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Friday, March 22, 2019

Buffalo Contact Improv Community Addresses Me Too Movement with "Mindful Touch"

Company: Center Dance of Buffalo, NY
Venue: Wasteland Studios, next to Shea's
Location: Buffalo, NY

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Photo provided by Olivier Besson

Center Dance and members of the Western New York dance community are addressing the controversies surrounding touch through a unique and niche dance workshop, accompanied by a performance, this March.

"Mission Improvable: Mindful Touch" is an educational-based dance program that aims to help corporations, professionals, community members and dancers of all levels understand the gravity of touch-specific encounters they are confronted with in their everyday lives.

The workshop will be facilitated by international choreographer and guest artist Olivier Besson from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, and will run from March 20-24 at 700 Main St., Wasteland Studios. Dancers from the Toronto and NYC area are also invited to attend.

As a style of dance that has remained relatively niche over the course of its history, contact improvisation is becoming infectious inside Buffalo's theater district among professional and recreational dancers. The art form, which is evolving in nature, is often referred to as "real time" composition. Two bodies share a mutual point of contact to create a dance together, with no outcome in sight.

"Contact improvisation is such an interesting form because people do it for different reasons. Sometimes it's simply about having fun and just being playful. Participants discover ways to enter 'art' or embody the 'sport like' physicality of the form. This leads them to a mutually shared experience of intimacy and an expanded notion of intimacy built through trust. People crave that," Besson said.

The workshop will also feature a community performance on March 22 where dancers, poets and spoken word artists will perform pieces that explore the theme, including tough topics such as physical attack, good and bad touch, how people need touch in their lives, how parents and children touch and ways people touch in an office environment. Attendees are invited to join an open discussion with refreshments after the performance.

For information about the workshop, to become a collaborator and sponsor or to learn more about the Buffalo contact improvisation community, visit <http://buffaloci.weebly.com/>.

Ticket information for the performance:

Title: Mindful Touch Date: March 22 at 7:30 p.m. Place: 700 Main St. (6th floor) Discussion after performance from 8:30-9 p.m. Ticket Purchase: <https://missionimprovablemindfultouch.brownpapertickets.com/> or \$15 at the door

Center Dance is an emergence focusing upon movement, wellness and education. Through interdisciplinary performance, movement training, community outreach and the presentation of learning opportunities, Center Dance strives to increase Buffalo's gravity as an international hub for creative exchange between dance artists.

