

2002-2003 Newsletter

FIVE COLLEGE Dance Dance Department



SLamming Forward, Unfettered: Performance at the Jail

by Susan Waltner

What could be more desirable than to move an audience to tears, a standing ovation, receiving expressions of deep gratefulness, and stimulating a strong desire to be congratulated by everyone present? As artists, these are real, sometimes reachable and sometimes idealistic goals. They were all evident in a performance produced in Northampton this summer by codirectors Amie Dowling, SC MFA, and Julie Lichtenberg, MFA University of Illinois. What made the performance particularly remarkable was that the performance was in the Hampshire County Jail, and the performers were inmates.

All of us have moments of wondering what value dance, which we love so much, is to the world. There are a variety of answers, but this kind of work leaves one with no doubt as to the power of movement and theater.

The theater is in the jail, the stage is one end of the visitor's room, the audience has been invited and instructed to arrive early, wearing no jewelry, no open-toed shoes, and no watches. ID's are checked at the door. Though not identifiable, one feels sure that security guards are standing by. A minute into the performance, all that is forgotten, and the men have begun to transport the audience to another world—their world. This piece, "not so very far from here" is set in a bus station waiting room. Here, in phone conversations and in verbal and physical interactions, they tell/show their stories of struggle, fear, addiction and faith. By the end of the hour-long performance, the audience experiences the cast and identifies with them as fellow human beings, with histories, hopes and dreams. The audience has cried, laughed, and understood. After the performance there is an outpouring of warmth and appreciation from the audience.

In this work, the Performance Project, Amie and Julie draw on $% \left\{ 1,2,\ldots ,n\right\}$

their artistic skills and experience and their commitment to working with non-traditional movers. They've made art. They have collaborated with multigenerational groups, "at risk" youths, students, and men and women who are incarcerated. "not so very far from here" is the third play they have produced at the jail. The focus of the Performance Project is the formation of a strong artistic ensemble that has come together to create a theater and movement work of artistic merit. The members give voice to their stories and ideas, creating a work of which the participants claim full authorship. In this process, the group may negotiate some difficult terrain, but they come to depend on each other for the project's success.

Amie and Julie comment:

"As artists we desire to situate our work within an artistic context, as opposed to a social work context. We are drawn to this work because it merges our interests in social justice with art, but it is the striving for artistic growth that keeps us engaged. There is a delicate balance between the voices of the men participating in the project, and our voices as artists within that process."

An article by a reporter in the local paper, The Daily Hampshire Gazette, had these comments in response to one of the previous performances:

The company spared sentiment and sought no sympathy. Men worked for weeks on such theatrical skills as voice and movement. They didn't try to become actors, but they moved far enough out of their own experiences so that when they came back, to star in moments of their own lives, the stories slammed forward, unfettered. (Parnassus. Gazette. 1-05-01)

Amie graduated from the Smith MFA program in 1997. She came to the program with impressive previous work in the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange and since graduating she has been working with her company, the Dance Generators, a multigenerational dance company. She has also continued to teach a course in the FCDD—Community Crossover—which introduces students as to how the arts can be used as tools for social change. In the Spring of 2003 it will be taught at Amherst College. "not so very far from here" is a beautiful example of her goal for the course. After the performance the cast members spoke to the audience about how creating the work had contributed to their sense of hope about their future. Everyone left the performance with boundaries dissolved, and a deep sense of the common humanity of us all.

NOTE: The Performance Project was founded by Amie Dowling and Julie Lichtenberg in 2000. Since its inception they have collaborated on 3 pieces while in residency at the Hampshire County Jail and House of Corrections. This fall they founded a performing ensemble on the outside, with men who have been released and will be teaching a workshop for women at the Hampden County Jail.



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FACULTY NEWS

Paul Arslanian (UMass Amherst) was featured in the September issue of ON TAP, a monthly publication of the International Tap Association, along with Drika Overton, in an interview entitled "Cracking the Collaborative Nut," the making of "Clara's Dream: A Jazz Nutcracker". The interview is part of a National Endowment funded program called "Closing the Gap." In addition, Paul will be directing and performing the music for a tap dance concert at the new Northampton High Scool auditorium on Sat. night, Oct. 26th for a show called "Feelin' the Beat," involving performers from Boston, Germany, and New Hampshire. Also performing are Marilyn Middleton and Sekou Sylla with the Bamidele Dancers and Drummers.

