

THE ABILITY TO DANCE

The 9th annual Danceability Workshop will allow able-bodied and disabled people to dance together

By Nicole Krueger
Entertainment Editor

Although many people don't think of dancing as a form of communication, Alito Alessi emphasizes the communication that can occur between people who dance together.

This communication forms the basis of Alessi's Danceability Workshop, in which people with various physical abilities and limitations dance together, expressing themselves through motion. In the process, attitudinal barriers between these people are eliminated.

"People get into a mode of looking at disabilities," Alessi said. "We show them there are different ways of looking at things."

The purpose of the workshop is to create a supportive environment in which people feel comfortable exploring their different movement capabilities. In this environment, both disabled and able-bodied people discover a common ground for mutual self-expression.

"Our goal is to create an artistic community where people aren't inhibited by social differences or disabilities," Alessi said.

As the co-founder of Joint Forces Dance Company, Alessi began the Danceability Project nine years ago in order to "really explore movement in a different way." He organized a workshop that was open to all people, and the event drew about 100 participants.

"Imagine walking into a room with 100 people ready to dance," Alessi said.

Alessi explained that when people attend the

Turn to **DANCEABILITY**, Page 7



Visiting art history professor possesses unique background

Gabrielle Yablonsky has traveled extensively throughout Europe and Southeast Asia, studying and creating art

By Jim Ransier
Freelance Reporter

While Professor Cynthia Bogel spends the 1995-1996 school year in Japan, Professor Gabrielle Yablonsky hopes to increase student interest and participation in Asian and Tibetan art history classes during the winter and spring terms.

Originally from New Jersey, Yablonsky spent her undergraduate years at the University of Paris in Paris, France. She spent most of her time traveling to places all around Europe, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

While living there, Yablonsky's interest in exotic and extreme places became apparent.

"I didn't spend as much time on classes as I did traveling," Yablonsky said. "But the traveling got me hooked on exotic places."

Upon returning from Europe,

Yablonsky attended Boston University, where she received a degree in painting, and Yale, where she received a masters in art history. Part of her work towards her art history degree included several months in Africa, where she observed an African tribe and learned its diverse history.

Yablonsky then took to Southeast Asia on a full scholarship to India.

"When I got a full-ride scholarship to India, I was supposed to paint," Yablonsky said, "but I saw these textiles in a museum, from the kingdom of Bhutan. They were strange and complex, and I thought, 'That must say something, it must be symbolic of something.'"

"I discovered they did mean something, and I spent the next seven years of my life in the Tibet/Nepal/Bhutan region."

During her seven year odyssey,

Yablonsky spent most of her time in the remote regions of the Himalayas or with natives in the central Indian jungles.

"I'm kind of a rebel. If the government says you can't go there, that's where I wanted to go," Yablonsky said. "The most fascinating places were where they didn't want you to go, such as the area along the Chinese border."

Yablonsky spent two years in Nepal and three years in Bhutan, and during that time she accumulated more than 30,000 photographic slides and hours worth of film that she shot out in the field.

After her scholarship ran out, Yablonsky managed to obtain several grants, such as the Ford Foundation Grant and the Rockefeller Grant, in order to stay in the region.

Yablonsky said everything takes a long time to do in the Himalayas

because of the remoteness of the region.

"It takes a long time to get around in the Himalayas. You have to walk on foot everywhere, and the conditions are extreme and difficult," Yablonsky said.

While filling in for Professor Bogel this year, Yablonsky hopes to use her field work on some of the courses she will be teaching, including an art history class spring term that will focus on the art of Tibet and the Himalayas.

When asked what she wanted her students to get out of her class, Yablonsky said, "I want to interest them, to see if they can go out and do their own research and observation. Asian art is my specialty, and I think it is such an interesting area of study."

"Most of all, I would like to see an increase in student participation," she said.