

# WONDERLAND

## Who We Are:

Collide Theatrical Dance Company is non-profit professional dance company dedicated to telling narrative stories through dance and movement. Founded in 2013 by Artistic Director Regina Peluso, the company has produced more than 25 original dance theater productions.

## Wonderland:

In the spring of 2021, Peluso worked with mental health professionals to create the dance musical production *Wonderland*, a show that aims to de-stigmatize mental health issues. Set in a psychiatric hospital, characters from *Alice in Wonderland* face challenges, explore what “normal” means, and share an uplifting story of empathy, acceptance, and friendship in the face of mental illness. The story is told using Collide’s signature blend of high-energy dance set to a pop-rock soundtrack.

It was enthusiastically received by critics (“spectacular and striking,” said *TwinCitiesArts.com*) and audiences. “I had no idea how much my family needed your show,” said one patron. Another patron, clinical social worker Jeannine Myrvik, said, **“When I saw *Wonderland* my first thought was, this performance HAS to be in schools.”**

## Need:

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that 20% of youth ages 13–18 live with a mental health condition. And in 2021, pediatric health experts and the U.S. Surgeon General publicized a growing mental health crisis among youth and how it has become worse during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Among the recommendations to address this crisis are programs to promote healthy development and provide avenues for help.

## School Tours:

*Wonderland* uses an accessible format (dance theater) to provide education and a positive message about the importance of mental health and empathy. Following each performance will be a short discussion session with the cast, during which students will be able to ask questions about the show.



School Performance Information

- The show is 45–60 minutes long based on the time frame available for the school, followed by a 15-minute Q&A session with the cast. It can easily be condensed more to fit into a shorter time frame if needed.
- The performers come directly to the schools, eliminating the need for transportation fees.
- The performance can take place in a traditional theater setting, dance studio, or gymnasium.
- An educational pamphlet will be provided to teachers that contains exercises and workshop ideas that explore mental health themes as well as dance education.
- The show is suited for audiences of all ages, though highly recommended for Grades 5–12.
- The performance was created with assistance from certified mental health specialists; referrals can be provided upon request.
- Cost: \$1500

School Touring Dates Available:

October 23–November 12, 2023

What Past Schools Have Said:

“Dance is such a powerful way to connect students to each other and to themselves. We...are so grateful for the WONDERLAND experience, to gain exposure to the beauty and truth that dance provides to us and the world!”

— Laura Mahler, FAIR School Crystal

“It was a beautiful mix of different dance styles and important messages - very well done.”

— David Kahl, Stillwater Area High School

“Collide delivers amazing dance with an important message to hear! Don't miss this show!”

— Barbara Farley, Benjamin E Mays IB World School



WONDERLAND in the Press:

[St. Paul Pioneer Press Feature](#)  
[Twin Cities Arts Reader Review](#)  
[Promo Video](#)

About the Show

*“Welcome to Wonderland, a premier psychiatric hospital. Dr. Knight has the difficult task of treating a man who refers to himself as a “White Rabbit” who suffers from a severe anxiety disorder, a young woman named Alice with body dysmorphia, and a Queen figure suffering from narcissistic rage. But as the doctor digs deeply into the causes and roots of their disorders he begins to ask: what does “normal” really mean?”*

If you would like to see the show before bringing it to your school, we invite you to watch our virtual production, filmed outside of the James J Hill House in 2021. (A few changes have been made for our current show. The story of the Caterpillar will not be included in the condensed school version.)

Link: <https://vimeo.com/556638381>

Password: **Alicedance**

