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COCA PRE-PROFESSIONAL DANCE COMPANIES PERFORM SEASON-CULMINATING REPERTOIRE AT *VERVE*

Ballet Eclectica and COCAdance Showcase Versatility and New Works from Renowned Guest Artists

ST. LOUIS (May 2, 2025)—[COCA's](#) Pre-Professional Division dance companies, COCAdance and Ballet Eclectica, will present new choreographic works from renowned guest artists and COCA's esteemed dance faculty for their annual spring repertoire, [Verve](#), May 9–11, 2025. Performances are Friday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m., Saturday, May 10 at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., and Sunday, May 11 at 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., at the Catherine B. Berges Theatre at COCA.

Ballet Eclectica, COCA's classical and contemporary ballet company, and COCAdance, COCA's modern and contemporary dance company, will showcase their versatility and exceptional talent as they present 12 dance works across three different programs. *Verve* is the culmination of their work this season.

"We're thrilled to share this work with our community. Our young artists have been working across genres effortlessly, making for an exciting array of dance," said Kirven Douthit-Boyd, COCA Associate Director of Dance.

In preparation for this concert, Ballet Eclectica and COCAdance dancers participated in creative development residencies with the choreographers to mount new works.

Guest Choreographers:

- **Mark Caserta**, choreographer and Founder of BIGKID Dance collective, former dancer with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, and Camille A. Brown & Dancers
- **Justin Conte**, choreographer, director, and educator based in Los Angeles
- **Thang Dao**, choreographer and educator based between Los Angeles and New York City who has choreographed for organizations such as Ailey II and Philadanco
- **Da'Von Doane**, former dancer with Dance Theatre of Harlem who has choreographed for institutions such as Bryant Park and Symphony Space
- **Julien Guérin**, former dancer and performer with the Ballets de Monte Carlo who has choreographed for institutions such as the Opéra de Nice and Ballet de l'Opéra-Théâtre Eurométropole de Metz
- **Igal Perry**, Founder and Artistic Director of Peridance Contemporary Dance Company and Peridance Center
- **My'Kal Stromile**, former dancer with Boston Ballet

COCA Teaching Artist Choreographers:

- **Kirven Douthit-Boyd**, Associate Director of Dance at COCA, Artistic Director at Saint Louis Dance Theatre, and former dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
- **Carrie Fernandez**, Ballet Eclectica Rehearsal Assistant
- **Sam Gaitsch**, COCAdance Rehearsal Assistant
- **Ashley Hamann**, Dancer Manager and Ballet Eclectica Rehearsal Assistant
- **Carly Vanderheyden**, Ballet Eclectica Rehearsal Assistant
- **Jada Vaughan**, dancer with Saint Louis Dance Theatre

Verve also celebrates the achievements of COCA's graduating seniors. The opening night program, Friday, May 9, will feature solo pieces performed by COCA Dance Program seniors.

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased at cocastl.org or by contacting the COCA Box Office at 314.561.4873. *Verve* is recommended for all ages and has a runtime of 90 minutes, plus 15-minute intermission.

The 2024–2025 COCApresents Season is presented by Leading Sponsors Amy, Sadie, and Sacha Lefton and Supporting Sponsors Mercy, Missouri Arts Council, and Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis. *Verve* is also sponsored by the COCA Advisory Board in honor of the graduating seniors.

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 60,000 students, audience members, artists, and families from more than 250 zip codes 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.

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