Rodger Blum (Smith College) premiered a new one-act original ballet, "Barbara Allen" in the fall 2001 semester. In the spring he created a new solo, "Moon Rise" on Mary Ann DeLisle (SCMFA). He is in his first semester as chair of the Smith College Dance Department

Billbob Brown (UMass Amherst) presented three new works at Jacob's Pillow's Inside Out Series this August. In May, Billbob was the choreographer/director/co-animator for "Transformations" a multimedia collaboration with composers Carl Weins, Greg Snedeker, and the Computer Sciences Department at UMass.

Yvonne Daniel (Smith College) has a best selling first video, *Cuban Dance* Examples (1989/90.) Details can be seen in the Insight Media catalogue. She has been invited to present at the Ford Fellows Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico Oct. 4-6 on "Balancing the Personal and Professional in Academic Life." In addition, Yvonne has been invited to Cuba by the Ministry of Culture, October 8-15, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Los Munequitos, one of two groups on which she did original fieldwork in the late 1980s. In addition During April 9-11, she has been invited to the University of Wisconsin, Madison as Minority Scholar in Education. Yvonne will present a paper and lead a workshop during a November 10th Festival Cubano symposium in Philadelphia with the theme of Artists working in Traditional Materials.

Mark Davis (Guest Artist in Residence, Smith College) has worked extensively as a dancer, choreographer, director, writer, actor and teacher. He has performed the works of Alvin Ailey, Jose Limon, Paul Taylor, Randy Warsaw, Talley Beatty and danced with Peter Goss Company in Paris, Jose Limon Dance Company, Remy Charlip and Impulse Dance of Boston. He also



ALUMNI NEWS

Amherst College

City. Lisa Biggs AC'94 and Christina Septien AC'01 were invited to present Quabbin Reservoir, Rabidoux and her company, hoi polloi, explored themes new work at the New York International Fringe Festival this past August. of premeditated loss, the isolation of history, and what it means to be Christina's original full-length movement theater piece included other alums from AC in the cast and as collaborators. Lisa Biggs was in residence at Amherst this fall with her collaborator, Tanisha Brady Christie, where they performed their new Piece, Memory is a Body of Water to glowing reviews.

Hampshire College

Pele Bauch HC'96 performed in New York at University Settlement as part of the Movement Research's open performance. Fran Clairmont HC'99 is performing in collaborative video works at the Green Street Studios in Cambridge. Sarah Eley HC'02 is working with the Hawley Martin Dance Company in Northampton and recently performed with the company in Wyoming. Jill Esterson HC'77, PT, CMPT has been working at Westside Dance Physical Therapy in New York City for seven and a half years specializing in dance medicine. Jane Jerardi HC'97 performed at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in a work, Mono: Singular, one. Erik Kaiel HC'95 performed site specific work in Montreal's Metro Station and was the featured performer at Pearson College in British Columbia. He is also teaching various week-long workshops for young kids in inner city schools. His company, Archeopteryx 8 performed in the Five College Alumni Dance Concert in October. Mollie McClelland HC'01 is teaching ballet classes in Pittsburgh and working with children in elementary schools. Steven **Petronio** HC'78 was sponsored by CRASHarts in Boston to perform the work Strange Attractors to a commissioned score by British composer Michael Nyman. A new work entitled *Poised* from **Sara Sweet Rabidoux** HC '93 and SC MFA '98 premiered at MASSMoCA in October. Inspired by the story of the

performed in the dance opera Mother of Three Sons directed by Bill T. Jones. Mr. Davis formed his own company Les Danses Dansk in Munich in 1989 and mounted seven full evening productions. Since returning to the United States he has toured the world with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Co., in such noted works as Still/Here, Ursonata and Ballade. He also performed with Lawrence Goldhuber at Danspace at St. Mark's Church. Mr. Davis is an original cast member of the Broadway production of *The Lion King* directed by Julie Taymore, where he performed for four and a half years. His recent Broadway credits include Nothing Like a Dame, Broadway Bared, Gypsy of the Year, Easter Bonnet, A Few Good Men Dancing and performed at Carnegie Hall with Sting. Also an accomplished figure skater, having received a United States Figure Skating Gold Medal in Ice Dancing, Mr. Davis is a member of the Professional Skaters Association

Rose and Charles Flachs (Mount Holyoke College) attended the CORPS de Ballet Conference hosted at Western Michigan University where Charles and Professor Patricia Graham, from Columbia College, presented a lecture on team teaching dance history via the Internet. At the Conference Finis Jung taught an inspirational, informative workshop for teachers of ballet. The Flachs enjoyed teaching this summer for the Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet and at the Pioneer Valley Ballet. They serve on the advisory board for both of these ballet academies. Currently they are in the midst of rehearsals for a new pas de deux, choreographed by Charles Flachs, for the MHC Faculty Dance Concert.

