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**Notes from editor (not for publication):**

Hi, Bridget — This is so lovely. We’re running it as our “Deeper Dive” column to keep it intact. The Latchis plug at the end did go a little too far into the realm of advertising. Please let me know if you’d like to arm wrestle about any changes. —All the best, Jeff

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Ballet dancers perform with hard work, passion, and love

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2 ‘The Nutcracker,’ an annual tradition of the Brattleboro  
3 School of Dance, takes place this weekend at Latchis Theatre

####END SUBHED####

4 TEXT BODY:

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5 WHEN YOU STEP into the art deco splendor of the Latchis  
6 Theatre this weekend, you will be stepping through a portal into  
7 a magical world of festivity, joy, fantastical heroism, delectable  
8 distortion of reality, and thrilling adventure.

9           *The Nutcracker* ballet offers a sweet escape into the Land  
10 of the Sugar Plum Fairy, where tantalizing treats leap and twirl  
11 with rapture to the intoxicating score by Tchaikovsky.

12           But what makes all this fantasy and beauty possible?  
13           It may seem everything is just whipped together  
14 magically, but this couldn't be further from the truth. The reality is  
15 that what you experience from your seat is the culmination of  
16 meticulous planning, months of preparation, and countless hours  
17 of physical labor.

18           The Brattleboro School of Dance (BSD) is busier than  
19 Santa's elves rehearsing dance variations, honing their technique  
20 in class, being fitted with bright new costumes, and organizing an  
21 army of volunteers.

22           Not to mention building sets, creating a brand new  
23 scaffolding and truss structure for backdrops and other theatrical  
24 elements, hanging and focusing lights, and numerous other  
25 behind-the-scenes aspects that make this show the magical and  
26 professional production it is.

27           The beauty of ballet is derived from the look and feel of  
28 effortless. Poise, control, precision, and grace are the  
29 qualities that ballet dancers display on stage to achieve this  
30 seemingly magical effect.

31           It takes years and years of training in class and rehearsal  
32 to get to this point. Most ballet dancers begin at a very young  
33 age, and they dedicate most of their time to develop the  
34 herculean strength it takes to become their dream. It is not easy!

35           \* \* \*

36           ONE BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE of this dedication and  
37 determination is our featured guest artist this year, Victoria  
38 Jaenson, an alum of BSD who will perform the role of Sugar Plum  
39 Fairy.

40           Originally from Kampala, Uganda, Jaenson began her  
41 formal dance training at the age of 7 at BSD under founder Kathi  
42 Keller. She later studied at the Rock School for Dance Education  
43 and The Hartt School at the University of Hartford.

44           She went on to dance professionally in companies  
45 throughout the U.S., and is currently dancing with Collage Dance  
46 Collective in Memphis, Tennessee. When Jaenson graces the  
47 stage in her pointe shoes and tutu, you will be watching the  
48 product of the years and years of hard work, grueling hours of  
49 physical training, psychological and emotional perseverance, and  
50 a will of iron.

51           In fact, every dancer you see on stage is showcasing the  
52 culmination of their training and passion, in whatever stage of life  
53 they are in.

54           You will see popping out from under Mother Ginger's  
55 skirt young dancers who have been dancing just a couple years.  
56 You will see adult dancers at the Stahlbaum's party in the first act,  
57 some of whom are novice dancers, some of whom have danced  
58 their whole lives, and most of whom are actual parents of actual  
59 dancers in the show.

60           \* \* \*

61           YOU WILL ALSO SEE gracing the stage three high school  
62 seniors who have more than a decade of training under their belts  
63 — and who have so much more of their dance journey ahead of  
64 them.

65           Mariam Abena Diallo will dance the role of The  
66 Nutcracker, leading the fight against the Mouse Queen with  
67 vivacious strength and heroism and guiding Clara on her dream-  
68 like journey.

69           Olive Fleming will be featured as The Snow Queen,  
70 whirling and twirling with dazzling grace through the snowy  
71 scene of a pine forest.

72           Diana Webb will gracefully and magnanimously weave  
73 and wind through the Waltzing Flowers as The Dewdrop Fairy.

74           The dancers you see in this production are giving you,  
75 the audience, all of their hard work, passion, and love.

76           That is what makes this show so special.

77           \* \* \*

78 Seniors and children at \$20.and general admission at  
79 \$30, available at [brattleboroschoolofdance.com](http://brattleboroschoolofdance.com). Showtimes are  
80 Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12 and 13, at 7 p.m., and Saturday  
81 and Sunday, Dec. 14, at 2 p.m.

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BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

82 **BRIDGET STRUTHERS** is the director of the Brattleboro  
83 School of Dance. *The Commons'* Deeper Dive column gives  
84 artists, arts organizations, and other nonprofits elbow room to  
85 write in first person and/or be unabashedly opinionated,  
86 passionate, and analytical about their own creative work and  
87 events.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

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