



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abby Frohne, Director of Marketing
afrohne@cocastl.org, 314.561.4876

MOTHER, A NEW WORK BY KIRVEN DOUTHIT-BOYD, DEBUTS AT COCA, DECEMBER 8–10

MOTHeR Tells the Story of Five Mothers and Their Influence on Their Families

ST. LOUIS (November 30, 2023)—[MOTHeR](#), a new work choreographed by Kirven-Douthit-Boyd and performed by COCA Pre-Professional Division student company COCAdance, will take the Catherine B. Berges Theatre stage in December. Performances will be held Friday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.; Saturday, December 9 at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and Sunday, December 10 at 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

MOTHeR centers on a family who uses the power of dance to elevate their existence. Mother and her four sisters serve as protectors of their family, orchestrating movement of the natural world to transport them to sovereignty. They are magical agents of change who use their individual and collective powers to lead their family on a journey that is both worldly and ethereal. This production encompasses alchemy, robust original sound, vibrant imagery inspired by the cultural aesthetic of Afrofuturism, and movement vocabulary that blends cultural and contemporary dance, to tell the story of five women who will stop at nothing to protect the prosperity of their children.

“*MOTHeR* is about the power of a mother’s love, inspired by the women who raised me. It speaks to the strength of these remarkable beings and how their individual talents intersect to create community. I developed the narrative from the perspective of my younger self, though I still look up to them all in constant awe of their strength and resilience.” said Kirven Douthit-Boyd, *MOTHeR* Choreographer, COCA Associate Director of Dance, and Artistic Director of COCAdance.

COCAdance is an advanced modern and contemporary dance company comprised of COCA’s most versatile young artists, ages 10–18. Members of COCAdance are selected based upon their technical proficiency across genres and an eagerness to engage in the creative process. *MOTHeR* marks the first time in nine years COCAdance will perform their own full-length production and features a cast of 18 pre-professional artists and one professional artist.

“We began the process for *MOTHeR* in August. It has been incredible watching the dancers settle into the storytelling and listening to them share their perspectives to the space,” added Douthit-Boyd. “The dancers take the audience on a captivating journey with this original work.”

The Creative Team for *MOTHeR* includes well-known St. Louis creatives: Axi:Ome (scenic design), Lamar Harris (original music composition); Brandin Vaughn (costumes); Maureen Berry (lighting), and Michael Musgrave-Perkins (projections).

Tickets may be purchased online at cocastl.org or by contacting the COCA Box Office at 314.561.4873. Ticket prices range from \$26–30. Show run time is 90 minutes with a 15-minute intermission.

The 2023–2024 COCApresents Season is proudly presented by Mary Strauss. Additional support of *MOTHeR* provided by Caryl Sunshine.

ABOUT COCA

COCA's mission is to *enrich lives and build community through the arts*. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves more than 50,000 students, audience members, artists, and families from more than 200 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of more than 200 artists at the heart of their work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and onsite at its campus in University City.

###