

Performing, in dance

Local troupe proves talent

The popular myth that first-rate local talent is non-existent will be dispelled Friday evening when Powers and Jeans Dance Ensemble take their act to the Hult Center for the Performing Arts.

This newly-formed group hopes to draw the size of audience that will help give other Northwest-based performers the chance to appear at the Hult — an opportunity which until now has been reserved for famous name artists.

"Smiles and Titters" is the first of six performances in a "Spotlight Series" which is to be held in the Soreng Theatre. It is, incredibly, the Center's first straight jazz dance presentation, as well as Powers and Jeans' first major performance.

Both Michelle Powers and Liz Jeans, the ensemble's co-directors, are well-known community performers and dance instructors.

Powers teaches jazz classes at the Creative Institute of Dance in Eugene and runs the Whiteaker Dance Program.

Jeans is heavily involved in "education through the performing arts" and has helped develop and direct the C.C.P.A.'s National Endowment for the Arts Dance Program. She also instructs community classes through Whiteaker.

Both women have gone through the Master's program in dance at the University of Oregon and are involved in numerous other pursuits in

choreography and consulting.

The Powers and Jeans Dance Ensemble will be performing in other cities in an effort to promote jazz as an art in Eugene and the Northwest area. Dancing along with Powers and Jeans are troupe members Donna Briggs, Kevin Collins, Doug Nelson, Cara Siler, Dave West and Terri Wilder.

"Eugene is full of talent," says Powers, "and it needs to be supported by the public."

Music set for the concert ranges from classical to jazz pieces. The choreographical themes are varied, from reflecting the innocence of child's play in "Twine the Garland" to the dynamic sensuality of feminine powers in "Jezebel."

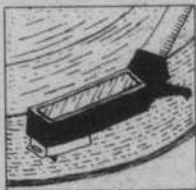
Another featured highlight in "Smiles and Titters" is the exciting and satirical "For Artists Only." The piece, originally done as part of Powers' Master's thesis at the U of O, is performed by two male martial arts experts.

Because the concert is directed at "the emotional part of everyone," as well as at the dance audience, "everyone will leave feeling something," adds Powers.

Smiles and titters, perhaps?

The concert is to be held Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m., in the Soreng Theatre. Tickets are \$5.50 in advance; \$6.50 at the door.

Julie Shippen



On record

Old Moody Blues moulder away

"The Present"
The Moody Blues
Threshold

First off, the title is a misnomer.

"The Present"? All the material on this album sounds like it came from the past — the distant past when the world was filled with weekend seminars and isolation tanks and "Have a nice day" people strolled untethered on the streets.

If the title means "The Present" in the form of a gift, take it back.

This latest Moody Blues effort is totally boring. Why do those old fellows bother? Why don't they lean back in their rocking chairs and reminisce about the good ol' '70s when they were pop-stars with long silk scarfs, windblown blonde hair and leave us alone?

This album is a fascinating exercise in simple futility. "The Present" presents nothing new. It shows no change in the band. There are no new variations in the classic formula. The tracks all lack tension. This is passable flatulence but not passable pop. One track congeals into the other like the grease on a plate of cold french fries. And it's just as palatable.

In "Meet Me Halfway," the Moody Blues ask the

musical question "would you meet me halfway?" Don't...not even for tie-dyed tee shirts and a chance to meet Tim Leary. He's dead anyway.

The usual Moody Blues album format dictates they do one track with pretensions toward rock'n'roll music — with a prominent guitar and as up tempo as the flatfooted oldsters can get. They did it again with "Sitting at the Wheel."

Instead of sitting at the wheel this track should be broken upon it. It's trash and so is the MTV video.

"Going Nowhere" is an aptly titled track, but rather than a self-realization, it becomes a sluggish paean to idiotic optimism.

The vocalist (it's Justin Justin, or something like that) steps up and croons: "Once more I've lived, I've laughed, and I've lost." And the music is also impotent.

Trite sentiments aside, who gives half-a-shit about this popster's 40ish romantic angst?

Later on he coos: "But now I know the good news, before you win, you have to lose." So profound — really yawn deep, ya know?

Lastly, this disc has a resiliency that is enraging. When it is torn from the turntable, thrown to the floor, stomped upon many times, bent this way and that and flung against the wall — it flatly refuses to shatter to smithereens. URRRGH!

Cort Fernald

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