

VERSA-STYLE DANCE COMPANY



7:30 p.m. Feb. 4, 2023

Escher Auditorium, College of Saint Benedict

Full of energy, inspiration and improvisation, Versa-Style celebrates the essence and power of hip hop – showcasing popping, locking, boogaloo, house and Afro-Latin styles such as salsa, merengue and cumbia dancing. This performance explores the limitless possibilities of improvisational street dance. Each infectious performance is love, positivity and knowledge shared through the medium of hip hop dance. For more than 15 years, Versa-Style has served as cultural ambassadors, traveling, teaching and spreading their love of hip hop culture.

CONNECT

Boogaloo: Originating in New York among African American and Latino youth in the 1960s. Incorporating popping, illusion, and doing the robot.

Popping, Locking, Whacking: Restricting and releasing muscle movements to give illusion, originating from clubs across America but specifically in LA in the '70s.

ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://versastyledance.org/>

<https://www.csbsju.edu/fine-arts/performances/versa-style>

ENGAGE

Versa-Style fully embraces the richness of LA and its diverse cultures, bringing street rhythm and dance styles to a professional stage and sharing it with the world.

- When you take street dance and put it on a professional stage, what happens? How does it grow and transform?
- If we created a dance company for our area, what would that look like? Who is represented and what do the dances look like?

Spoken word is a way for poetry to be shared. It can encompass or contain elements of rap, hip hop, jazz, folk, and rock music. Characterized by rhyme, repetition, improvisation and word play, spoken word frequently refers to issues of social justice, politics, race and community. Related to slam poetry, spoken word may draw on music, sound, and dance or other kinds of performance to connect with audiences.

- How is language different when it's being read compared to when it's being recited?
- What are some intentional ways artists use language to express something unique and individualistic?
- How are stories told throughout the performance? Which styles do you most relate to?

"I'm a first-generation Latina," says Jackie Lopez, co-founder of Versa-Style. "My parents immigrated to Los Angeles from El Salvador. My love for dance began in an after-school program. [In] school, I always did my best to stay involved in the arts. The arts saved my life! My theater workshop teacher...asked me a simple question, 'Are you going to college?' For the first time, I felt heard and felt that someone deeply cared for me, but most importantly believed in me."

- What is something in your own life that drives you?
- When did you know you wanted to attend college? Was there someone who supported you to make that decision?

Hip Hop, according to Versa-Style, "breaks color lines by creating a forum where people come together for a common passion rather than grouping themselves by race or socio-economic backgrounds." Versa-Style demonstrates freedom of expression, freedom of individuality, hard work, self-discipline and dedication to the form. Often growing their leaders from within, Versa-Style showcases a diverse group of artists.

- What does it mean to be an older dancer?
- How do the dance styles differ? How do they compliment and grow on each other?