools in under-resourced communities with over half the student population receiving federally subsidized lunches. This may be the first exposure for students to a world-class professional ballet company performing live in a formal theater space.

"Ballet RI has seen first hand that school field trips to see grand ballets are life-changing events for students," Artistic Executive Director Kathleen Breen Combes said. "Many of our company members first fell in love with ballet on their class trips. We want to make ballet as accessible as we can for the next generation."

Discover Dance performances feature full-length ballets with the same breathtaking costumes and scenery that season ticket holders experience. Options to attend are sorted into three categories for ease of access:

- K-12 Private and Public Schools
- Senior and Disabled groups
- K-12 Homeschool Students (registration opens at a later date, see website for details)

Accessible seating for wheelchairs, and sensory diverse tools such as noise-cancelling headphones and weighted lap blankets are available upon request.

For more information, and to register for Discover Dance performances, visit balletri.org/discoverdance.

The Nutcracker performs December 17-27 at Veterans Memorial Hall. Tickets are available now at balletri.org/performances.

ABOUT BALLET RHODE ISLAND

Ballet Rhode Island is Rhode Island's premier professional ballet company, captivating local, regional, and national audiences with a diverse repertoire of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary ballet. The company's mission to reimagine classical ballet as a modern, inclusive art form that reflects the rich diversity of Rhode Island's communities, is achieved through its public performance series, community engagement programs, and the School of Ballet Rhode Island.

Founded in 1978 by Christine Hennessy and Winthrop Corey, Ballet Rhode Island has undergone a remarkable transformation defined by growth, innovation, and a renewed commitment to artistic excellence and community engagement. Under the direction of former Boston Ballet Principal Dancer Kathleen Breen Combes since 2019, Ballet Rhode Island has deepened its commitment to presenting a wide-ranging repertoire, balancing groundbreaking contemporary works with timeless classical masterworks, and has prioritized accessibility, diversity, and education in meaningful new ways. With performances now staged across the region, and as the resident dance company at the United Theater in Westerly, Rhode Island, the Ballet has firmly established itself as a leading cultural force in Southern New England.

As the organization approaches its fiftieth anniversary in 2028, Ballet RI is pursuing an ambitious vision for its future: to become a nationally recognized creative force in dance, rooted in Rhode Island and helping shape what ballet can become for the next generation.

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