

Mercyhurst Dance Department

SoMar Dance Works



Slice of Life

a dance concert full of life, any way you slice it



Walker Recital Hall

Sat Feb 18 @ 7:00

Sun Feb 19 @ 2:00

SoMar Dance Works

Presents

Slice of Life

Solveig & Mark Santillano
Co-Directors, Choreographers

Company

Kaitlyn Bazala, Katie Bleu, Rebecca Jones, Katherine Kilbourn, Meggie Peterson,
Madeleine Plourde, Mark Santillano, Solveig Santillano, Sophie Satoh, Mia Semieraro

With Kelly Armor and Angela McDonough DiFiore

Technical Director
Harold Hotchkiss

Hello and welcome,

We are excited to share this program with you. We've brought back a few pieces from our repertoire that haven't been seen in quite some time, and we've also got a couple brand-new offerings for you. Each piece, in its own way, represents a "slice of life," be it themes of temptation, loneliness, longing, compassion, fear, fun, or funkiness. These subjects are things we hope you can relate to. It has been our distinct pleasure preparing for this concert, mainly because the dancers we've been working with are such wonderful people. Not only are they talented dancers, but they are also some of the nicest people you'd ever hope to meet. Our heart-felt gratitude goes out to them, and to you for choosing to spend your time with us. Enjoy the show.

~Mark and Solveig Santillano, Co-Directors

-- Program --

NANACHI (seven)

(2016)

Music: Jing Jing (Traditional & Shoukichi Kina); Subete No Hito No Kokoro Ni Hanna O
(Shoukichi Kina);

Don-Don Bushi (Traditional & Shoukichi Kina)

Choreography: Mark Santillano

Commissioned by Western Oregon University

Kaitlyn Bazala, Katie Bleu, Katherine Kilbourn, Meggie Peterson,
Madeleine Plourde, Sophie Satoh, Mia Semieraro

MR. RIGHT

(2014)

Music: Coin-Operated Boy by Amanda Palmer

Costume alternation by Jodi Staniunas Hopper

Choreographed & Performed by Mark Santillano, Solveig Santillano

ELIPSINATION

(2008)

Music: String Quintet #1 in E, Op. 11/5, G 275 – Minuet by Baccherini

Choreography by Solveig Santillano

Kaitlyn Bazala, Rebecca Jones, Meggie Peterson, Madeleine Plourde, Sophie Satoh

This dance was originally commissioned by, and created for the
Instinct Dancecorps Company of Scottsdale Community College

TEMPTATION

(2016)

Music: Temptation by Tom Waits (performed by Diana Krall)

Choreography by Solveig & Mark Santillano

Meggie Peterson and Solveig Santillano with the company

ECHOES OF YESTERDAY

(2022)

Music: Echoes of Yesterday by Mark Santillano

Directed, filmed, and edited by Mark Santillano

Dance improvisation by Jenna Swartz

SCHERZO

from A Midsummer Night's Dream

(2013)

Music: Ein Sommernachtstraum by Felix Mendelssohn

Choreography: Mark & Solveig Santillano

Katie Bleu, Rebecca Jones, Katherine Kilbourn, Sophie Satoh, Mia Semieraro

FREEDOM, DIG IT

(2012)

Text, Bongos by Mark Santillano

Choreographed and performed by Mark Santillano

THAT'S WHERE THE SWING IS

(2023)

Music: What is Jazz by Club des Belugas (music by Kitty the Bill, Lyrics by Dean Bowman)

Choreography by Mark Santillano, Solveig Santillano, in collaboration with the cast

Kaitlyn Bazala, Katie Bleu, Rebecca Jones, Katherine Kilbourn,
Meggie Peterson, Madeleine Plourde, Sophie Satoh, Mia Semieraro

SKELETON WOMAN

(2022)

Concept drawn from Skeleton Woman as told by Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Music and narration by Kelly Armor (Whackadoodle, water whistle);

with Mark Santillano (percussion)

Choreographed and performed by Angela DiFiore, Solveig Santillano

PLANET KRUPA

(2006)

Choreography by Mark Santillano

Music: Sing Sing Sing by Louis Prima

Dedicated to Gene Krupa, Ray Castrey, Mark Marchant,
and all the different drummers I've marched to.

