

DANCE

First Movement

BodyVox christens future home base with collaborative show

by Rebecca Ragain

Over two decades as a dancer with companies such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and Eugene Ballet Company/Ballet Idaho, Matthew Hope has made the occasional choreographic contribution. But it had been almost four years since he exercised that side of his creativity.

"When I moved to Portland it felt good to just be a dancer again, to ease into being with BodyVox, figure out how they work," says Hope. "It is a really unique company, and I'd never done anything like that before."

By the time artistic directors Jamey Hampton and Ashley Roland invited four company members to create sections of BodyVox's new work, *The Foot Opera Files*, Hope was more established, both personally (he loves Portland and the gay community here) and professionally. He was ready to return to working on his own movement and ideas.

To jump-start *The Foot Opera Files*, Roland and Hampton chose a selection of Tom Waits songs and mapped out the overall vision. Then, each of the six chore-

ographers—Roland, Hampton, Hope, Eric Skinner, Lane Hunter and Daniel Kirk—picked songs that spoke to them from that initial pool, and got down to the business of creating movement.

Because every choreographer is also dancing in the show, Hope describes the rehearsal process as "being in front and making up movement and then diving in and learning someone else's movement."

Hope says, "It's been really fun to be part of everyone else's creative process at the same time I'm working on my own movement."

The result is 18 choreographic sections comprising a series of vignettes. The show will be accompanied by live music—a band headed by 3 Leg Torso's Michael Papillo and vocals by the Portland Opera Studio Artists—and performed in the unfinished space of BodyVox's future home. 

BodyVox presents *The Foot Opera Files* March 26 to April 5 at BodyVox Dance Center, 1201 N.W. 17th St. Tickets are \$30-\$46 from 503-229-0627.



MICHAEL SHEA

BodyVox's *Foot Opera Files* was inspired by a selection of songs by Tom Waits.

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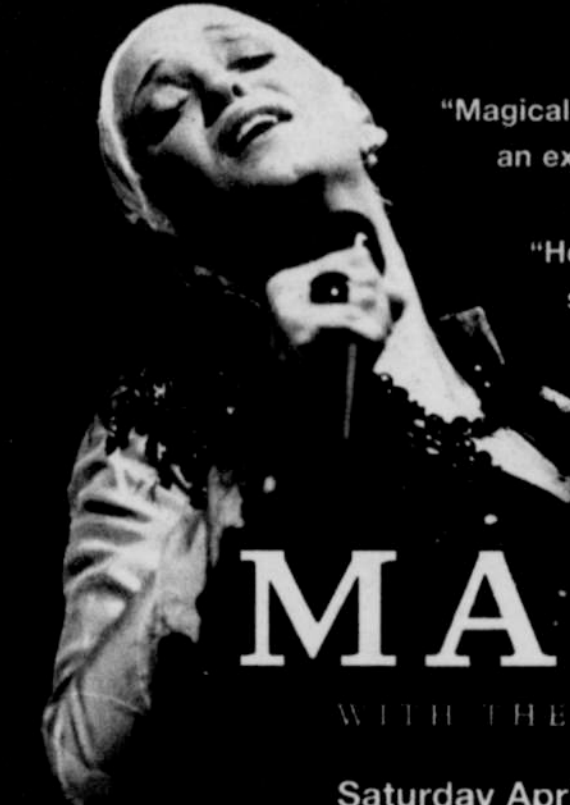
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