Terese Freedman and Jim Coleman (Mount Holyoke College) won one of three Massachusett's Cultural Council Choreography Fellowships (\$12,500) from a pool of 59 applicants. They performed 'Family Pictures' a piece featuring their two children. Evan and Zoe, in Port Townsend WA in August. They will also perform the piece in Rochester NY in October. Plans are in the works to get dancers with families to create dance works with their children, which would then be performed in Boston and NY later this year.

Constance Valis Hill (Hampshire College / FCDD) in June, completed compiling a dossier, commissioned by the Balanchine Foundation for its Popular Balanchine project, on Babes in Arms, the 1937 Broadway musical directed by George Balanchine which featured the Nicholas Brothers. She also attended the Society of Dance History Scholars' Conference at Temple University in Philadelphia where she was a plenary speaker on a panel entitled 'Dancing Devils and Speed Demons: The Aesthetic of Speed in Philadelphia Dance (or, They Do It Phaster in Philly!).' Panelists included



Yaniera Castro AC'93 and Company continue to perform regularly in New York four towns in Western Massachusetts flooded in 1937 to make way for the forgotten. Rabidoux is one of four choreographers commissioned by World Music/Crash Arts for Dance Straight Up! which will be performed December 6-7 at the Blackman Theatre in Boston. In May, Yasuko Yokoshi HC'86 presented her work, Shuffle, at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris in New York. She melded the oldest of the Japanese creation myths (the "Kojiki") with stories of family members who drowned at sea, their bodies never recovered, in a contemporary performance that involved dance, storytelling and video.

Mount Holyoke College

Lucy Albert Bermingham MHC '74 donated 23 pairs of Grishko Pointe Shoes to the MHC dance department. **Alison Bory** MHC 97' finished her MA in dance studies at the University of Surrey in the UK, is applying for her PhD, working at Dance in America, and doing research and production on a number of documentaries. Amy Cox MHC '91 is working with French choreographer Daria Fain, building a physical language for the Helen Keller project, to be performed at the Kitchen (NYC) in Dec 2002. Amy is also developing a new work, *Angles of Incidence*, for March 2003 at the Kitchen with six performers including Marya Wethers MHC '97 and Nicky Marshall MHC '00. Erica Florrence MHC '01 performed in HOT and Bothered, with choreography by Mary Ann Wall and Zenobia Taylor, at CHASHAMA Theatre in New York. Elizabeth Hallmark MHC '83 formed a company, Hallmark Danceworks in Rochester, NY. Katie Krokev MHC '01 received a full scholarship to the PhD program at Riverside. Martha Mason MHC '88, director of Snappy Dance Theatre, presented her company's work for two full weekends in October at the Copley Theatre in Boston. The company, now five years old, is preparing to tour nationally by next fall and to pay every dancer a full-time living wage. Rebecca Malcolm-Naib MHC '87 performed in Elemental, an evening of four of her works at The Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia, PA, in

tap dancer LeVaughan Robinson, hip hop dance artist Rennie Harris, and tap historian Sally Sommer. In July, Constance conducted a series of preperformance talks with choreographers of the New York City Ballet's tenth anniversary Diamond Project at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in Saratoga, New York; and had the pleasure of interviewing New York City Ballet Principal dancer Albert Evans about his new choreography, Haiku and Christopher Wheeldon about his new work, Morphoses. Constance also participated in the second annual New York City Tap Festival at the Duke on 42nd Street in New York City by curating the first eight inductees into the Tap City Hall of Fame (which included Fred Astaire, Bill Robinson, Jeni LeGon, Eleanor Powell, Nicholas Brothers, John Bubbles, Steve Condos, and Baby Laurence); and introducing the Tap Talk Tap Films series in the festival. Finally, toward the end of summer in August, she began organizing materials (and even wrote some of the early chapters) for a new book, a history of tap dance in America.

Peter Jones (Mount Holyoke College) performed/composed for choreographer, Martha Bowers, in "The Dream Life of Bricks" at Mass Moca in June. He will be performing with Philip Hamilton January 4th and 5th as part of the "Alltogether Different" series at the lovce Theater and in March will perform the score to "The Metal Garden," live with Tigger Benford, at the New Victory Theater for the Sean Curran Dance Company. He has also released "Skeletons", a new CD for solo piano. Music from his recording "Three Characters" is featured in a new interactive CD-rom "Rhythmic Training for Dancers" by Robert Kaplan

