

Live from New York

Choreographer Bryan Hayes returns.

Unlike many towns this size, Eugene's dance community receives an astounding variety of dancer/choreographers who visit from larger cities. Even more amazing, a large number of these artists who contribute to this dance potpourri have strong, deep ties to Eugene. All this serves as a reminder that, when we look closely at the dance world, it really is one huge family, connected by thick, intertwining ropes of movement and artistic vision.

A few weeks ago, Salt Lake City-based, former Eugene dance teachers Pamela Geber and Eric Handman jogged our memories when they brought their dance and video creations to the UO. This week, we will have a rare opportunity to witness the work of widely acclaimed New York choreographer Bryan Hayes, when he presents an evening of experimental creations on Sunday. The show will consist of original dance film and live choreography, including a new duet for Hayes and Eugene dancer Pollyanna Lind.

Hayes, born and raised in Eugene, began visualizing dance paired with different kinds of music when he was in high school, inspired by his violinist mother. "I think from the beginning I sort of had a choreographer's mentality," he says.

Soon after, Hayes headed off to New York to immerse himself in movement.

Since then, the 56-year-old has built an astounding list of accomplishments, including a faculty position with Merce Cunningham Dance Studio, numerous dances of his own and lofty praise from *The New York Times* and *The Village Voice*.

Like Geber and Handman, much of Hayes' recent work deals with elements outside traditional live stage performance, including video, and we will see this reflected in Sunday's show. His three-part dance film series *Box* has been included in a gallery installation at New York's Art Under Construction, and Hayes will share a section of this, along with the premiere showing of *Chamber*, a piece created in collaboration with Eugene's Van Ummersen Dance Company. Hayes and the Van Ummersen Company made *Chamber* last summer, and the entire film is shot from above. "It creates this very strange sense of gravity," Hayes says. "It's kind of a fugue."

While artists everywhere still experiment with avant garde stylings such as this, Hayes says the dance world in gener-

Hayes' *Chamber* explores movement from unique angles.



al has recently taken steps back from more adventurous choreography, due to economic hardship. "Fewer people are doing it on a small scale," he says. "The art world has gotten sort of increasingly commercial-oriented. A lot of crowd-pleasing special effects and pyrotechnics are going on... It's a problem across the world."

Hayes says the solution lies in both a more enlightened National Endowment for the Arts as well as producers who don't underestimate the intelligence of their audiences. "If we were spending more money on art and less on bombs, that would help," he adds.

However, Hayes says he sees promise in Eugene. "It's the beginnings of an art community that could blossom," he says. "There's a sophisticated audience for a range of things, and there may be a wider angle of things going on here. I think the Northwest is fairly progressive."

But despite all this, the choreographer says he is not out to transform the art world. "I don't have an agenda," he says. "I'm just doing what I do."

And Eugene audiences can see Hayes do what he does at 7 pm Dec. 14 at 55 W. Broadway, in the former Alder Gallery space.

"It's something different," he promises. **ew**

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