

BC3 guests can “feel that energy” during Tamburitzans’ performance

Ensemble’s 8-state tour brings dancing, music to Succop Theater on Jan. 17

Jan. 3, 2020



Members of the Tamburitzans, the nation’s longest-running multicultural song and dance company, perform to a Serbian dance suite during a fall 2019 show. The 82-year-old ensemble will perform at Butler County Community College’s Succop Theater on Jan. 17 during its eight-state, 40-show 2019-2020 tour.

(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College will host the nation’s longest-running multicultural song and dance company when the Tamburitzans – “high-energy” university and technical school students spiraling in a “kaleidoscope of colors” to Old World and world music – return to Succop Theater on Jan. 17 and for the first time since selling out the 442-seat venue in 2018.

Succop Theater guests will experience the “high energy and youthfulness” of the 29 Pittsburgh-area performers, 18- to 26-year-olds who dance to music native to Eastern Europe and to the northern United Kingdom, said George Kresovich, the Tamburitzans’ artistic director.

The Tamburitzans open Succop Theater’s spring 2020 Performing Arts season with a 100-minute “Symbols: Expressions of Culture” show that begins at 8 p.m. and includes a 20-minute intermission.

Tickets cost \$20 for general admission, \$18 for those age 65 and older, and \$10 for students, and can be purchased by calling 724-284-8505 or by visiting bc3.edu/theater.

The show at Succop Theater on BC3’s main campus in Butler Township is one of 40 Tamburitzans’ performances in eight states during a September-to-May season that includes stops in Cleveland; Annandale, Va.; Orlando, Fla; San Diego; Las Vegas and Pueblo, Colo.

“They don’t perform in Pittsburgh very often,” said Larry Stock, director of BC3’s Cultural Center. “They are primarily all over the area, all over the country.”



Members of the Tamburitzans, the nation’s longest-running multicultural song and dance company, are shown performing dances from the Republic of Georgia during a fall 2019 show. The 82-year-old ensemble will perform at Butler County Community College’s Succop Theater on Jan. 17 during its eight-state, 40-show 2019-2020 tour.



Members of the Tamburitzans, the nation’s longest-running multicultural song and dance company, perform a dance called Russia holiday during a fall 2019 show. The 82-year-old ensemble will perform at Butler County Community College’s Succop Theater on Jan. 17 during its eight-state, 40-show 2019-2020 tour.

Succop Theater guests can encounter cultures found in Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Norway, Poland, Russia and Serbia, and from the Celtic regions of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, through music and dance complemented by video and state-of-the-art lighting, Kresovich said.

“It’s a full-media production,” Kresovich said. “It’s live performance with enhanced media. And you feel that energy.”

The performance “takes the audience through a journey of the cultures we are representing,” Kresovich said. “Someone who has never seen the show or knows nothing about these cultures will come out of the show enlightened.

Everything on the stage represents symbols of festivals and things that relate to those particular cultures.”

The Tamburitzens’ dancing, Stock said, is “incredible, energetic and authentic, from whatever country they are representing.”

Unlike a number of dance ensembles, the Tamburitzens, Stock said, perform to live music.

“Not recorded” music, Stock said. “This is live. So it’s a whole, immersive experience of the culture of whatever country they are representing at the time. The energy that these young people exude and the amount of talent that’s on stage is just mind-boggling. This is not something that you get to see every day.”

Historically, up to 70 percent of the 82-year-old ensemble’s performers have danced – and played instruments such as the tamburitza, a six-stringed, lute-like instrument; the accordion or violin, Kresovich said.

“A lot of them actually grow up with the culture,” he said, adding that the Tamburitzens, many of whom attend Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, differ from other university organizations in that the ensemble doesn’t hold two or three campus-based recitals a year, but tours the United States.

“We are out there touring and performing on a level like ‘Riverdance,’” Kresovich said of the dancers to traditional Irish music. “We are doing major theaters and I think that is a big deal.”



A member of the Tamburitzens, the nation’s longest-running multicultural song and dance company, performs as a Nordic fiddler during a fall 2019 show. The 82-year-old ensemble will perform at Butler County Community College’s Succop Theater on Jan. 17 during its eight-state, 40-show 2019-2020 tour.

As are the costumes the Tamburitzans will wear in Succop Theater.

“Just outstanding,” Stock said.

The Tamburitzans’ attire is based on folk and traditional costumes, “with a little bit of a lighter, contemporary feel,” Kresovich said. “Very powerful this year. The costuming is outstanding. Each year you get different lightened patterns and different costuming, a kaleidoscope of colors and different schemes. And we have energetic young people on the stage wearing those costumes.”

BC3’s Succop Theater will also host in its spring 2020 Performing Arts season the River City Brass Band Octet on Feb. 28; Semi-Toned on April 8; and the Pittsburgh Philharmonic on March 21 and May 16.