

With Grace

Colors 2016: Studio Dance Conservatory's Annual Dance Production Delights Audience

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By Todd Pullan , Post-Journal

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The perspective audience was waiting patiently by the stage door with arms bouqueted in flowers in anticipation of Colors 2016, the yearly dance production of the Studio Dance Conservatory.

This production that featured 20 classics, contemporary, acro, hoops and adaptive dance was staged at Jamestown Community College's Scharmann Theater on Saturday. This production was dedicated in loving memory to Cecelia Fosberg (1932-2016), mother of Libby Nord, Studio Dance Conservatory founder, owner, dancer, choreographer and teacher.

Dancers leaped in calisthenics down the theater aisles to the 1980 hit "Celebration," by Kool & the Gang arriving on stage with energy to demonstrate their ballet elements, movements with metallic flags, streamers, hoops, contemporary sequences, and classic technique with precision acrobatic elements. The context of this piece was exciting and sparked interest for the rest of the production.

Article Photos



The Dove, danced by Emma Anderson, in a graceful first arabesque in plie.

Photos by Todd Pullan

A consumer of The Resource Center approached Nord to include an adaptive dance class in her studio curriculum. "Party People," was the culminating experience for that class of five of which three performed this evening. "The TRC adaptive class has been one of the best experiences in my dance career," according to Nord. The special dancers were appointed with regal blue bob wigs, brown Studio t-shirts, and blue cargo scrub pants as they completed group and solo vignettes. The huge smiles on the dancers and the numerous kisses blown to the audience assured that this was a life changing moments for these consumers. Anna Paterniti glistened as she floated across the stage in her contemporary pic "Sensual Flavor."

The audience was very supportive to acknowledge the creative movements to "Rhapsody in Blue," as choreographed by Nord who used a senior dancer to assistant in the showcase of beginner students using hoops for creative movement, skills and execution. Cecelia Eklum danced a historical piece, "Blue Bird" variation from Sleeping Beauty, choreographed by Marius Petipa (1818-1910) noted to be the most influential Ballet Master and Choreographer in ballet history. Ballet history is past on from teacher to student and specifically by Nord who learned this piece from

Shirley Kobb, Academy of Dance Arts in Jamestown, New York. Eklum's smile beamed throughout her pointe performance demonstrating her skill, pose, and carriage as costumed in classic blue velvet with complementing crown. Her bourree on pointe travelling upstage with hands fluttering was spectacular.

Grace Anderson's "Kitri," variation from Don Quixote was also choreographed by Petipa and originally presented by the Ballet of the Imperial Bolshoi Theatre of Moscow, Russia in 1869. This ballet is based on the book Don Quixote de la Mancha by Miguel de Cervantes centers on ancient chivalry. Don Quixote dreams he is a knight surrounded by beautiful maidens in which Kitri symbolizes Dulcinea, Quixote's fictional character. Anderson's historic costume was yellow and black with a classic black fan that complemented her classic and skilled movements.

"Le Jardin Animee" once again choreographed by Marius Petipa was an eclectic variation which creatively featured the work of young and skilled dancers which contained many classic and famous performed excerpts often danced romantic symbolism using floral arches and tussie-mussie, a nosegay. The spreading shape of the tutus worn by the classical dancers were adorned with hydrangea petals and arm movements swayed like gentle wafting breezes, arm movements like opening buds turning and spinning representing the awakening of the garden blooms. It is noteworthy that Costume Design was completed and stitched by Nord. The light design by Scott Barton transitioned with the varying elements of composition that were well executed by the running crew for this production.

The song "Heart Cry," by Drehn created the emotional canvas for Maisy Chang's full-bodied contemporary masterpiece choreographed by Nord. Chang's blood crimson layers of chiffon and velvet with delicate accents circulated flowed and expressed throughout the entire stage as the music often beat in stark cardiac rhythm. This 12-year-old accomplished dancer is a ten-year veteran of the Studio Dance Conservatory. "I wanted to give Maisy a piece that would suit her capabilities that she could embrace and communicate with," explains Nord. "She really nailed my choreography, making it look better than I was even picturing. That's pretty rare in a child."

"Main Title," from the motion picture August Rush composed by Mark Mancina was captivating with very touch music and heart drawing lyrics I believe in music the way some people believe in fairy tales. The very confident and fluid movements by Alex Green were very emotional and compelling as choreographed by Nord. Lighting by Barton provided an additional matrix for application.

Sandra Mangusing, currently on staff at the Chautauqua Regional Youth Ballet

Choreographed the contemporary and lyrical piece for Grace Anderson entitled "Ditto," from the 1990 movie Ghost starring Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze. Ditto means, "I Love You." Anderson executed linear lines which appeared to extend to infinity as complemented by her subtle green and blue tied dyed long sleeve legged unitard with chiffon dance skirt. Every composed movement was captivating in concert with the music. Her skill and technique was noteworthy. Grace even bowed in character style which is classic in the work of Mangusing. Grace is fifteen years old and has been dancing ballet for three years. She received a personal invitation to attend the summer intensive program at Cincinnati Ballet and will also attend the Summer Workshop with Ballet Magnificat, a Christian-based dance company. Grace hopes and dreams of touring with Ballet Magnificat sometime in her dance career.

Emma Anderson, an eight-year veteran with Studio Dance Conservatory danced, "The Dove," also by Mangusing that was simply elegant like a dove soaring with an olive branch. The white chiffon fabric fluttered across the stage in perfect symmetry with perfect execution.

"Carousel," a contemporary piece choreographed by Nord was colorful and energetic. The queen of diamonds costumes with metallic tinsel wigs captured the movement and reflection of a carousel. Nord explains, "The streamers added a blurring effect that I think people feel on a carousel ride, where your surroundings go out of focus." This energetic dance montage slowed to a crawl as the dancers found order in the carousel and then dropped to the floor in exclamation: the ride was over.

The Studio Dance Conservatory should be validated for their spectacular execution of classic and historical ballet. It is noteworthy that many students are enrolled in pre-professional study. Contemporary dance was highlighted in group numbers such as "Carousel" and in emotional connective pieces like "Heart Cry," "Ditto," and "All or Nothing." Hoop and Acro dancing was innovative and creative. "Party People," the adaptive work by Nord appeared to please the dancers and the enthusiastic audience alike. The Studio Dance Conservatory is located at 90 Woodworth Avenue, Jamestown, New York. Libby Nord dancer, choreographer, and teacher can be reached at (716) 488-3198

or studiodanceconservatory.com. A review of the website notes Studio Dance Conservatory has a 6-week Summer program, a two week Summer intensive and some exciting master classes with guest teachers.