

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

Dance majors travel to Berlin to learn choreography from German dance artists

The dance program at Oakland University took flight this summer, as students, alumni and faculty are showcasing their talents across the globe.

In May, Professor Elizabeth Kattner accompanied ten dance majors to Berlin, Germany, one of Europe's most lively artistic cities. They studied German contemporary dance by taking technique classes at the Tanzfabrik and learning choreography from German dance artists.

"I'm excited about studying with German dancers," said dance student Andrea Cheshure. "I'm eager to learn about their culture knowing we're already connected through our passion for dance."

The OU dancers ended their stay in Berlin with a final performance at the Uferstudios for Contemporary Dance, which serves as a performance space for Berlin's rich culture of solo and group dance artists. They performed their own works from Oakland Dance Theatre productions, as well as new works learned in Berlin. The trip is being funded in part by the Judd Family Endowment and the Maggie Allesee Summer Scholarships for Dance.

"Oakland students had the chance to immerse in one of Europe's artistic and cultural centers," said Kattner, who worked as a dance artist in the city for ten years while completing her Ph.D. in theatre studies. "Germany is important to 20th-century dance; it is the birthplace of modern dance and both theatre and dance dramaturgy. These genres are interwoven with the music, art, literature, architecture and history of the area."

Dance professors Ali Woerner and Thayer Jonutz joined the group for the last week of the program to assist with rehearsals for the Oakland Dance Theatre's performance at the Uferstudios for Contemporary Dance. They also performed in a full-length duet concert with repertory from their professional company, Take Root, and taught a workshop based on Take



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[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), or enable JavaScript if it is disabled in your browser.

TV Berlin filmed the dress rehearsal for the show Berlin Tanzt (starting at 7:50) with glimpses of their performance as well as interviews with students and professors Ali Woerner and Thayer Jonutz.

NEXT STOP: KOREA

Take Root will travel to Korea in August, invited to teach and

Root's partnering methods.

Read more about the Uferstudios for Contemporary Dance and see the schedule for **Oakland Dance Theatre and Take Root performances here.**

perform at the Gwang Jin International Dance Festival in Seoul. They will debut "Ink," an original work based on a short story by OU faculty member and 2012 Kresge Artist Fellow Kathleen Pfeiffer.