

Cocktail Hour opens season with dancing, high 'spirits'

Adam Tumino, Reporter
September 22, 2019

News



The Doudna Fine Arts Center opened its 2019-20 season with a twist, specifically the New York City-based dance company Ballets with a Twist.

They performed their signature program, "Cocktail Hour: The Show" in the Doudna Theatre on the nights of Sept. 20 and 21. Providing a mix of original choreography, music and costumes, the show was attended by both students and community members.

"Cocktail Hour" consists of many dance vignettes, called cocktails, that each represent a different cocktail or mocktail, some of which were available outside the theater. Community members Kristi Lawson and Zeena Christopher said they enjoyed the show.

"I thought it was very fun," Lawson said. "I liked the second half very much."

"They had some very good costumes," Christopher said. "I liked the 'Boilermaker' myself."

"Boilermaker," a solo dance by Morgan Stinnett, was one of the eight cocktails that was a solo dance. The other nine cocktails featured two or more of the dancers.

The dances consisted of many different styles of dance, and the music ranged from classical to techno-punk with other components stirred in.

A standout section of the show came in the second half. Claire Mazza's solo "Manhattan" was about a young woman out walking her dog in New York City at night. Mazza guided the dog, which was a prop on wheels, across the stage as she danced.

The next dance, a solo by Andres Neira called "Cin Cin," tied in "Manhattan" near the end. Neira danced across the stage with a tablecloth, and received praise from the audience when he spun it rhythmically onto a nearby table.

As the performance reached its end, Mazza and her dog entered the restaurant and sat at the table, joining Neira for a romantic dinner.

But perhaps the highlight of the show was the three-part finale, the Latin-themed “Rum Runner.”

It began with “Mojito,” which was set in a nightclub and featured three couples dancing through the night.

This was followed by “Cuba Libre,” a duet for Andres Neira and Catherine Walsh, and “Caipirinha,” which implemented the entire ensemble to bring the show to a close.

Many of the cocktails were also humorous. The Western-themed “Roy Rogers” featured Stinnett, although he did not do much dancing, and Amy Gilson. Stinnett stood in the middle of the stage as Gilson danced around him, lassoing him in various ways.

Tori Hey’s solo dance, “Sputnik,” also got a few laughs from the audience because of its goofy sci-fi theme and cathartic scream midway through.

Senior Spanish major Amanda Kiessling said “Sputnik” was a highlight for her, but she enjoyed the show as a whole.

“I didn’t expect a lot of what happened, but I’m glad it happened,” Kiessling said. “There was so much emotion in each dance.”

Junior English major Mariah Smith said she was not sure if she wanted to attend but was glad she did.

“There was so much stuff going on, I couldn’t really focus on one particular thing,” Smith said. “All of them were amazing.”

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