

FREE

Take One!



The Burgh

Editorial»

Governor Cuomo
has proven to be
an advocate of the
region

PAGE 4

Clinton County, New York

Saturday, July 26, 2014

www.the-burgh.com

Fête de Danse returns to the North Country

By Tiana Downie
tad@theburgh.com

PLATTSBURGH — The Strand Center for the Arts and Norte Maar for Collaborative Projects in the Arts are pleased to announce the return of Fête de Danse, one of the North Country's signature dance events.

"With the Strand Center for the Arts, we do all types of different art forms," said Jessica Delle, director of the Strand Center for the Arts. "It's a wonderful way to bring in international dance to the Plattsburgh area and bring the Strand Center for the Arts into a new international platform as well."

BY TIANA DOWNIE

July 26, 2014

Fete de Danse

From page 1

"KEEP DANCING"

On Aug. 1 and 2, Fête de Danse will return full steam as Norte Maar collaborates with the Strand Center for the Arts to present the return of this unique dance event that graced the streets of Rousseau Point once before (span 2004 to 2009).

"We had international companies, invited guests, local companies, tap dancers and Irish dance," said Julia Gleich, co-founder of Norte Maar and director of Gleich Dances Contemporary Ballet. "We took over the local hockey rink in Rousseau Point, built a floor, built sort of a set and had a little makeshift lighting.

"It was a real community event, and it became really popular and successful."

The event marks the first major production of contemporary dance to be held in the newly renovated Strand Theater in downtown Plattsburgh. It begins at 7:30 p.m.

"It's a great way for people to see a return of artists from the area that have gone off, got new training and are doing beautiful artwork," Delle said. "It's a great way for the community to embrace the talent that comes not only from the Plattsburgh area, but internationally as well."

General tickets are \$25, and member tickets are \$50 to view the three dance companies Racoco Productions, Gleich Dances Contemporary Ballet and MADHOOTS dance co.

"RACOCO PRODUCTIONS"

"We mix dance and theater and visual arts in a pretty unique way and with a lot of humor, which is something you don't always find in dance," said Rachel Cohen, artistic director for the company. "From what people have told me, we create 'worlds' rather than 'dance pieces,' so the audience is transported into an alternate universe for a brief period while we're onstage."

Racoco Productions, which became a non-profit organization in 2005, creates theatrical experiences that combine movement, the visual arts, burlesque, cinematic styles, everyday objects and musical composition.

Three of the people who will be performing in Plattsburgh are Massumi Kishimoto, company member, Stephanie Beck, first time performer and visual artist, and Cohen.

"We're doing one piece, tentatively called 'Paper Trail' Cohen said. "We're interacting with long rolls of colored paper, usually used as photo backdrops, making and changing the set and costumes throughout the piece with our movement."

"There's a loose storyline about how landscapes are created and destroyed and the role that humans play in that process."

Recently, Racoco has created explorations of interactions between the human body and inanimate materials—dry, flour, taffy, paper, chewing gum—collaborating with composers and visual artists to blur the boundaries between the real and the imaginary.

"I like working with inanimate objects partly because the things around us are such an important part of how we define ourselves, so if I'm trying to capture or express some element of being human in a piece, I feel like our 'things' are a necessary part of that package," Cohen said. "And then once you add

www.the-burgh.com



them, the objects take on a life of their own."

This company appears regularly in New York. Previously, Norte Maar has invited Racoco to perform in Fête de Danse in 2006 and Dance at Socrates in 2013. Now, they are ready to perform once again for 2014.

"I think it will be fun," Cohen said. "People will see something unusual and, hopefully, orientating."

"Maybe our work can expand the way people think about dance, and most important, stimulate their own imaginations."

"GLEICH BALLET"

Gleich Dances Contemporary Ballet is under the artistic direction of Gleich and has been the featured company at Fête de Danse.

For this Fête de Danse, Michelle Buckley will be dancing a solo piece created by Gleich in 2006 called "Aperture," the first solo Gleich performed in New York.

"Aperture" is about openings," Gleich said. "Originally, there were some sculptures that were designed, and they had these openings in them that the dancer would fit through."

"I always describe it as though you're going into a cornfield where the corn is above your head, and it's that sort of game where you are looking or seeking out someone, and sometimes you find them, and sometimes you don't, and sometimes you're hiding, and sometimes you're trying to discover."

The piece will include two supporting roles that will represent friends, other people, other facets of personalities and other openings.

Gleich plans on doing a second performance with co-founder of Norte Maar Jason Andrew for piece called "Ghost," a duet love story where one person isn't actually present.

"It had nothing to do with the movie 'Ghost,'" Gleich said with a chuckle. "It's the age-old story of the fantasy that you can reconnect with somebody who isn't actually there, as much as the person who is."

Gleich's choreographic residencies have included Brooklyn Ballet, Burklyn Ballet Theatre, University of Northern Colorado, Island Moving Company and Norte Maar, putting on performances for community events such as Fête de Danse.

"There might be surprises," Gleich said. "Who knows?"