

“Graceful, elegant” Bodiography to blend ballet, jazz, hip hop – and more – at BC3’s Succop Theater

Sept. 3, 2019



Bodiography Contemporary Ballet artists are shown in a work created by company founding director Maria Caruso titled “Midnight Air” in this undated file photo taken by Eric Rose.

(Butler, PA) Nine Bodiography Contemporary Ballet dancers, whose movements evoke in audiences emotions ranging from joy to compassion, and from excitement to reflection, will open the 2019-2020 Performing Arts season at Succop Theater on Butler County Community College’s main campus in Butler Township on Sept. 28.

Bodiography, the resident ballet company of Succop Theater, “is very graceful and elegant,” said Larry Stock, director of BC3’s Cultural Center. “It is so well done, so poignant. It’s an incredible performance.”

The 19-year-old professional company’s nearly 90-minute show begins at 8 p.m. and also marks the debut of Bodiography Contemporary Ballet 2, an ensemble of 18- to 24-year-old pre-professionals, and includes a second performance in as many seasons of ninth- through 12-graders selected from up to 10 dance studios in Butler County and surrounding counties.

“It will be great for the audience because they can see our local dance students performing with professionals,” Stock said. “It’s also a good experience for the students. This is an opportunity for them to see what it is really like if they are going to pursue a career in dance, to see how it works in the real world.”

Added Maria Caruso, founding director of Bodiography and chair of the performing arts department at LaRoche University: “Every week I will be meeting with the students, giving them a warmup class, working on choreography with them and creating the work. They will rehearse with the company the day of the show, get to be backstage with the company artists and get a full experience.”

“Natural human connection”

Bodiography formed in October 2000 in New York City and moved to Pittsburgh in 2002, Caruso said. The performance at Succop Theater will be the first of a 2019-2020 season that will feature up to eight large-scale engagements regionally and internationally, she said.

The company, whose members are ages 22 to 38, blends ballet, jazz, hip hop and modern dance to an array of music, from classical to rock, in evoking that range of emotions, from joy to compassion, and from excitement to reflection, Caruso said.

“I think what I am drawn to is natural human connection, how we use gesture,” Caruso said. “I believe God is life’s best choreographer. I don’t really focus so much on the fluff and all the steps as much as I do about the nuances of how humans interact.

“I think that what you find with my work is a lot of connectivity through individuals and connectivity from the dancer to the audience.”

It’s the way “someone touches someone on the shoulder,” Caruso said, “and how someone touches someone on the face.”

Tickets cost \$20 for general admission, \$18 for seniors age 65 and over, and \$10 for students, and can be ordered online at bc3.edu/succop-theater or by calling 724-284-8505.

BC3’s Performing Arts season is sponsored in part by Armstrong.