

FOOTNOTES

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FEB 2007

#19

Ailey® II Mixed Repertoire

ROYAL THEATRE

8:00 pm

TUES, Feb. 27

WED, Feb. 28

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Alvin Ailey – American Dream?

The story of Alvin Ailey's life is an indisputably American story – not the story of the privileged, instead a tale that begins in the segregated south (Texas) in 1931. Ailey's mother was a teenager who had married a handsome boy at church, but within a year Alvin's father (Alvin Ailey senior) was gone. Alvin's early life was spent in rural Texas, moving from home to home and then suddenly, as a teenager, Alvin and his mother moved to Los Angeles where there were more opportunities for a better life.

continues >

Photo by Nan Melville/ren of Ailey II company members • Beauty by Doug Varone



> continued

Ailey came to dance late. He had finished high school when he began taking classes and eventually joining the company of modern dance pioneer Lester Horton in 1947. He did not have a foundation in ballet training like many of his contemporaries, but he did possess a charismatic quality in performance that critics likened to the energy of a caged animal, specifically a lion. When Horton died suddenly, Ailey took over the reins of the company briefly before moving to New York where in his early years he worked on Broadway as a dancer and actor. In the late 1950s Ailey's own choreographies were being performed in small theatres in Manhattan drawing larger audiences with each production. In 1960 he premiered a work called *Revelations* at the YMCA theatre that would be considered his masterwork. *Revelations* is performed in almost every Ailey concert to this day.

In the U.S. in the early 1960s, the Civil Rights movement was changing the face of America. In the midst of this, the U.S. State Department selected Ailey and his small, loosely formed company to tour the world in state-sponsored presentations, showcasing the contemporary dance performance of the American Negro. It was a huge public relations exercise on the part of the U.S. Government but one that nonetheless built a large international audience for Ailey's work. For much of the 1960s the company was on the road and had built a stronger reputation abroad than in New York, where annual performance opportunities were limited.

Alvin Ailey was a man who had greatness thrust upon him by a country eager to show a positive example of racial equality to the world. But he rose to the occasion. Ailey had the talent and the drive to develop a huge repertoire of works that still have resonance today. In the 1970s and 1980s Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater developed administrative infrastructure. Dancers were employed on longer contracts and a number of younger, exciting choreographers were commissioned to create new work for what were now well-established New York seasons.

Ailey himself was a troubled man, reconciling the disparate experiences of his life, conflicted about his sexuality and never comfortable in the elite, moneyed world that his success introduced him to. He died of AIDS in 1989, but his art and his institution continue to thrive.

Ailey® II – A Brief History

In 1974, Alvin Ailey created what was originally called the Alvin Ailey Repertory Company, a company of dancers that was distinct from the main Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Today, the second company is called simply Ailey II.

There were a few reasons for establishing this new company within a company more than 30 years ago. Comprising the most promising graduates from the Ailey school, Ailey II offered Mr. Ailey an opportunity to develop new repertoire without the pressure of union time restrictions. He also wanted to foster young and promising choreographers and this second company seemed to be a natural place for bolder experimentation with less attendant risk. Finally, Ailey II has a very strong mandate to provide workshops and classes when visiting a community, building an appetite for dance in general and Ailey II in particular in the smaller North American centres. The experience of being an Ailey II company member is profound for young dance artists. They gain experience touring the continent as well as teaching and talking about dance.

Today, Ailey II is one of the most popular touring American contemporary dance companies. In fact, between the end of January and mid-May this year they will offer 30 performances in 28 U.S. and Canadian cities.

DANCE VICTORIA

DANCEVICTORIA.COM

Dance Victoria Society is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to dance presentation and education.

Our Mission: to enhance the appreciation of dance in the Capital Region by presenting and developing professional dance and engaging the community in outreach programs.

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Footnotes is prepared by Stephen White and proofed by Anne Moon.

