

# PRESS RELEASE

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## BALLET VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL ANNOUNCES ITS NEW HOME

Ballet Virginia International announces its new home in the heart of Norfolk's historic Ghent district. Located at 700 21<sup>st</sup> Street, formerly Toques Catering, this building will showcase our Academy and our dancers. The architectural integrity of the building and the cultural atmosphere of Ghent will enhance the Academy experience and allow our dancers to thrive artistically.

Ballet Virginia will open its doors in early November thanks to the hard work of Michael Zarpas of Global Real Estate Investment who structured the deal, and of Richard Levin who owns the building and is offering it to Ballet Virginia at a below market rate. "We are so excited to have our Academy in Ghent" Hope Paryzek, President of Ballet Virginia International said. "This will be a wonderful home for our children, thanks to the enormous generosity of Richard Levin, and his support for Ballet Virginia International and the arts." "With its new studio space in Norfolk's historic Ghent business district and its strong performance season, Ballet Virginia International is poised to be the premier dance academy and performance company in Hampton Roads," said Jeff Sanborn of the law firm of Williams Mullen, legal counsel to Ballet Virginia International.

We are building a state of the art dance facility designed to be a safe, creative, and family-oriented facility where dancers of all ages and levels can obtain the training needed to achieve their goals. The facility will consist of three studios, a backstage dressing room, Loft Study Area, Sewing Room, Kitchen, and offices. The Loft Studio will be designed to simulate backstage quick changes and stage spacing. It will offer an abundance of natural light and plenty of room to dance. Designed with sprung floors and the latest technology, "our studios will be a choreographer's dream" said Suzanne Lownsbury Long, Director of Ballet Virginia International, "perfect for in studio dress rehearsals!"

The Ballet Virginia International faculty consists of eight professional instructors with combined experience of over 100 years in dance instruction, staging, choreography, and performance opportunities. "While this is a new non-profit company at a new location, Ballet Virginia International's artistic directors and faculty are the same people who have brought high quality ballet performances such as the Nutcracker to Hampton Roads for years." Mr. Sanborn added. The training their students receive has brought them recognition and acceptance in intensive dance programs all over the United States and abroad. Our faculty has sent over 100 dancers on to professional dance careers. Many more have left with a life long love of dance in their hearts. Ballet Virginia International's faculty is truly an extraordinary team. "We not only nurture young dancers who aspire to become professional dancers, but give all students the training, poise and discipline that will stay with them in any profession for the rest of their lives," said Janina Michalski Bove, Director of Ballet Virginia International.

Our mission is to passionately teach pre-professional dance education, and to create magical, innovative performances that showcase Ballet Virginia International's performing company for the community to enjoy. Ballet Virginia International will offer three productions during its debut 2008 - 2009 Season. The productions will be at venues throughout Hampton Roads including the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts, Harrison Opera House, and The Suffolk Center. *Our goal is to bring Hampton Roads together through dance.* By offering productions and academy classes throughout the region, Ballet Virginia International will be able to share the love of dance with all. Please visit us at [www.BalletVirginia.org](http://www.BalletVirginia.org) for academy and production schedules.

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