Kaitlyn Bazala, Katie Bleu, Rebecca Jones, Katherine Kilbourn,
Meggie Peterson, Madeleine Plourde, Sophie Satoh, Mia Semieraro



-- The co-directors--

Mark Santillano has enjoyed a rich and varied career in the arts. With a background of gymnastics, martial arts, music, and theatre, Mark earned a BFA in Dance and BS in Communications from Southwest Missouri State University, and his Masters from Wesleyan University. As a dancer he has performed around the world. With Pilobolus Dance Theatre, Mark was dance captain, soloist, choreographic collaborator, danced at the Olympics, appeared in commercials, on television, and won an Emmy. He was also a member of Indianapolis' Dance Kaleidoscope. As a member of Actor Equity Association his credits include the (inter)national tours of The King and I, West Side Story, and A Chorus Line. As an educator, Mark has served as an Artist-in-Residence at SMSU and is

currently an Assistant Professor at Mercyhurst University. Along with his wife, Solveig Santillano, Mark is co- director/founder of SoMar Dance Works. Established in 1999, SoMar has received numerous grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and Erie Arts and Culture. The company is in-residence at Mercyhurst. He has choreographed for a number of companies and university performing ensembles across the country and served on the board of directors of the American College Dance Association, and as president of the Erie Dance Consortium. In 2016, Mark became the recipient of the inaugural Erie Arts & Culture Artistic Fellowship.

Solveig Santillano, Associate Professor of Dance at Mercyhurst; Co-Director/Choreographer of SoMar Dance Works; holds an MFA (Hollins); MALS (Wesleyan/Rulewater Prize winner); a BFA from Juilliard; multiple certifications in yoga; CET/Certified Evans Teacher; is trained in Stott Pilates; and is a CLMA/Certified Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analyst (Integrated Movement Studies) and RSMT (Registered Somatic Movement Therapist) through ISMETA. Originally from SD, early studies revolved around theatre (Circle in the Square, NHSI), followed by a decade of performing (Anna Sokolow's Player's Project, Ruby Shang and Dancers, Prometheus Dance, Spencer/Colton), culminating in six years of touring internationally with MOMIX. Now based in Erie, Santillano lives, teaches, dances, collaborates with her partner on and off the dance floor, Mark, her students, friends, colleagues, and company, SoMar. Her work has been presented by/at/in Dance Across Borders (Gothenburg Sweden), Austria's Young! Tanzsommer dance festival, Grand Valley State University (Allendale, MI), Dancing Wheels (Cleveland, OH), Lake Erie Ballet and Erie Contemporary Ballet Theatre; Instinct DanceCorps (Scottsdale, AZ); the San Diego Civic Dance Company (CA), conferences including American College Dance Association, East West Somatic and William Evans Somatic Conferences. She has a passion for collaborations that build community, raise awareness over issues of social concern including cancer (Laura's Grace), mental health (Dis-Ease: A Coming Out), human trafficking (Project Abolition), gender (In Her Shoes), and environmental science (The Ripple Effect) and was the recipient of the (2016) inaugural Erie Arts & Culture Artistic Fellowship.

-- The company --

Kaitlyn Bazala is a multidisciplinary movement artist from Pittsburgh, PA. She studied dance, with a concentration in ballet, at Point Park University before transferring to Mercyhurst University where she will receive her BFA in dance in 2023. When Kaitlyn began her movement journey, she had a strong interest in ballet, but began to broaden her horizons to modern, contemporary ballet, hip-hop, jazz, and tap. Kaitlyn loves to lean into the body's voice to guide improvisation which becomes the basis for her movement. Her biggest emphasis is that a person is not just an artist while they are dancing, but an artist through all that they are. This is Kaitlyn's first year with SoMar Dance Works.