Ailey® II Repertoire in Victoria

Alvin Ailey lived by two principles in the development of his company. The first was that even though the company would be predominantly black it wasn't exclusively so. Ailey wanted to give opportunity to dancers regardless of their skin colour. Secondly, in addition to his own choreography, from the beginning Ailey offered opportunities to new, emerging or even established choreographers to develop work for the company.

The programs for Victoria (yes there are two different programs) include:

Tuesday, February 27

Streams (1970) Choreography by Alvin Ailey, Music by Miloslav Kabelac

Bitter Suite (2005) Choreography by Scott Rink, Music composed by John Barry & Steven Bernstein

New York dance critic Chris Dohse, writing in *The Dance Insider* recently described Scott Rink as having "created a mature, singular style, and is an assured director, combining human movement with elegant dancing as an extension of that humanity."

Revelations (1960) Choreography by Alvin Ailey, Music: Trad.

Revelations is considered an Ailey masterwork, choreographed early in his career

Wednesday, February 28

Takedeme (2000) Choreography by Robert Battle, Music by Sheila Chandra

Robert Battle, originally from Miami, Florida, is a graduate of the New World School of the Arts. He earned a B.F.A. degree from The Juilliard School. While at Juilliard, he received a Princess Grace Dance Scholarship and the Martha Hill Prize. After graduation, Mr. Battle joined the Parsons Dance Company where he danced for seven years. His choreography has been performed by the Parsons Dance Company in Australia, Italy and across the United States. In addition, his works have been commissioned by Hubbard Street 2, Dallas Black Dance Theater, The Juilliard School, Evolving Arts Inc., Perry-Mansfield, Ailey II and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. In 2002, Mr. Battle established his own company, Battleworks.

Splendid Illusion II (2006) (World Premiere) Choreography by Jessica Lang, Music by Trio Mediaeval, Gustav Mahler

Jessica Lang, a graduate of The Juilliard School and a former member of Twyla Tharp's company "THARP!" Lang has created work for American Ballet Theater's Studio Company, New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, Colorado Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Richmond Ballet (Choo-San Goh Award 2003), Washington Ballet, Saint Louis Ballet, Hubbard Street 2, Dallas Black Dance Theater, Ballet de Monterey in Mexico, among others.

Quintet (1968) Choreography by Alvin Ailey, Music by Laura Nyro

AILEY HIGHLIGHTS

Blues Suite (1958) (Excerpt)

Streams (1970)

Hidden Rites (1973) (Excerpt)

ISBA (1983) (Excerpt)

Escapades (1983) (Excerpts)

Both evenings offer an introduction to Alvin Ailey's works as well as a glimpse of the company's future through the interpretation of new works commissioned specifically by Ailey II.



Photo by Nan Melillo from Ailey II company members • Escapades by Alvin Ailey

Pre-Show Chats

Meet Ailey II Artistic Director Sylvia Waters

7:20 pm February 27 & 28

West Lobby, Royal Theatre

Artistic Director Sylvia Waters has been responsible for Ailey II since its inception over 30 years ago.

Ms. Waters' has a long and illustrious career in dance having studied with Antony Tudor and Martha Graham among many others. In her youth Ms. Waters received a scholarship to the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance and also performed with Donald McKayle's dance company.

Ms. Waters toured Europe as a professional dancer and lived in Paris, where she appeared regularly on television and worked with the director of the Paris Opera Ballet. When she returned to the United States in 1968 she joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater touring extensively throughout the United States, South America, Europe and the Soviet Union as a principal dancer until becoming the Artistic Director of Ailey II. In the fall of 2003, Ms. Waters was presented with a *Bessie Award* for Sustained Achievement in recognition of her outstanding commitment to young and emerging artists.

In 1997, she received an honorary doctorate from the State University of New York at Oswego.

