

Groovaloo showcases different side of hip-hop

By Cayla Rasi

COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

An inspirational story about hip-hop dancers will take the stage tonight when Groovaloo comes to Eisenhower Auditorium.

The hip-hop sensation created by Bradley Rapier and Danny Cistone consists of a team of award-winning dancers who create a show that portrays performers' actual experiences.

"The show has a mix of guys and girls from an interesting mix of backgrounds," said Laura Sullivan, marketing and communications director for the Center for Performing Arts.

"They all have solo careers on top of what they do as a group and a national tour."

Dancers have been in commercials, music videos and movies such as "Step Up 2: The Streets."

They've also been featured on television shows like "So You Think You Can Dance," "One Cubed," "The Wayne Brady Show," and "The Ellen Show."

Sullivan said two performers planned to come to Penn State before the show to teach two hip-hop classes, but their flight from Los Angeles, Calif., was canceled due to snow.

Rapier said some people may think hip-hop is dangerous because of the way it is used in popular culture.

"I'm trying to redeem people and welcome them into hip-hop, he said. "All of those stereotypes — we are going to change that as much as we can."

Sullivan agreed with Rapier that the performers present a positive portrayal of hip-hop

"[The performers] are very into

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Bradley Rapier

Groovaloo co-founder

showing people that hip-hop dance doesn't have to come with all of the negativity some people feel is attached to it — it's a very positive dance," Sullivan said.

"Some older generations think that it is bad music, but [the performers] show the positive influence the dance and music can have on young people."

Hip-hop is used throughout the performance to tell the stories of the dancers.

In fact, windmills, shoulder-spins, back-spins, popping and locking are all moves that Rapier will conduct. But he said he does not do any head-spins.

"I went on my head and went, 'Ouch that hurts,'" he said.

Rapier said some performers can spin on their bare heads and others will wear a spin cap with a mesh material or some padding on the inside to help with the wear and tear.

"One of the guys that spins on his head, he has on top of his head a bubble — it's like a sack full of fluid from spinning on his head and it definitely hurts," he said.

The performers use their dance style to connect with the college audience and share their individual personalities with the crowd in attendance.

"Hip-hop dance, it asks you to be yourself, it asks you to train and learn how to get in there — but it asks 'Who are you?' in the dance," Rapier said.

When he isn't traveling and on tour with the rest of the crew, Rapier is at home with his wife and four- and eight-year-old sons — but being home does not mean his dancing stops.

"The cutest and coolest thing at night is that my sons will come say, 'Daddy, let's have a dance-off,'" he said.

"They will move the table and we'll put on music and dance."



Courtesy of playbill.com

Hip-hop dancers will perform "Groovaloo" at 10 p.m. Thursday and 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday in Eisenhower Auditorium. Dancer and co-creator Bradley Rapier said some people have a negative view of hip-hop because of the way it is portrayed in the media, but he hopes "Groovaloo" creates a more positive image.



Courtesy of broadway.com

"Groovaloo" performers were scheduled to hold a hip-hop dancing seminar on campus earlier this week, but snow prevented them from doing so.

To e-mail reporter: car5082@psu.edu

If you go

What: "Groovaloo"

When: 10 p.m. Thursday, 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Where: Eisenhower Auditorium

Details: Tickets cost \$55 and \$49 for an adult, \$40 and \$34 for a University Park student, and \$50 and \$44 for a person 18 and younger.