

Sarasota Contemporary Dance puts the fun in Funk



PHOTO BY JEFFREY PAUL GUNTART

Contemporary dancer Monessa Salley will perform in December.

See Reverend Barry & the Funk

By MELILSSA SPERBER
FOR THE GONDOLIER

SARASOTA — Sarasota Contemporary Dance puts the “fun” in its dance and music collaboration with Reverend Barry & The Funk.

SCD will join forces with Reverend Barry & The Funk, an eight-piece funk band featuring a three-piece horn section and one of the fastest-rising “buzzworthy” acts in Florida.

This collaboration “will not be a Funk dance show, but instead showcase the essence of funk, groove, and boogie through a contemporary dance language,” said Leymis Bolaños Wilmott, SCD artistic director.

The production will feature her original choreography in collaboration with the SCD dancers. The band’s live, high-energy performance features not only originals, but also true-to-the-original cover versions of funk & soul classics from Earth, Wind & Fire, Tower of Power, Prince, James Brown, Rick James, Aretha Franklin and more.

“It has always been my passion to collaborate with local musicians,” said Bolaños Wilmott. “This is the first time that SCD will be partnering with a funk band, and we couldn’t be more thrilled that they are already a Sarasota favorite.”

Reverend Barry & The Funk are fueled by their recent No. 1 position on ReverbNation’s Funk Charts after the release of their debut album “SxyGdLuv,” and the success of their recent breakout single “LoveShine” — which will feature in the performance — the band is now headlining festivals and larger venues around the state.

The band features: Grammy-nominated drummer Ray C. Williams (Erykah Badu, Stevie Wonder); Grammy-Nominated vocalist Yaya Diamond (for her work with Walter “Clyde” Orange of The Commodores); Grammy-Nominated guitarist Mark Vincent (Melissa Etheridge, Stanley Clarke, The 5th Dimension, Dionne Warwick, Michael Sembello); bassist, lead vocalist and bandleader “Reverend” Barry Nicholson — who has performed and recorded with several top acts in Los Angeles, Dallas and more.

The horn section features Chris Chiodo (trumpet), Bob Miner (sax) and Donald Parker and have decades of performing credits in every imaginable musical style and configuration, from traveling circuses to big band jazz.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Dec. 5 – 8

7:30 p.m. Thursday to Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday

Jane B. Cook Theatre, 5555 North Tamiami Trail Sarasota.