Ken Lipitz (UMass Amherst) during the spring semester, as Visiting Artist in Dance at Amherst College, taught a course in ballet technique. He also taught master classes and set a ballet on the student dance ensemble at Deerfield Academy. In June. 2002. Ken along with his wife and co-director. Shelley Ziebel, produced, directed, conceived and choreographed a four concert series at CityStage Theater in Springfield, for the New England Dance Conservatory, using students, members of the Pre-Professional Programs and dancers from the outreach rep company, New England Dance Theater. Summer activities included a week in June teaching as a guest artist for the summer dance program at Stoneleigh-Burnham School ballet technique and pointe technique; in July and August, directing and teaching ballet, pointe and modern techniques for the New England Dance Conservatory's four week Summer School. This fall. Ken will teach master classes in ballet at the Springfield College Dance Department and serve as



October. Rain Ross MHC '00 is dancing with Arc Dance Company in Seattle and is teaching at Bainbridge Dance Center with director/choreographer Susan Thompson MHC '78. She created Lehua Production Company and presented her own work Always Times Three in February 2002 and will present another evening of work Beyond Blue in January 2003. Joanna Mendl Shaw's MHC '69 company Dancing with Horses recently performed her work Kalliope at the Ethel Walker School in Connecticut. This piece was commissioned by the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts in 2001. It traces a young girl's interaction with a cast of horses and dancers, including Layard Thompson UM '00, who spill from the pages of her book. Joanna began her exploration of dancers and horses as a guest artist at MHC in 1998 and has continued this investigation for the past five years. Nicole Tessen MHC '02 completed an arts internship at Jacob's Pillow. She now works with the Center of Contemporary Arts Urban Arts Program teaching creative movement and jazz at Jefferson Elementary School and Adams School. Abby Yager MHC '92 continues to tour with the Trisha Brown Dance Co. Elizabeth Young MHC '87 is living in Paris, dancing with Joel Borges, a Brazilian choreographer and Felix Ruckert, a former dancer for Pina Bausch. Last year she toured to South America with Felix , performing his work Ring which incorporates the audience into the performance, physically and verbally, creating a simple ritual to initiate the dance. She has also begun choreographing her own work.

Smith College

Christine Bennett SC MFA '96, artistic director of Bennett Dance Company in Boston, held an annual fund raiser in October in the Loft Space in Davis Square, Proceeds will benefit the company and Silent Spring Institute for breast cancer research. Bennett Dance Company is also part of the Residential Arts season this fall, in a performance with the Dance Alum Festival in October. A June evening of works from Symphony Space of New York entitled dance sampler included choreography by Melissa Briggs SC '95. Last fall, Rebecca Chisman SC '94 began the Masters Program in dance at the Artistic Director for University Dancers' December concert series.

Daphne Lowell (Hampshire College) has 2 articles (and several photos) in the Contact Quarterly special issue on Authentic Movement (Summer/Fall 2002). She wrote the "Introduction to Authentic Movement" and "Three Layers" a piece about using Authentic Movement as performance. With colleagues Alton Wasson and Mary Ramsay she taught the first Year II program in Contemplative Dance this past year as well as the Year I program and the 14th annual summer workshops at Hampshire College. She was invited to teach Contemplative Dance on the faculty of the National Sacred Dance Festival in Rindge NH this past summer.

Rebecca Nordstrom (Hampshire College) and Billbob Brown will collaborate with London based musicians Maggie Cole (piano) and Miranda Fullylove (violin) in a concert entitled "Hands and Feet Across the Water" at Bush Hall, a venue in Shepherd's Bush, West London in November. Nordstrom and Brown have also been invited to perform a concert of their solos and duets at Roger Williams University in January 2003.

Fritha Pengelly (Visiting Faculty at Hampshire College, Visiting Artist at Mount Holvoke and the University of Massachusetts Amherst) is currently working on a project with Wire Monkey Dance to be performed at the Northampton Center for the Arts October 25, 26 and November 1,2 and 3. Fritha will be creating a piece for the FCDD Faculty Concert at the end of February.

Julius Robinson (Smith College) performed works of Schubert, Norman Dello Joio and Schumann during his concert performance Friday, October 25, 2002 at Smith's Sweeney Concert Hall in the Sage Hall Music Building.

