

DANCE

'Pathfinder' presents social concerns through dance

Several choreographers have come together to create an expression of social concerns

By Kristin Mihalco
Freelance Reporter

The fragile irony of dying to live, the solitude found in cathedral ruins and the celebration of women's strength, power and integrity are only a few social concerns presented through contemporary choreography and dance in Lane Community College's "Pathfinder."

The performance allows six well-known local dance companies to bring their talents together for an evening of dance.

Visitors to the Performance Hall at LCC can support local talent while experiencing seven choreographers' insights through a diverse array of contemporary dances.

"Expressions of social concern is the unifying theme of this show, and each choreographer approaches this theme in her own unique and creative

way," said Mary Seereiter, the director of "Pathfinder" and the director of the dance program in the LCC Performing Arts Department.

"Art can be a barometer for what is happening in the world today and can give insight into the direction we're taking," she said.

Letters of invitation were sent to all local dance companies that work with contemporary dance asking the choreographers to combine their individual ideas and insights with their dance talent, Seereiter said.

While guest artists have been featured in previous LCC Performing Arts performances, this is the first time such a broad spectrum of contemporary works and perspectives has been presented.

The concert, which will include more than 30 dancers from LCC, the University and the featured dance companies, will present choreographed works by Margo Van Ummeren of the Rosehips Dance Co., Sheila San Nicholas of San Nicholas & Co., Mary Seereiter and Cheryl Lemmer of LCC,

Donna Briggs of the Briggs Contemporary Dance Co., Sherrie Barr of the University, and guest artist Cara Haakanson.

Sherrie Barr, associate professor of dance at the University, is thrilled to take part in this collaboration and was honored to be invited as a guest artist.

Barr's piece, titled "We See Ourselves," features three university students, senior dance majors Kristin Hapke and Amy Dore and sophomore dance major Angela Mattox.

"We See Ourselves" represents the intermingling of the past and the present to find one's self," said Barr, whose inspiration came from the cathedral ruins she recently visited in Wales and England.

"I want the audience to make discoveries and gain awareness, but I can't dictate what they get out of it. They must come and experience it for themselves," she said.

While the show is aimed at educating and entertaining the audience, Seereiter said the underlying intent is to further educate the dancers and give them a chance to perform.

"The ideas of the different choreographers and companies catapults [the dancers] into a whole other level," Seereiter said. "The biggest driving force behind these performances is that I'm a teacher and an educator."

The set consists solely of the stage, the lights and an occasional chair. Seereiter, who also credits the lighting director and costume designer for completing the image, said the dancers are the sets.

Lighting director Jim McCarty worked individually with each choreographer to capture the intent and the feeling of the piece, Seereiter said.

University alumna Sue Surdam Bean, the costume designer for "Pathfinder," used an ancient Chinese dyeing technique to color the dancers' leotards.

"Pathfinder begins at 8 p.m. at LCC Performance Hall. Tickets are \$6 for students and seniors and \$8 for adults and may be purchased at the Hult Center Ticket Outlets, Backstage Dancewear and at the LCC Ticket Office.



Shepard to sing at Hult Center

Vonda Shepard will open for Jackson Browne Feb. 27 at the Hult Center.

Shepard, who has sung with Rickie Lee Jones, Jackson Browne and Al Jarreau, recently released her third album, *It's Good, Eve*, by Vesper Alley Records.

The show will begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$20.50-\$28.50.

Danceability: Workshop facilitates communication

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Danceability Workshop for the first time, they usually aren't sure what to expect.

"People are a little bit nervous and apprehensive," he said, "so we provide a place where they can ask questions, view demonstrations and look at documents and video tapes."

"People begin to relax when they realize what it is," Alessi said.

The Danceability Workshop is based on contact improvisation, a dance form in which two or more people move together, linked by a point of contact. Differences

in range of movement shape the dance that unfolds between dancers, he said.

"The workshop has developed a whole philosophical approach to movement as nonverbal communication between disabled and able-bodied people," Alessi said.

"It's amazing, the depth and quality of communication that gets generated over a couple of days," he said. "People really love it, and they're having fun."

An international staff, including blind, disabled and able-bodied movement artists, will teach the Danceability Workshop. All of the

workshop's events will be sign interpreted and wheelchair accessible.

The workshop, co-sponsored by the University Department of Dance, will begin with an introductory lecture from 7-9 p.m. at the Hilyard Community Center. The actual workshop will occur from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 2-3 at Agate Hall.

A "potluck and potpourri of dance and music" will follow the workshop March 2.

The cost of the Danceability Workshop is based on a sliding scale, and can vary from \$25-100. Scholarships are available.

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