

# Dancing on the coast



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Members of the Sparrow Dance Co. perform outside the Columbia River Maritime Museum in August.

## Sparrow Dance Co. to offer September outdoor performances

BY KATHERINE LACAZE

When Julia Gingerich moved to Astoria, she noticed there were few opportunities for highly trained adult dancers to refine their craft and perform for the community.

The words of Sparrow Dance Co.'s vision statement — “to dance across boundaries of age, culture and ideologies” — captures Gingerich's passion for the group she founded last year.

“Dance is a language with no words,” Gingerich, who serves as the group's artistic director, said. “When I don't have words to express what I'm feeling, whether it's joy

or sadness or frustration, I dance. I create dance and I share my creation with somebody else in hopes that it will evoke emotion or something in them.”

The company is developing a show with a musical theater slant that will be performed three times in September. The show comes after a successful set of family-friendly, social distanced performances in Astoria earlier this summer. The show will include local guest singers and numbers such as “Spoonful of Sugar” from “Mary Poppins,” “Under the Sea” from “The Little Mermaid,” and “Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'” from “Oklahoma!”

The goal of the street dances this summer, Gingerich said, was to find a way to be resilient and find hope while also bringing dance to the community safely.

“A street show was a great way to combine the state the company was in and the state the world was in and give back,” she said.

### Collaborative efforts

The company also includes Sarah Cohen, Sarah Elder and Celeste Olivares.

One of the company's focuses is working with children. This happens through workshops and school partnerships. Through the partnerships, the company leads children to learn about different genres of dance

### If You Go

Performances are free and are scheduled for 6 p.m. Sept. 25 at the Astoria Column, 2 p.m. Sept. 26 at the Garden of Surging Waves and 5 p.m. Sept. 27 at the Columbia River Maritime Museum

and music. This mission has led to working with guest artists and exploring Irish dance, salsa, Afro-Caribbean, Hawaiian hula, among other styles of dance.

“We're looking around for new groups to bring in all the time,” Cohen said.

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