Peggy Schwartz (UMass Amherst) spent the first part of the summer bringing to completion work on the FCDD / NCCI Project, "Zollar on Primus: Riffing on the Legacy." In May, she lectured and presented workshops on Primus's life and work at Brooklyn and Hunter Colleges. She coordinated travel and rehearsed the cast of "Walking with Pearl" to prepare for their performance on June 28th at Jacob's Pillow, and she gave a workshop and lecture on the life and work of Pearl Primus at the National Dance Education Organization conference in Providence, Rhode Island. Additionally, she taught "Bushasche" at the New York State Summer School of the Arts for dance teachers from magnet high schools and universities around the country. She also continued consultation with the American Dance Legacy Institute on the documentary / teaching video which is underway. In June, she represented the FCDD at the Dance/USA Roundtable in Miami, Florida and served on a panel entitled, "What's



the University of Washington. Kitty Clark SC MFA'97 set a dance piece on students in Frederick, MD, and is working part time for the Ice Theatre of New York, Mary Ann Delisle UM alum and SC MFA'96 is now a lecturer in Dance at Dean College in Massachusetts. Last spring she performed in Moon Rise, an original solo work from Smith professor, Rodger Blum. Brenda Divelbliss SC MFA '99 is one of four choreographers commissioned by World Music/Crash Arts for Dance Straight Up! which will be performed December 6-7 at the Blackman Theatre in Boston, In Mixed Company presented the premiere of Maura Donohue's SC'92 Rip It Open an exhaustive and athletic examination of each performer's relationship to violence. Dancing in the company for Maura is Nancy Ellis SC '93. Maura taught at Dance Space Center as part of the Modern Guest Artist Series. Smith College honored Sharonjean Moser Leeds SC '67 with the naming of "The Sharonjean Moser Leeds '67 Dance Studio" in the Mendenhall Center for the Arts Sharoniean is on the Dance faculty at the University of San Francisco and was recently awarded a special "30 Year" pin for her long dedication to teaching dance. Last May she established a dance scholarship and accompanying financial award at San Francisco's High School of the Arts in the interest of promoting pursuit of the arts at the high school level. Kristen Mangione SC'94 is now the artistic director of her own company, KM&Co. The company has performed at venues throughout New York. Most recently the company premiered the evening-length SKIN DEEP during its 2001 New York City Season at University Settlement. Upcoming appearances include the SWEAT Series at Stevens Institute of Technology's DeBaun Auditorium and Dancers' Responding to AIDS The Remember Project at ST. Mark's Church. Natalie Neckyfarrow SC '00 is performing with Notes in Motion, a New York based company. She both choreographed and performed in a concert, *Threshold*, in July. **Wendy Osserman** SC '64 was recently invited to teach a master class series at Marymount Manhattan College. Her company, Wendy Osserman Dance Company, recently completed a project with Wesleyan University and presented six performances of her work In the Light of Loss at the Montreal Fringe Festival. In the New York Times (1/29/02), Jennifer Dunning described this work as "blessedly non-literal dance-(an)

Next?: Future Possibilities for Collaborating in College Settings" moderated by Suzanne Callahan, the National College Choreography Initiative representative, with panelists Douglas Sonntag, Director of Dance for the National Endowment for the Arts, Tere O'Connor, choreographer, and Linda Shapiro from the University of Minnesota. Peggy returns to the University as Coordinator of the UMass Dance Program after serving as Chair of the FCDD for the past three years.

Augusto Soledade (Smith College) received a faculty grant from Smith to develop a summer research project in Brazil. The Project involves collecting the data to be used as part of a choreographic work to be performed on the 'Off Center Series", a performance venue in Amherst, MA in February 2003. The researched data will consist of recorded interviews of Candomble practitioners and non-practitioners on their understanding of lemania and the concept of her consciousness; videotaped images of spontaneous cultural manifestations pertinent to the investigation; and recordings of songs used in the religious Candomble traditions that evoke lemanja, which have not yet been commercially explored. In late summer he performed at the Jacob's Pillow with Brazz Dance Theater in the "Inside Out" Series. This fall he will continue to perform and choreograph for Brazz Dance Theater and on a new work to be premiered on the Smith Faculty Concert.

Marilyn Middleton Sylla (Guest Lecturer in Dance) The Sixth Annual African/Caribbean Dance and Drum Celebration sponsored by the Bamidele Dancers & Drummers, directed by Marilyn Middleton Sylla was held September 22-23 in Amherst at the Wildwood Elementary School. Over 150 dance and drum enthusiasts from as far as Canada and the United States attended the event. She will be a guest artist teaching a workshop in African Dance at New York University in October, and with her husband, Sekou, will teach at Bates College July 2003.

