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Dancing in the Big Apple: RWU Dancers Perform at the Jack Crystal Theater in New York City

The performance, choreographed by an alumna, gave RWU dancers the opportunity to shine in the big city



Eight RWU dancers performed a piece choreographed by RWU alumna Christina Jane Robson '09 over the summer at the Jack Crystal Theater in New York City. From left to right they are Emily Bartnicki '20, Kaylee Mahan '20, Emilee Olivari '18, Makaila Corridori '20, Shaelyn LeLievre '20, Layne Willis '18, Abbie Dougherty '19, Erin Saunders '18, Christina Jane Robson '09.

August 31, 2018 | By April Federico '19

New York City, N.Y.– With the buzz of the city surrounding them, eight RWU dancers took the stage at the Jack Crystal Theater to dazzle the New York City crowd with a ten-minute piece that incorporated electronic rhythms and movements.

Called Multiplex, the RWU dancers glided and performed with all heart and soul on that stage at the Jack Crystal Theater.

The performance gave the RWU dancers the opportunity to perform at a prestigious venue in New York City where some of the most accomplished dancers in the world have performed, said Associate Professor of Dance Gary Shore.

The RWU dancers – Emily Bartnicki '20, Makaila Corridori '20, Abbie Dougherty '19, Shae LeLievre '20, Kaylee Mahan '20, Emilee Olivari '18, Erin Saunders '18, and Layne Willis '18 – said the opportunity gave them not only the chance to show off their technical skills as dancers but the opportunity to display the quality of the [RWU dance program](#).

“I think of the dance program at Roger Williams University as a hidden gem,” Willis said. “But this performance put us on the map!”

“It was a great honor to be chosen for this performance,” Saunders said. “To dance alongside some successful dancers already in the business was amazing, I came offstage and felt proud to be from RWU.”

The piece the RWU dancers performed was created by RWU alumna Christina Robson '09, who is a member of the Jones/Zane Company in New York. Recently, the dance was recognized by the American College Dance Association and selected as an alternate to be performed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as part of the association's national gala. Robson came to RWU in October 2017 and showcased Multiplex to the dancers.

Robson worked with the students for two days to prepare the students for the performance. Robson says there is nothing that the dancers won't try. If there was a suggestion that came up on how to improve the performance, the dancers were willing to do whatever it took to get the movement right.

"The students are so malleable and willing," Robson said. "My trust in them is so full."

Robson, who is a frequent visiting guest artist with the dance and performance studies program at RWU, specifically wanted RWU performers for the event because she is familiar with the talent and technical skill of the dancers trained in the program, she said. She could think of no better group of dancers to bring her piece to life.

"The RWU dance program cultivates artists," she said.

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