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A fishy dance performance

Show makes science accessible through movement

LAURA LYALL

Swathed in glimmering, oceanic costumes, the Motus O dancers craft an undersea environment with human bodies, building a bridge between the sciences and the arts.

The dance, titled IMTA, began in 2007 when Ontario dance company Motus O met with Dr. Thierry Chopin, professor of marine biology at UNB Saint John.

Chopin wanted to make his aquaculture studies accessible to the general public, not just scientists.

“(Chopin) put it really well...The nature of science is about detail and discovery, but he said, that’s our worst enemy, because at some point we have to step back and com-

municate that to a broader audience,” said James Croker, co-artistic director for Motus O.

“(He said) that’s what you do, you communicate to a broader audience.”

Motus O was spawned by Croker, Jack Langenhuizen and Cynthia Croker who are trained in several artistic disciplines and originally met studying in Montreal. They spent time together in both Europe and South America doing street performances before forming the company in 1990.

IMTA is part of a collection of dances, called Perspectives. For this piece, the six-piece troupe worked 15 hours for every minute of dance, and at approximately 15 minutes long, the dance is the longest in the series. They worked on IMTA on and off for a year and a half, and Croker said that for him, IMTA is one of the most beautiful works

they’ve crafted to date.

“We believe there’s no part of human activities, human endeavours that cannot be interpreted in an artistic way, said Croker. “In our case it’s dance.”

During the creative process, Motus O became fascinated with Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture the more they studied the subject. The contemporary dance piece specifically captures what Croker refers to as “the essence” of salmon, kelp and mussels and their relationship to one another, using studies and other information sent to them by Dr. Chopin to map the intricate study of their movements.

“Once we begin to understand the scientific function of how they work, and how they relate, we’re able to choose techniques and movements that best illustrates them...” said Croker. “If we can capture the essence of a type of move-

ment, that is beyond the cliché... then people relate to that in some way. They recognize it, even if it’s only intuitively.”

SHOW TIME

Motus O Dance Theatre: Perspective at The Imperial Theatre on Friday, Oct. 14 at 24 King Square South, 647-4100. 8 p.m., Tickets \$26, \$21 for insiders, \$20 for Youth 18 and under.

For more information on Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture, visit bit.ly/qKg5M8.

www.motuso.com



Motus O Dance Theatre’s IMTA dance aims to capture the “essence” of salmon, kelp and mussels.

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