Susan Waltner (Smith College) took a course on ligaments at the School for Body-Mind Centering, providing her with new information to share in her Mindful Body and Graduate Dance Science courses. (The ligaments turn out to be very important in the dialogue between bones and muscles!) She attended the NDEO conference in Providence, RI. and gave a workshop on Ritual Rhythm Circles, a structured session on working in a circle with both group and personal rhythms. She ran into FCDD alums Heidi Henderson, Kim Greenberg, Lynne Fredrikson, Marc Strauss, and Maria Simpson, most of whom were also presenting! Susan has a grant for Peter Schmitz to create a solo for her which will be shown on the fall Smith Faculty Dance Concert.



imaginative response to the horror that helped to shape it." Erik Kaiel HC '95 is now dancing with her company. **Cheri Soule** SC MFA '02 is setting a new work on students in the dance program at Trinity College, Connecticut, Marc Strauss SC MFA '91 was recently appointed to the rank of Associate Professor of Dance at Southeast Missouri State University. **Debbie Williams** SC '99 is working energetically in the dance education field. She has been working in Baltimore, but is interested in moving on and would love to hear

UMASS

Melissa Bemis UM works as an Assistant Broadcast Producer creating TV and radio ads. Kimberly Lass Cohen UM '98 is the Senior Program Director for Recreation and Community Relations in Newton, MA. Alyssa Cohen Coughlin UM '96 directed two dance programs in Burlington and Bedford MA after graduating. She currently works in business and is considering returning to school for an MA in dance. Shaun Curtin UM '96 writes that he is still "Dancing Longer and Dancing Stronger!" Michele Chrisbacher UM '02. Melissa Ham-Ellis UM '02. Arlene Steiner UM '02. and Molly Oulette UM '03 produced a concert, Conspicuously Marked Wings, at the Flynn Space in Burlington, VT. Kristen Duffy UM '00 danced with "Upward Spiral Dance Company" in Boston, Katherine Hooper IJM '98 was commissioned to create new work for PKDC and Amy Zarlengo MacDermot UM '91 serves as the Executive Director. Patricia Kenny UM'91 produced a concert in New York last spring and taught at the Peridance Center in New York, Fiona Marcotty UM '84 and her company Beat Upon Beat performed in the Five College Dance Alumni Festival in October. Her work draws on sources such as classical sculpture, flamenco and blues, and choreography of the 1930's Geniene Maybruch UM '98 performed with Patricia Kenny Dance Collection Julie Ladouceur UM '98, Kate Brennan UM '98, Amy Steverman UM'98, and Colleen Sullivan IIM '98 completed a year working for Holland American Cruise Line. Layard Thompson UM'00 has worked in Europe with Brice Leroux. He performed in August 2002 at Jacobs Pillow with Alexandra Beller and

She is also involved in helping to create a benefit concert in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the performance space in Thorne's Market, by a revival of an old solo. "lourney." which she set on community dancer Christina Gabriel, and a new duet for herself and one of her yoga teachers. She had an article published in Contact Quarterly on Authentic Movement and Choreography. After 12 years, she is relearning the ropes of being chair of the FCDD and is as always, inspired by her extraordinary colleagues, and the complex but human way the Department collectively manages to maintain its stature as one of the best dance departments in the country.

Andrea Watkins (UMass Amherst/ret.) From 'retirement' Andrea reports: Right now I'm working very hard to keep up with a whole new life that is opening up faster than I ever dreamed! Yikes! Here's what's up: I'm team teaching a Sci Found course for the grad students at American University. I'm certifying to teach the Pilates Mat Work. I'm teaching ballet and modern dance fundamentals at the Dance Center, and teaching Stretch, Pilates Ball, Therapeutic Ballet, and Maximum Turnout at Body Dynamics (a physical therapy facility). I've taken 83 hours of Pilates classes this summer, and have a good 100 or so more to go before I take my exam next May.

I was part of the Body Dynamics crew that went to the Kirov Ballet Academy in Washington, DC. We did the "pre-season" screening for their students...strength, flexibility, posture/alignment, some functional evals. I did posture and some of the functional work. It made me think of all those UM auditions...looking at all the dancers at the barre and evaluating their alignment and technique. The Body Dynamics bunch was ever-soamazed at how fast I was with the posture analysis. I said this Kirov eval was a piece of cake. At the Kirov, I had only one dancer to watch at a time, and the dancer was standing in front of a posture grid...no problem! I figure I have done this type of eval 3,000 times at least in the past 30 years! Practice definitely helps increase speed!

Wendy Woodson (Amherst College) in March 2002, at the Ninth Annual Multicultural Film Festival, presented an evening of her award winning videos that she has made over the past 10 years. She is currently working on a new multi-media project entitled CROSS CONTINENTAL which will be performed at several different international locations. In this regard, she was invited to the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center in Italy for a month's residency in March 2003. She also has been invited to create new works for the George Washington University and the University of Auckland in New Zealand during her sabbatical this coming spring.



