

# A Letter from the Artistic Director & Choreographer Herci Marsden *The State Ballet of Rhode Island*



**HERCI MARSDEN**

*"First Lady of Rhode Island Ballet"* Martha Smith/Providence Journal

It is my pleasure to welcome you to what I cannot believe is our 52<sup>nd</sup> Performing Season! We have many unique opportunities planned, and our performances will be sure to leave you uplifted and feeling proud to be part of our ballet family.

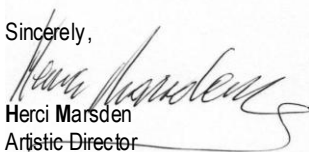
We began this season with another beautiful performance for the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Research Foundation's Flames of Hope event in downtown Providence. We are always honored to be a part of this breathtaking celebration of life. We continue our free Coffee Hour studio-based series that gives our public an up-close and personal look at the life of a dancer and how ballets are created. If you haven't yet had the chance to attend, I invite you to come visit us and attend a Coffee Hour as my invited guest!

As always in December, we are excited to present our holiday ballet, *Coppelia*! Featured throughout this ballet that is so special to me personally, you will see costumes, props, and scenery all handmade by decades of devoted supporters of SBRI. We are thrilled to welcome two new "Swanhildas" and a new "Frantz" to the stage, as they become part of the SBRI lineage of leading dancers. Also, over 25 young dancers from Brae Crest School and surrounding dance studios are highlighted in *Coppelia*, showcasing the youngest and upcoming talent of our state. I love giving these children the opportunity to perform onstage with our Company dancers, as Mr. George Balanchine did for young dancers when he created his 1974 staging of *Coppelia* for New York City Ballet. Our fresh and vivacious company will have you in holiday spirits from the start to finish of this most treasured ballet.

This spring, we will provide you with an "around the world" ballet experience as a finale to our season. We will revive and restage many SBRI cultural repertoire favorites, including *Polovitsian Dances* and *Ballet Ireland*. Opening the performances of *Tour de Ballet* will be the world premiere work of one of our resident choreographers paired with an original musical score of a Rhode Island native composer. Set to live music, this piece will compliment our spring show and will be a true collaboration of music and dance.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you, our patrons of the arts, for your continued loyalty and support. Without you as audience, our efforts as artists would go unappreciated and our dreams would not be able to come true. Thank you for believing in SBRI, and I might add, its Artistic Director. I look forward to seeing you at the theater!

Sincerely,

  
Herci Marsden  
Artistic Director

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