Katie Bleu is from Greensburg Pennsylvania where she started her dance training following in her sister's footsteps. From there, she started her college education at Mercyhurst University. She is now a senior dance major at Mercyhurst. Katie's feet are always moving to the beat of the music and so is her soul. She loves all genres of dance, however she specializes in modern, contemporary, and ballet. She has been to summer intensives such as Alonzo King Lines (online program), Attack Theater, Diffusion Dance Company and others. Katie has also apprenticed with Texture Contemporary Ballet. This is her second year with the SoMar Dance Works, and she is thankful to have been given the opportunity to dance with them again! Katie doesn't know where life will take her next, but she will be dancing her way to new things as her senior year ends.

Rebecca Jones, from Sweet Home Oregon, began her journey with dance at a young age. She grew up with ballet, but expanded her repertoire to other styles in her later high school years. She has received additional training at the University of Utah, Oregon Ballet Theater, and Diffusion Dance Company. She is currently a senior at Mercyhurst University, where she is majoring in dance with a minor in arts administration. Rebecca enjoys sharing her love of dance through choreography, performance, and dance education. Through dance and artistic creation, Rebecca is able to share her world with others, exploring movement and finding ways to connect with others.

Katherine Kilbourn is currently a junior dance major and psychology minor at Mercyhurst. This is her second season with SoMar. She grew up training at The Mid Shore Dance Academy in her hometown of Easton, Maryland. There, she cultivated her love for dance and for learning a diverse selection of styles and skills. While growing in her dancing, she also performed locally in the community with the Mid Shore Dance Academy's Student Company, with Continuum Dance, a local modern dance organization, and in numerous supernumerary positions at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. During high school, she transitioned to The Washington School of Ballet in Washington D.C to focus on her ballet training where she stayed until joining Mercyhurst.

Margaret (Meggie) Peterson, from Syracuse, NY, is currently finishing her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance and Minor in Mathematics at Mercyhurst University in Erie, PA. During this time, she has danced in Giselle (2019), Swan Lake (2021), and The Nutcracker (2022), as well as numerous modern and contemporary works by choreographers such as Sidra Bell and Mark Santillano. In addition, she interned and performed with Ballet Concerto, a ballet company in Fort Worth, Texas, in Les Sylphides and Boléro (2022). This is Meggie's first time performing as a member of SoMar Dance Works.

Madeleine Plourde is a Dance BFA and Integrated Media and Strategic Communications double major at Mercyhurst University. She is a Junior this year and this is her first season with SoMar Dance Works. Madeleine is from Cincinnati, Ohio but grew up in Burlington Vermont where she began her dance training. In Vermont she primarily studied ballet but also worked in Jazz, Contemporary and Ballroom dance. Since coming to Mercyhurst she has studied Modern, Tap and a variety of other styles. Over the years, she has danced in on and off campus productions from full length ballets to more contemporary works from widely acclaimed choreographers. She has danced in student choreography and choreographed works of her own. Aside from learning choreography, Madeleine loves exploring what's possible in dance, exploring the ideas surrounding dance and finding the connections between it all which is one reason she really loves being a part of SoMar.

Sophie Satoh was born in Tsukuba, Japan where she first found her love of dance. She then moved to Andover, Massachusetts where her passion for dance followed as well. She trained at Center of Performing Arts in her formative years and went to train in the summers at Ballet West, Joffrey Ballet etc. She is now a junior at Mercyhurst University and a double major in Dance and Public Health. This is her second year at SoMar Dance Works; and she hopes to continue to bring her passion for dance forward.

Mia Semieraro grew up in Pittsburgh, PA and began dance classes at a local studio at 18 months old. When she was about 5 years old, she started training at Pittsburgh Youth Ballet under the director Jean Gedeon, focusing in on ballet study. She remained there until the age of 15 and performed in numerous roles. They included renowned choreography by George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins. She then began training at Pennsylvania Ballet Conservatory, under the direction of Vanessa Haidar, where her dance training was broadened beyond ballet to include flamenco, character, jazz, and contemporary. She is a dance major and anticipated exercise science minor at Mercyhurst University as a sophomore. Her consistent modern dance study began at Mercyhurst University. She found a love for it and is very excited for her first performance with SoMar Dance Works.