continues to work with her company. Margaret Prindle (Albertson) UM '83, has 4 kids, ages 10, 8, 5 and 3 and has moved to Gainsville Florida. She remembers her dancing days at Umass with great affection. Angelique Rodriguez UM '97 continues to apply her dance training to Olympic training in diving. She graduated with a Masters degree in Sports Administration from the University of Arizona, May 2002. Ambere Rogers UM '98 is in the national touring company of Mama Mia. Stacey Sipowicz UM' 95 toured with Fame in Europe and with the 1st national tour of Cabaret. She is currently with the Broadway production of Caberet and recently returned to Boston to perform in Impulse Dance Company's 30th Reunion concert. Tony Silva UM'94 continues as the Artistic Director of the New York-based company, Tony Silva Dance and Music. He is an active choreographer, producer, teacher and promoter of many dance activities. Robert Smith UM'83 recently moved to Tacoma, Washington. He sends warm greetings to all in the dance department. **John Wrzos** UM '00 presented his choreography in New York City this past year where he is an MFA candidate at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts on a \$20,000 annual scholarship.

A study of the Five College Dance Department Graduates has recently been completed by Sarah Montgomery and Michael Robinson of the Mount Holyoke College Economics Department. The report, "What Becomes o Undergraduate Dance Majors? A Study of the Five College Dance Department Graduates" summarizes the results of a survey of the graduates conducted in 2000. The income, hours, jobs, work lives and work histories of the graduates are explored. Copies of the paper and a summary are available on the web at http://mhc.mtholyoke.edu/~mirobins/fivecollege-dance.doc and http://mhc.mtholyoke.edu/~mirobins/five-collegesummary.doc. Many thanks to those of you who participated in the survey.

may o'donnell

The Five College Dance Department and Mount Holyoke College will be re-staging "Suspension," a dance by May O'Donnell, during January term. The piece will be performed by an auditioned group of seven dancers on the FCDD Faculty Dance Concert February 27 and 28 and March 1, 2003 at Mount Holyoke. The work will be staged by Lida Nelson Smith, a former O'Donnell company member, and overseen by Charles and Rose Flachs. Art students from MHC are helping build the set.

On December 2, 2002 May O'Donnell will be the recipient of the Martha Hill award for lifetime achievement. As choreographer, she created more than seventy-five works for her own companies, 1937 to 1988. Her works have appeared on the programs of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Houston Ballet, The Place in London, the Oakland Ballet and at annual festivals and summer workshops. Her technique has been taught in Italy, Switzerland, Taiwan, and in colleges across the nation. O'Donnell was unique in being able to balance her choreographic and performing career at the same time. As a member of the Martha Graham Contemporary Dance Company from 1932 to 1938 and from 1944 to 1953, she premiered the role of The Pioneer Woman in Appalachian Spring, the Attendant in Graham's duo, Herodiade, and performed as guest artist in many other roles. "Suspension," created in 1943, occupies a special place in her works and is based on T.S. Eliot's words "...at the still point of the turning world, there the dance is." It was created during wartime and she remembers: "One day, alone on a mountain top, I saw a plane and a ship below me and realized that there is no up or down. I was supposed to be down and they were supposed

to be up!" She concluded that everything moves in its own orbit yet holds its own energy and design. She put that observation into dance as "Suspension." It was the first abstract piece in modern dance and became her signature work. May O'Donnell and her late husband, composer Ray Green, are regarded as American originals in modern dance and modern music. She is now 96 years-old, lives in Manhattan and is in the midst of writing her biography.



Tere o'connor pance

Press release written by Ryan O'Donnell for UMass Residential Arts Program

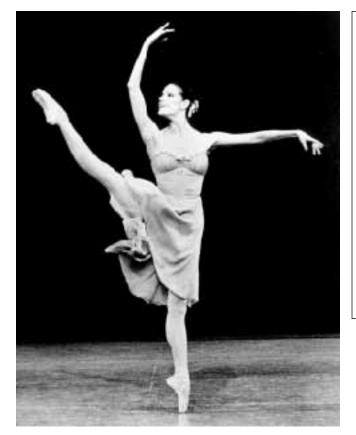
Tere O'Connor Dance performed as part of the "Off-Center" series on October 4. Mr. O'Connor has been commissioned to create a new dance at Mt. Holyoke College with Five College dance students. The work will premiere in the Mt. Holyoke Faculty Dance Concert on November 7-9.

Tere O'Connor Dance has become known for transforming the mundane into the poetic. Comprised of myriad and widely-varied dance styles including modern, classical ballet, ethnic forms, mime, social dance, and others, his choreography has recently veered off in a bold new direction. As The Village Voice asserts, O'Connor's dance emerges in fragments-it's all cranky subtext with rage, grief, and loneliness erupting from bouts of stand-up comedy, cliches intoned by Greek choruses, scenes, songs, dances and quiet soliloquies." Quite a stew.

