

THE TREND SETTER

Cornel Hardiman aka Karress Ann Slaughter

Female illusionist, G.L.A.M. Nights

If you've been to a G.L.A.M. night (formerly at John Henry's, now at Diablo's), you're familiar with Karress Ann Slaughter's killer, on-the-cultural-pulse moves — usually done in 6-inch heels. For those of you who haven't, G.L.A.M. host Diva Simone Slaughter sums it up best: "He was part of the movement that brought modern music as a part of drag and not just the regular gay anthems that the rest of us have as a part of our repertoire. He made it cool to do Lil' Kim and Missy Elliot when Madonna and Donna Summers were the staple." The father and grandfather has been performing for 22 years, crafting his own choreography, pulling from dance innovators like Michael and Janet Jackson, Ciara and Beyoncé. Hardiman says he first knew he was pushing "old-school drag" to "new-school drag" when he performed Lil' Kim's "How Many Licks" at Neighbors before it closed. "I think that kind of shocked a lot of people," he says, laughing.

THE AVANT-GARDIST

Brad Garner

UO assistant professor of dance; dancer and choreographer, Harmonic Laboratory

The choreographer behind Harmonic Laboratory's cutting edge "Four Corners" performance at the Hult last spring didn't start with dance; Garner started with gymnastics, completing a year of Olympic training when he was a high school sophomore. But soon gymnastics turned into a passion for modern dance, which he studied at the esteemed University of Minnesota Department of Theatre Arts & Dance with famous guest artists such as Doug Varone. "I liked athleticism, wildness, innovation," Garner says of choosing modern. Now a professor at the UO, Garner pushes dance to its cerebral edges, fusing it with visual arts and technology, drawing inspiration from unexpected sources like Picasso's cubist studies and Newton's laws of motion. Next up, Garner takes his intellectual exercise on the road: Harmonic Laboratory has been invited to perform the piece "Zero Crossing" at the Kyma International Sound Symposium in Brussels Sept. 12-15.

THE PRODUCER

Nathan Boozer

Director and choreographer, Work Dance Company

Let's be clear, when you see a Nathan Boozer production like the Lady Gaga-inspired *Wonderland*, it's not a recital, it's a *show* (and usually a sold-out one at that). "It's about the production," says Boozer, who combines his hip-hop- and jazz-driven choreography with video visual effects on a 50-by-30-foot screen, high-tech lighting and props. "I want my audiences to completely feel and experience what we're trying to do on stage." The Churchill High and LCC graduate's Work Dance Company is relatively new to Eugene's dance scene: It opened in 2008 with four female dancers — there are now 21 dancers. "I feel like with dance we're able to tell such an intricate story," he says. "It's been around since the dawn of time."