-- Guest artists --

Angela McDonough DiFiore has over twenty-five years' professional experience in the field of dance as a choreographer, performer, and educator. She holds a BFA in Dance from New World School of the Arts and an MFA in Dance (Performance and Choreography) from Florida State University. Angela has presented her choreographic work in performances throughout the state of Florida, Erie, Pennsylvania; Fredonia, New

York; Mt San Jacinto, California; Steamboat Springs, Colorado; and Pro Danza Italia in Montescudaio, Italy. She has performed throughout the South Florida region with such groups as Dancesynergy, Corps Chameleon, Millennium Dance Syndicate, Ballet Flamenco La Rosa, Kokoflux, Fuzion Dance Artists (Sarasota Contemporary Dance), and The Ugly Company in NYC. Angela has been a part of performances of Florida Waterways Dance Project and National Water Dance since 2010 through the present, as a choreographer, director, collaborator and performer. She has recently become involved in choreographing and performing in dance for film projects for Erie Dance Film Festival as well as creating a new screendance work made for Fredonia Dance Ensemble titled Turbulence and an independent dance film titled Waves for the Erie Dance Consortium Festival of Dance. Angela has taught at Broward College, Santa Fe College, University of Florida, the College of Central Florida, FSU in NYC, Perry Mansfield Performing Arts School and Camp and the Mercyhurst Summer Dance Experience. She has served on the board of directors of the Erie Dance Consortium and has hosted dance movement workshops in the Erie community at Soma Movement Arts and PACA Movement Center. Angela is a rostered teaching artist with Erie Arts and Culture and an adjunct professor at SUNY Fredonia and Mercyhurst University.

Kelly Armor is singer, multi-instrumentalist, storyteller, folklorist, and educator. In 2020 – 2022 she has recently performed her original compositions for three productions by Erie's Dafmark Dance Theater. Ms. Armor has been a teaching artist since 1995, and lead over 50 residencies in schools and social service organizations. Her residencies focus on storytelling, folk music, songwriting, and folk arts.

For the past 25 years she has worked intensively with Erie's New American community, identifying artists and supporting their work to preserve their culture and traditions in their new home and creating systems for the greater community to honor, celebrate, and benefit from the New American's indigenous knowledge. She was the Education and Folk Art Director at the Erie Art Museum from 2003-2018. Since 2018 she has been the Folklorist in Residence at Erie Arts & Culture, a regional arts council.

From 1993 – 2003 she was a full-time performer, interpreting the folk music from East Africa, Appalachia, and the British Isles. She toured the country presenting at coffee houses, festivals, schools and concert venues. She studied flute performance and composition at Yale University. She has a B.A. in Ethnomusicology from Friends World Program of Long Island University, where she did field work from 1986 – 1989 in Kenya and Tanzania in traditional music, Swahili language, and English language instruction.

-- Technical Director --

Harold Hotchkiss, MFA, has been working in technical theatre for 22 years. Harold is a native of Buffalo, NY, and a graduate of the University of Buffalo. He completed his Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-

Champaign. During Harold's time in theatre, he has worked with many educational institutions such as Mercyhurst University, Penn State Behrend, Moreau Catholic High-School in Hayward California, University of Buffalo, and more. Currently he divides his time working as an assistant technical director in Erie, PA and production manager/technical director in Hayward, CA. Outside of the theatre Harold enjoys working in the garden with his wife, Gillian.

Appreciations

It is with endless gratitude that we acknowledge the many people that help us continue to do what we do. Namely:

Mercyhurst University Dance Department – Noelle Partusch, Chair

Our financial contributors:

Anonymous, Kaitlyn Culp, Alice Edwards, Sydney Gondringer, Claire Hinde, Melanie Jones, Lyn Kilbourn, Pazaz Christian Dance Academy, Mary Ray, Joseph Semieraro, Kevin Watson

And our incredible dancers. It's always a pleasure.

Thank you, our audience, for supporting the arts.

Come see the Mercyhurst Dance Department's next performances:

Choreography II showcase: April 18, 2023, Palmer Studio, Zurn Hall

Raw Edges XXV: April 28-30, 2023, Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center

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