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# Dancers seek enrichment

The Human Dancing Company is more than movement and more than dance, and its purpose is to do more than entertain. With titles on the program such as "Duel With The Enemy," "The Voices Of Amima," "When Marriage Becomes Friendship" and "The Rebirth Of Icarus," one might think they were in for more than just an evening of watching 11 dancers exhibit their talents. They'd be right.

Andre Carpenter, HDC artistic director, wants his audience to leave a performance changed; perhaps disturbed, perhaps elated and somehow richer emotionally and spiritually.

"I would dare to say that I'm more of a philosopher (than dancer-director), but I'm expressing it in a theatrical form rather than an academic one," Carpenter says. "It's not just another dance company," he adds.

Carpenter believes that anyone who has what he calls an "inner life," as well as anyone who has questions about what it is to be human will be challenged by an HDC performance.

That's not an empty belief. The company makes passive viewing passe. The audience can't help but get involved and grow with the unfolding of ideas on stage — ideas presented through the all-original works which combine dramatic movement, mime, archetypal themes, mythology, social commentary and an eclectic mix of music (from Bach to Zimbalist to Laurie Anderson to Varigélis.) The result is a story that says something about the human condition.

The HDC was created in Ashland in 1973 as a non-profit educational organization. Its first major creation was a show titled "Becoming Human — A Journey Of Consciousness," which took the then six-plus members on tour and to various temporary residences up and down the West Coast, where audiences have been, for the most part, enormously receptive.

Carpenter says the HDC's purpose is to "inspire care for the as-yet unrealized potentialities of the human being, to encourage the integration of human consciousness, and to reveal ourselves and the audience to the embarrassing beauty of inner life, through the performing arts."

Carpenter's philosophical and artistic intentionality is an integral aspect of the purpose of the HDC, and "Initiations," the company's current tour of performances, fits in with that purpose. Carpenter says that since childhood he has been trying to understand the disturbing state of things

in the world, and has been trying to find a solution. This quest is what "Initiations" is about.

"It's about being initiated to all the aspects of ourselves that we don't know," Carpenter says. "What we don't know in ourselves we will fear in others. It's individuation — the process of becoming a whole human being."

One of the dances in the program, "Greek Pas-De-Deux," is dedicated to the forgotten ancient ideal of kalokagathos (a fine mind in a fine body.) Carpenter explains, it's the one-on-one, intimate rapport of mentor and pupil as the medium for truly inspired education.

"It's leading out what is already inside, while education is stuffing in rather than leading out," he says.

Another dimension of the HDC is its relation to Western culture. Carpenter feels that in the feminist movement, somehow men have been left out and are confused about their roles. In the HDC, men are left in — the company has three women and eight men, uncommon for a dance company.

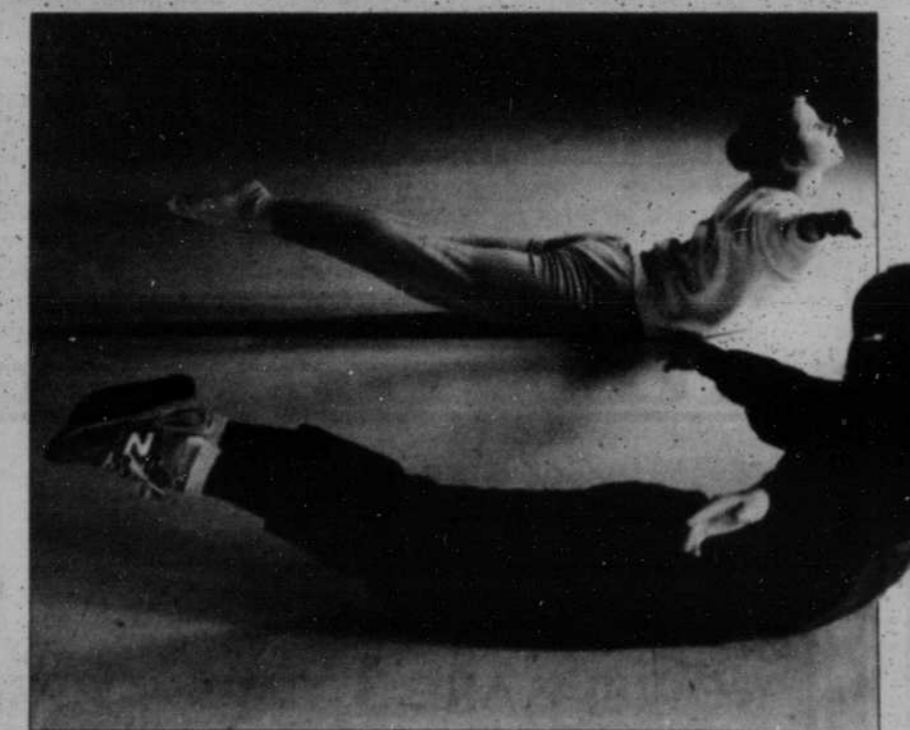
"Initiations" begins with "Initiation To Manhood," which is danced while a story about a hunt is recited. The show progresses to depict an evolution, with "Initiation To The Shadow," to the "Anima And Animus," to the "Mentor," to "Brotherhood," and finally to "Wholeness." It ends with a joyful piece, "Alleluia The Colors."

Dancers of the HDC include Douglas Zalud-Mackie, Anne Egan, Julie McCullough, Sara Gustafson-Lombardi, Gregory Lara and Bob Ollar, all of whom danced with the Eugene Ballet Company as well. Completing the company are co-producers Carpenter and Richard Reitz, along with Lee Anderson, Richard Gustafson and Michael Wendt.

"Basically my show is to feed that inner life. I sort of take them (the audience) by the hand gently," Carpenter says. "I'm really not doing this for my own ego trip. I really feel like 'poor world, you can do something to re-sensitize yourself,'" he adds.

HDC's "Initiations" will be performed next Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the Soreng Theatre in the Hull Center. Reserved-seat tickets are \$6, \$7 and \$8, and are available at the EMU Main Desk and all Hull Center ticket outlets.

Story by Amy Moss  
Photos by Steve Gibbons



(Left) Julie McCullough (front) and Sara Gustafson-Lombardi dance with the Eugene Ballet as well as the HDC. (Right) Anne Egan prepares for "Initiations," the HDC's current tour.



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