



Gina Gibney Dance presents *unbounded* from Jan. 11 to 13 as part of the White Bird/Portland State University Dance Series.

standing up for your beliefs and maintaining a strong sense of artistic purpose.

Even during the process of creating a new dance, Gibney collaborates with the dancers in her company.

"People's voices are respected," she says. "It's my vision, but there is a lot of input and respect toward [the dancers'] point of view."

Gina Gibney Dance will perform one of these collaborative works in Portland from Jan. 11 to 13 as part of the White Bird/Portland State University Dance Series.

The piece, called *unbounded*, is inspired largely by the dancers with whom the choreographer has worked. She describes the dance as an exploration of boundaries, both real and imagined. The set includes lengths of white tulle that fence in the stage.

Gibney adds: "This is a very abstract piece. There is nothing tangible except the fabric and the relationships between the dancers, and the connection to the space they're working in."

Given her advocacy for women in dance, it seems appropriate that Gibney's Portland debut is part of this particular season, titled "A Celebration of International Women Choreographers."

Though Trisha Brown, an important female choreographer, opened the White Bird/PSU Dance Series in 2000, it has since featured mostly male choreographers. So White Bird co-founders Paul King and Walter Jaffe thought it was time to celebrate the contributions of women choreographers.

The theme came about serendipitously. The first company White Bird booked for the 2006-07 series was Tania Pérez-Salas Compañía de Danza, based in Mexico City.

When Jaffe and King saw Pérez-Salas perform in Mexico two years ago, they knew they wanted to bring the group to Portland. But because she did not have an agent at the time, it took some doing to get the company to the United States. The Portland performance from Oct. 12 to 14 will mark the beginning of Pérez-Salas' first U.S. tour.

The second company that White Bird booked, Conny Janssen Danst, is from Rotterdam, the

Netherlands. Though well-known in Europe, the group has never performed in the United States, so its Portland performance of *Rebound* from March 22 to 24 will be the piece's U.S. premiere.

Compagnie TchéTché is an ensemble of four women from the Ivory Coast of Africa. The group's name means "eagle" in the Bété language, and its mission is to show the power and glory of women. From Dec. 7 to 9 it will perform the work *Dimi*, which explores the complexities of modern African women, for Portland audiences.

Once Jaffe and King confirmed the appearance of Compagnie TchéTché, the season's theme was clear.

Jaffe says: "That really became the theme...the challenges and opportunities that women artists face, and have faced in the past, in different countries."

To kick off the series, White Bird and Reed College's dance department have organized a panel discussion, free and open to the public. The event, which takes place Oct. 10, will feature Gibney and Pérez-Salas, dance writer Suzanne Carbonneau and Portland-based choreographer and teacher Linda K. Johnson. Their moderator will be Norton Owen, archivist for the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. (Seating is limited; contact White Bird to reserve space.)

The topic of the conference, says King, is the past, present and future of women's role in dance. He expects the panelists, with their different backgrounds, to contribute an intriguing range of views to the discussion. 10

A CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN CHOREOGRAPHERS kicks off Oct. 12 with Tania Pérez-Salas Compañía de Danza. All performances begin 8 p.m. at Portland State University's Lincoln Hall, 1620 S.W. Park Ave. Tickets are \$14-\$25 from Ticketmaster. For more information visit www.whitebird.org.

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