

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Dance production incorporates motion, dialogue into concert

By Karen Engels

Of the Emerald

Audiences may be surprised to find dialogue as well as dance featured in "Dance '87," the annual winter concert presented by "Dance Oregon!"

"Some of the choreographers wanted to make a statement two ways — through both dance and through dialogue," said Janet Descutner, University dance professor and producer/director of the show.

Choreographers developed the use of dialogue in the show after experimenting with the idea last year, Descutner said. "The dialogue forms a framework for the dance."

The annual dance production, which is in its 27th year, will be staged seven times and opens tonight in Villard Hall's Robinson Theatre. More than 40 student dancers and actors are featured in the production, which is the largest of the year.

The performers range from freshmen to graduate students to faculty, and from dance majors to people who "just like to dance," Descutner explained.

"The dancers are excited and involved — many are finding new challenges, and some are performing on stage for the first time," she said.

The concert includes six works choreographed by University dance faculty members and guest choreographer Rolande Chesebro of Seattle, who earned her master's degree in dance from the University in 1982. The dances are "related to who the dancers are," Descutner said.

"The choreographers are mostly faculty members. It's like in the art department where professors are artists. We make dances," she said.

"Everyone in the audience will find something to like. We have everything from a tap dance number to a classical ballet en

pointe, and the dialogue may come as a surprise to some in the audience," Descutner said.

Auditions for the show were held in the fall, and dancers have been rehearsing with choreographers two to three times a week since then. Emphasis this month has been on costumes, lights and working on the Villard stage, Descutner said.

One difference in the production this year has been the group's name, which was changed from the UO Concert Dance Theater to "Dance Oregon!"

The group did more repertory dance in the past, said Descutner, and selections often were revived from past years. The change will include more dancers and involve more of the student body, Descutner said. This year, only one of the dances has been revived from a past year.

This modern dance, entitled "Adrift," explores the use of visual pattern and rhythms as a way of molding empty space and reflects the state of mind evoked by the ocean, she said.

Another dance, "for nancy," takes the audience to New York in the 1950s with a mixture of jazz, tap and musical theater styles. "It has the hustle and bustle of the subways, the sadness and loneliness of 42nd Street at night and a big-bang ending," Descutner said.

Musical director for "Dance '87" is Bruno Madrid, a University dance instructor. Lighting is by David Shaw, a University theater instructor.

Curtain time is 8 p.m. for all performances, scheduled for tonight, Saturday, Jan. 24, 29, 30, 31 and Feb. 6 and 7.

Tickets are \$3.50 for University students, \$5.50 for the general public and \$4.50 for seniors and students. Tickets can be reserved by calling the University Theatre box office at 686-4191 from noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

'Bits & Pieces' focuses on mortality

By Frale de Guzman

Of the Emerald

University Theatre's second season opened Thursday with "Bits & Pieces," a contemporary version of the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris, in the Arena Theatre located in Villard Hall.

Playwright Corrine Jacker began writing "Bits & Pieces" after being informed that she suffered from a terminal illness, said director Terra Daugirda Pressler. Later, Jacker learned that she had been misdiagnosed.

Although the play helped her deal with the imminence of her own death, Jacker also ad-

resses the effects death has on the survivors, Pressler said.

"Bits & Pieces" focuses on a young housewife, Iris (Marla Wildeson), attempting to deal with her husband's death.

Confused and grief-stricken, Iris, through the use of flashbacks, journeys within herself to her former life with Philip (Peter Davis). She also journeys out into the world to meet the recipients of Philip's body parts, which he donated for organ transplants.

The play sensitively explores the question of mortality and emotional dependence, said Pressler. However, there are many of comic moments in the

play.

"Bits & Pieces" is a non-linear play that leaves the audience with a warm, healing feeling," Pressler said.

It was honored in 1975 with an Obie Award for the best new play.

"Bits & Pieces" will run through this weekend, Jan. 29-31 and Feb. 5-7. Curtain time is 8 p.m. for all performances.

Tickets are \$2.50 and are available at the University Theatre box office located in the lobby of the Robinson Theatre. Box office hours are noon to 4 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and noon to 8:30 p.m. on performance nights.

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