O'Connor, 43, stopped performing about five years ago to

concentrate on choreography. But the new work has brought him back into the performing arena. "I'm trying to make a dance that comes from an imagined world where I never had any dance training or studied any dance thought." This is a fresh approach that has yielded equally fresh material, energized with both a new-found vigor and steadfast elegance. For example, O'Connor has recently taken the interesting step of integrating text into his dance, illuminating a whole other dimension in which O'Connor's usual political discourse can run rampant. Nevertheless, as The New York Times has stated, Tere "now subjects his text to the same kind of rhythmic scrutiny he has always applied..."

...but the last words must belong to IGNY Dance: "For the restless and unasserted, prepare ye: nothing is sacred."



Merrill Ashley

by Meghan Fair

On October 25th, Merrill Ashley, former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, will be speaking at Mount Holyoke College as part of the FCDD Residency program. Following the lecture, she will be teaching a group of intermediate and advanced ballet dancers a selection from the ballet Ballo della Regina which was originally choreographed for her by George Balanchine.

Merrill Ashley was one of the last Balanchine Ballerinas, dancers who were members of the New York City Ballet well before Balanchine's death in 1983. During her time in the company, Ms. Ashley performed principal roles in numerous works by Balanchine. She was known for her stunning allegros and athletic, yet graceful technique. In 1997, after dancing with

the company for more than 30 years, she retired. Immediately following her retirement, she became a teaching associate at the New York City Ballet, where she teaches Company class and helps to coach dancers in their roles. Today, she continues to play an important part in the dance world, appearing as a guest teacher at many schools, and staging Balanchine ballets for companies.

Partial Listing of

FIVE COLLEGE Dance Department Calendar of Events 2002-2003

For full list of events: www.fivecolleges.edu/dance/calendar

December

- **University Dancers Concert** UMass • 8 pm • 545-2511
- Amherst College Dance/Theater Performance Project: original five college student choreography
- Experimental Theater, AC 8 pm 542-2411 Smith College Grad Event
- SC 7:30 pm 585-3232

anuary

- Alankara: Arts in India Study Tour
- May O'Donnell Residency MHC

February

- 13-15 Hampshire College Winter Concert Main Studio • HC • 8 pm • 559-5889
- 13-15 Smith College MFA Concert
- Theatre 14, SC 8 pm 585-3232
- 21-22 Off-Center Series:
 - **Brazz Dance Concert: Augusto Soledade** Bowker, UMass • 8 pm • 545-2511
- 27-1 Five College Dance Department Faculty Dance Concert Kendall Studio Theater, MHC • 8 pm • 538-2848

March

- Five College Dance Department Faculty Dance Concert MHC • (see above)
- **Grupo Corpo Concert**
 - FAC, Concert Hall 8 pm 545-2511
- Workshop and Lecture by Nai-Ni Chen and Prof. Zhongwei Shen of the School of Science and Technology, Springfield, MA Herter Hall, UMass • 3 pm
- 27 Nai-Ni chen Dance Company In Concert: Passage to the Silk River
- Bowker, UMass 8 pm 545-2511 27-29 Hampshire College Div 3 Concert
 - Main Studio 8 pm 559-5889
- 27-29 Mount Holyoke College Student Concert Kendall Studio Theatre, MHC • 8 pm • 538-2848

APľIL

- 3-4 Off-Center Series: Alexandra Beller
 - Kendall Studio Theater, MHC 8 pm 545-2511
- **Smith College Spring Concert** Theatre 14, SC • 8 pm • 585-2787
- 10-12 Hampshire College Div 3 Concert Main Studio, HC • 8 pm • 559-5889

- 10-12 Mount Holyoke College Senior Thesis Concert
 - Kendall Studio Theater 8 pm 538-2848
- Karinne Keithley Concert: Performers Karinne Keithley, Paul Matteson, Melissa Briggs and members of the rep class Kirby Theatre, AC • 8 pm
- 24-26 Off-Center Series:
 - **Emerging Choreographers Series Concert** Main Studio, HC • 8 pm • 545-2511

MaY

- **Rhythm in Shoes**
 - FAC Concert Hall, UMass 7:30 pm 545-2511
- Alive With Dance Concert
- Bowker, UMass 8 pm 545-2511 Smith College Grad Event
 - Scott Dance St., SC 7:30 pm 585-3232
- Off-Center Series: Wire Monkey
 - Bowker, UMass 8 pm 545-2511
- Amherst College Music 18-Final Project. Kirby Theatre, AC • 8 pm • 545-2411
- Mount Holyoke College Commencement Concert Kendall Studio Theater • 8 pm • 538-2848

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