UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

December 2, 2019

Andrea Estrada

‘Out of Many’

The work of five BFA senior dance students and one faculty member — assistant professor Brandon Whited — will be presented in “Out of Many,” the theater and dance department’s annual fall dance concert.

Directed by Christina McCarthy, the department’s director of dance, in collaboration with lecturer Ann Bruice, the concert opens Thursday, Dec. 5, in Hatlen Theater and continues through Sunday, Dec. 7.

In their respective pieces, each choreographer and student costume designer is investigating how the individual relates to and integrates with society and the community, and how each of us strives to be part of the world while remaining true to ourselves.

“Each summer the senior dance majors start thinking about what is in the forefront of their mind and how the ideas that are brewing will come to life as dance art in the Fall Dance Concert,” explained McCarthy. “It is not surprising that these choreographers are asking about how the individual is defined and how they fit into our larger world. We are all in a place of uncertainty as we navigate new and exciting questions about inclusivity, self-definition and communal responsibility.”

Among the student works presented is choreographer Wes Dameron’s “Atlas Reflection,” which explores the aesthetic juxtapositions in the perceived corporeal forms of statues. Dameron finds a non-linear and durational aesthetic as he alternates between the humanness of the individual dancers on stage and the

objects of artistic beauty they embody in their controlled and stylized movement.

In “Hinder,” choreographer Lexi Cipriano examines the idea of the individual facing obstacles, and how our perceptions of what is happening leads us to decision-making that informs and creates the path of our lives. Exploring the energy of spatial dynamics and pathways on stage, she offers a poetic and abstract physical interpretation of stress, questioning, assumption, feat and frustration.

“Invite to Surrender,” choreographed by Morgan Geraghty, invites the audience and the dancers to surrender to the music and chaos therein. The piece dives into a dichotomous world as the soloist finds herself stuck between aspiration for perfection and acceptance of the unpredictability of life. Geraghty’s work emerges from adherence to and breaking away from driving, beat-heavy music, fusing contemporary and modern dance techniques to communicate the value of release and surrender.

In her work “in: somnia,” Whitney Ross delves into a surreal experience for audiences and dancers as a way of investigating obsession and infatuation. Through a progression from focused unity and calm abandon that devolves into chaos and conflicting individual experiences, the movement explores the isolating effect of getting lost in one’s daydreams.

“The Reality of Degas,” by Gina Schemenauer, brings to life impressionist painter Edgar Degas’ artwork of ballet dancers. The ballet point piece begins within the realm of classical ballet, centering on Degas’ famous painting, “The Dancing Class.” It then transforms into a darker, more contemporary ballet movement, reflecting the unseen struggle of ballet. Expressed through the lens of an individual contemplating one’s role in the art form of ballet, the piece falls in line with the broader concepts of fitting in culturally and what it takes to thrive and survive.

Faculty member Whited’s piece, “95 North,” originally developed through a commission for Santa Barbara Dance Theater, examines the call of the north, wanderlust for opportunity and growth, and the youthful audacity to dream of a life beyone one’s current circumstances. Utilizing group form and featured roles from within the ensemble, “95 North” reflects the myriad paths any of us might take in life, and the varied perspectives we hold. The work draws from Whited’s personal history of growth, travel and the process of becoming through self-citation and the aesthetics, physicality and experiences that shaped his relationship to dance.

Behind the scenes, and supported by the vision and mentorship of Bruice, three student costume designers — Janelle Provost, Savannah Lo and Winnie Tin — have worked in collaboration with the student choreographers to present the choreographic ideas with stunning and evocative costume designs.

Each student designer begins with the choreographers' imaginings and expands the focus of the dance creation to include the visual elements present in the costuming color, style and textural qualities. As the dance is built, the costumes are conceived and created in tandem.

Tickets for the Fall Dance Concert are available at the Theater and Dance Box Office. More information about event can be found at https://www.theaterdance.ucsb.edu/.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.