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Starbelly School of Dance

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RELEASE DATE:

10/16/2019

**Boise's Only Professional Male Belly Dancer Performs in Starbelly's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser** at the Visual Arts Collective in February.

**Boise, ID – January 9, 2019** – Starbelly School of Dance, the resident dance studio of Gem Center for the Arts, will be putting on their 9<sup>th</sup> annual fundraising show at the Visual Arts Collective. Before joining the team at Gem Center for the Arts, Starbelly made a name for themselves by performing quality Raqs Sharqi (or belly dance) at restaurants and festivals all over Boise and beyond. The Fundraiser began as a showcase, but over the years evolved into a more cohesive show with all the dance pieces being connected thematically. “It has given us all the opportunity to dig a little deeper as dancers,” explains Cecilia Rinn, Starbelly’s director, “and explore the stories we want to tell with our dance.”

In addition to an extremely talented performing group, Starbelly School of Dance is also home to Boise’s only professional male belly dancer. Chad Rinn began dancing with his wife, Cecilia Rinn in 2009 and has made a name for himself with his fluid, powerful movements and masculine stage presence. “I expected us to be dancing on stage together when I first met him,” Cecilia says of Chad, “but it took a few years for it to actually happen. Once it did, though, there was no stopping him, he was dancing 15-20 hours a week. Belly dance has been a remarkably empowering for thousands of women around the world, and it is exciting to see the audience react to a male belly dancer. It is never what they expect, and it expands (explores?) the many facets of what it is to be a man.” Chad also teaches classes at the school, including Toltec Energy Dance and Yoga.

Cecilia Rinn, who has been dancing professionally in Boise for over 20 years, is the driving force behind Starbelly. Not only does she teach nearly all the classes at the school and choreograph all the dance pieces, she also designs and sews all the costumes. “Our annual fundraiser is quite an undertaking, but I have a wonderful team of performers and student volunteers who bring the show to life.” All proceeds for the show go toward Starbelly’s scholarship and financial hardship programs that assist dancers who may be facing financial difficulties.