

Choreographic Constellations

And the spaces in between

As if focusing a telescope on a distant galaxy, choreographers shape movement to transform our perspective. One degree of difference, and new realms of possibility emerge, even with the same building blocks of dance: shape, force and time. Relationships are illuminated. Connections are made to the remote past and the immediate present. Like optimistic astronomers, dancers push boundaries as they explore the limits of human possibilities. And as they pursue an understanding of what's to come, dancers delve also into what has been. A momentary interplay, a fascinating dialogue, between mentor and protégé, between past and future, can come to the stage through this kind of experimentation.

Walter Kennedy and Dancers will bring an evening of such invention to the Soreng Theatre at the Hult Center Nov. 12 and 13. In a tribute to the late choreographer Bella Lewitzky, along with new works by Kennedy, the performance promises to be as rare in these parts as viewing an eclipse on a cloudless night.

Professor of dance at the UO and recipient of a prestigious research award, Kennedy is both determined and humble about the opportunity to gather professional dancers from across the country for this event. He is

pleased to pay homage to his artistic "mom," Bella Lewitzky. "I grew up as an artist under her, because of her," Kennedy said. And he is eager to excite Eugene audiences about dance in its pure yet passionate form.

Working with dancers in New York, Minneapolis and Los Angeles — his "best dance buddies" — and students and faculty from this community has provided Kennedy just the right atmosphere for creativity, he said. Dance making is just the beginning point for Kennedy, his lens for looking at seemingly disparate events, people and places. Dance has helped shape the person he's

become.

The breadth of Kennedy's performance suggests the scope not only of his own career but also the last half-century of dance making.

Three reconstructions of pieces by Bella Lewitzky will be featured. A firebrand mover who first danced with Lester Horton, Lewitzky's incandescence as a performer was unparalleled. Strong, unmannered, starkly funny at times and always an individual, Lewitzky made significant contributions on stage and off.

The Lewitzky Company, which she founded at age 50, probed the idea of dance possibilities, of physical versatility. Lewitzky looked for new ways to create, to learn, to re-

WALTER KENNEDY DANCE PROJECT
at 7:30 pm Nov. 12-13
at the Soreng Theatre,
Hult Center.



In New York, Walter Kennedy and Diane Vivona rehearse a section of Kennedy's new dance piece, *The Deep Field*.

late to movement and the social solar system. Although her company made its farewell tour in 1997, her work continues to burn as brightly as a supernova.

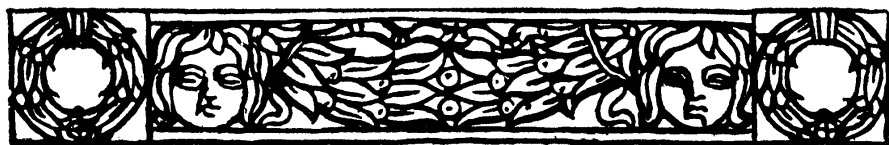
Kennedy has re-mounted three of Lewitzky's pivotal works. The first are two movements from the lyrical *Suite Satie*, a solo. It was the first piece to be set on Kennedy when he joined the Lewitzky company in 1980. The duet *Pietas*, 1971, expresses with iconic angularity the dignity of protest, a nation at war, its youth in rebellion. *Kinaesonata*, a solo, will be performed by veteran Lewitzky dancer, Lori McWilliams.

The last piece has a direct tie to the Eugene community. In 1970, Lewitzky was in residence at the UO. She also held classes at South Eugene High School, searching for the edge, the connections, the new and the universal in a moment, a gesture, a line, a

dance.

As segue into his own contemporary dance work, Kennedy will offer *Twilight Yielding*, a solo from 1998. Other new pieces include *Bridges/LA*, a collaborative piece featuring Bonnie Simoa and video by Bridget Murnane and Kennedy. In this process-oriented inquiry, a conversation erupts between dancer and film projection, place and perspective, separateness and connection. And finally, in *The Deep Field*, Kennedy strives to make sense of seemingly unconnected movement, such as the stars and their alignment.

Through anchors of the familiar and tested mapping and with optimism, dance-makers let us look at ourselves as people the way we gaze at the heavens. We see better the connections we can make among ourselves and the empty spaces that have always been in between. **ew**



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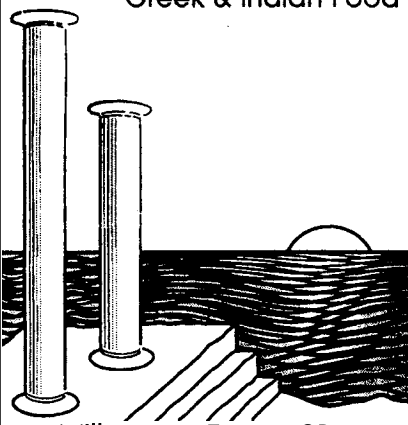
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