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For Immediate Release

Virginia National Ballet Announces 2018-19 Season and Roster of Dancers

Virginia National Ballet is excited to announce the repertoire for its 6th year, the 2018-19 Season, as well as the wonderful roster of international dancers in the company. All performances will be held at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas. VNB is led by Artistic Director Rafik Hegab and Managing Director Elysabeth Muscat Hegab, and recently moved into a brand new, larger facility with three studios, in Manassas in April 2018.

In November, the company presents the 6th Annual presentation of “**The Nutcracker**” with brand new, gorgeous backdrops and updated scenery. VNB’s Nutcracker is a highly popular production, the first Nutcracker of the season in the region, taking place the day after Thanksgiving, and sells quickly each year. Last year’s shows were virtually sold out, and tickets are anticipated to sell even more quickly this year.



THE NUTCRACKER



Emanuel Tavares as ALADDIN

VNB presents the world premiere of Rafik Hegab’s “**Aladdin**” in February, a sumptuous production that is very family friendly and will appeal equally to adults and children, with world class choreography, outstanding professional dancing, and enchanting scenery and costumes.

In April, VNB is bringing back “Carmen”, which premiered two years ago, and the world premiere of “Life in the fast lane”, a rocking contemporary ballet to the music of The Eagles. “Carmen” was a huge hit when it premiered. It’s based on the famous opera by Bizet, and VNB’s version is unique because of Hegab’s incredible choreography as well as the addition of an excerpt from the actual opera with live singing. “Life in the fast lane” will be choreographed to the Eagles’ top hits.



CARMEN

Other performances include the **Arts Alive Festival** at the Hylton in September, and participation in VNB School’s **Spring Performance** at the Hylton in June.

Audiences will be thrilled to see returning Principal Dancers Saaya Pikula and Emanuel Tavares grace the stage again this season. Pikula has danced all Principal Roles since the 2016-17 season including “Snow White”, “Aida”, Sugar Plum Fairy in “The Nutcracker”, Mimi in “La Boheme”, and lead roles in the contemporary ballets “Carmina Burana”, “Bolero”, “Bohemian Rhapsody”, and more. Tavares has portrayed Rodolfo in “La Boheme”, the Cavalier in “The Nutcracker”, the Prince in “Snow White”, Radames in “Aida”, and lead roles in all of the contemporary



Saaya Pikula in BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

ballets. They are also highly sought after as guest artists along the East Coast.

New dancers are joining the company come from all over the world: The United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, Italy, Ukraine, Japan, and South Korea.

Ahmed Nabil of Egypt has been a Principal Dancer for the Cairo Opera Ballet Company and has toured internationally. Daniela Moya of Mexico joins us after dancing last season with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. Olga Aru of

Ukraine danced with the Imperial Russian Ballet, Cairo Opera Ballet, Silesian State Opera & Ballet and more. Masaya Kaneko of Japan danced with Arts Ballet Theatre of Florida and was a semifinalist in the Prix de Lausanne International Ballet Competition. Alice de Nardi of Italy danced at the Arena de Verona, Macedonian State Opera & Ballet, and was a First Soloist at the Cairo Opera Ballet. Lydia Sanders is a graduate of the University of South Carolina.

Apprentices Quinn Fieldstone, Regan Shaw, Amanda Michel, Seulbi Lee, Milena Marafioti, and Karla Rodriguez come from the US, Canada, South Korea, Brazil, and Cuba.

VNB is one of only a few ballet companies in the State of Virginia to be included on the Virginia Commission for the Arts Tour Directory, and is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, Virginia Commission for the Arts, Prince William County, NOVEC, and the Dominion Energy Foundation. VNB's School is located in the fantastic new facility at 8104 Flannery Court in Manassas, which was just built out in March of 2018. The beautiful new space has three large, bright studios, a music studio, a large waiting area with TV and closed circuit TV of the 3 studios as well as observation windows, and ample parking space.

VNB is also represented in an Emmy nominated performance in 2018: Artistic Director Rafik Hegab choreographed "A Whole New World" for Young Artists of America's performance of "The Circle of Life: The Music of Tim Rice" at the Music Center at Strathmore, which was televised on PBS and nominated for a Regional Emmy Award.



Audiences can purchase subscriptions to VNB performances at the Hylton and enjoy preferred seating, special pricing, and a free glass of wine at one performance, if reserved before September 30th. Subscription forms are available at www.gainesvilleballetcompany.org/subscribe

2018-19 Season Events

Arts Alive Festival

Sun., September, 16th, 2018, FREE!

The Nutcracker

Fri. November 23rd, 2018, 2pm & 7 pm

Aladdin – (World Premiere)

Fri., February 15th, 2019, 7:30 pm

Sat., February 16th, 2019, 6:30 pm

Carmen, and Life in the Fast Lane (World Premiere to the music of The Eagles)

Sun., April 28th, 2019, 3:00 pm

Virginia National Ballet School Spring Recital

Sat., June 1st, 2019, 3 pm