

Dancing with Wings on their Heels

Story by Freya Horn

A rich variety of dances — from the rhythmically complex ethnic dances of Bulgaria to the metaphorical dances of animals in the wild — will be presented in "Wings On Your Heels," opening January 15 in the Robinson Theatre.

The dance department will present this 32nd annual Department of Dance faculty dance concert in conjunction with the theatre arts program, which provides costume and set design, technical direction and theater space to complement the five individual choreographed pieces.

Susan Zadoff, senior instructor of dance, composed "Silenced" as a timely piece related to the Anne Frank exhibit.

Zadoff wanted to be involved in the Anne Frank exhibit currently showing in Eugene, but realized the "Wings On Your Heels" show was opening around the same time, she said.

"I wanted to be connected. The silencing of (Frank's) voice represents six million voices silenced," she said. For this reason, her piece has an underlying theme that is political.

She said she began to see the structured, organizational murdering of the Holocaust as parallel to other forms of oppression.

"I began to see book banning, which is an attempt to suppress ideas, as parallel to the silencing of people," she said.

To convey the "silencing of voices," Zadoff's dancers speak small excerpts from various banned books, such as the works of John Steinbeck, Henry D. Thoreau and Anne Frank.

This theatrical aspect, or scenario, that the story of Anne Frank inspired is not typical of her choreography, she said. But she said she felt Anne Frank's message of the resiliency of the human spirit, or its ability to overcome oppression, was a message she wanted to portray through dance.

Lisa Arkin, an assistant professor of dance, choreographed "Bulgarska Kitka: Bulgarian Bouquet," which features eight women wearing traditional clothing designs from indigenous people of Bulgaria's Shope Mountains.



Dancers rehearse "Light" (above) for the Jan. 15 opening show of "Wings On Your Heels," the 32nd annual Department of Dance faculty concert. (left) A dress rehearsal of "Air for the G-String," one of the contributions to the dance concert.

Courtesy Photos

"With the strife and ethnic warfare in the Balkans now, I thought it would be good to bring an awareness of the culture to the University," Arkin, who has studied with master dance instructors in Bulgaria, said.

Her purpose in featuring Bulgarian women's dance, she said, was to portray their unique styles and expressions.

"The hand gestures are unique to the women of Bulgaria," she said. "They're a demonstration of the merging of Slavic and Moslem cultural traditions."

This 15-minute dance "suite" represents Bulgarian

dance as a whole by combining various dances and moves from different regions of the country.

Live music on bagpipe, clarinet, percussion and accordion — native instruments of Bulgaria — and traditional Bulgarian folk songs will accompany the dancers' intricate arm movements and syncopated footwork.

Mark Levy, assistant professor of music, arranged the music for the trio of musicians and Carol Silverman,

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