Ms. Waters will speak about her experiences with Ailey II and will take your questions. **FN**

battery opera [*storm*]

A co-presentation with Belfry Theatre

March 13 through 17 @ 8 pm

Belfry Theatre

Tickets: 385-6815

WARNING: Strong Language and Adult Themes. Not suitable for Children

Stormy Weather



battery opera is a small Vancouver company that has built a sizable fan base in Victoria since their work *Spektator* was first presented in the fall of 2002. The performance of *Spektator* (based on the ritual cockfight) caused quite a stir. Some strong

supporters of Dance Victoria's programs to that point stormed out of the theatre at intermission and were very vocal in their negative reaction to the work. A larger number of local dance fans were enthralled with what they saw and thanked us for bringing such ground-breaking work, hitherto unseen, to Victoria. Since then, battery opera has returned to Victoria several times – to develop [*storm*] during a three-week residency in 2005 and for principal Lee Su-Feh to work with local dancer Jung-ah Chung on a new piece last summer. Su-Feh's various classes and workshops, which use martial arts as an entry point to the development of a movement vocabulary, have been very successful.

We're very pleased to have them return to Victoria with this evocative, poetic work that explores the relationship between men and their fathers against the backdrop of the sea.

battery opera's work always elicits a strong response. In this piece there is some strong language and graphic descriptions that may be offensive to some but that are completely in character with the work.

Below is a brief interview I conducted with the other half of battery opera, David McIntosh.

Stephen White: Can you talk a little bit about the dynamic involved in creating a work with someone else? What was the process for [*storm*]? Did you each take responsibility for individual aspects of the work? How did you put these elements together?

David McIntosh: The dynamic is fraught, fraught I say, with exciting possibilities and brutal rejections. Danger lurks: will love, more importantly will I, be destroyed?

Well, I was creating a work with Su-Feh, my wife and partner of the last 20 years, so it's a kind of delicious, familiar hell. Indeed this would be, we decided, the last of our co-created works for the foreseeable future. As such, it was also a little different than the

others (*Spektator*, *Reptile Diva* and *Cyclops*) in that we clearly defined roles for ourselves at the outset. Music and text for myself, choreography and overall direction from Su-Feh. How does it work? Well it starts with discussion about ideas that we are obsessed with at the moment. Events in the past, things taking place in the midst of our lives and the ideas that we use to link ourselves to all of it. We talk, and find resonance (and some dissonance) in each others' ideas and concerns and then we take those discussions into the separate creation of material, then we bring them into rooms together, are surprised, argue a bit, reassess, and go at it again. Because Su-Feh is a bit of a control freak, and also because of the sociological history of men and women and power, and my sensitivity to all that, I often have to act insidiously, developing my ideas in secret before insinuating them into the overall work where they attach quietly and then grow like bacteria. Then, once the bacteria has a life of its own, we both have to deal with it as facilitators to let the work that wants to be emerge.

SW: Some of the language and stories in [*storm*] are fairly graphic. Not a surprise when you consider you're exploring male relationships. But most of your work that I'm familiar with has been peppered with what some would classify as "off-colour" jokes, ribald stories or strong language. How do you answer those critics who have labeled you as a "shock" artist? Is there something you're exploring beyond shock?

DM: Shock, shock-artist, hmm... (I'm shocked). I could cop to having an "authority figure" complex, in the past - perhaps. And yes I have said, and do say things to purposely push peoples' buttons. Maybe because I am not that erudite and it seems to be the quickest way to elucidate a fallacy in logic or a blatant social hypocrisy. I'm impatient. And yes, I enjoy it, but I also cry at the fact that people actually find me offensive. There are far more worthy candidates for your ire! But, also no. I don't believe that I use any language out of context to the content of a work. I find great beauty in strong language and crude stories poetically expressed with the clarity of language appropriate to the acts described. I suppose that I grew up around a fair amount of foul language, drove a cab, worked in construction, sang in a "fuck band" - as they say, did some smuggling with alcoholic Irishmen, and then I started hanging out with dancers (Good Lord! They are the worst.). So my ear may have grown to be comforted by obscenity, but no, I don't believe I use crudeness to shock on its own accord. It is suitable to the content, and it is a vehicle of empathic expression. I want to communicate with people, and sometimes a certain amount of crudeness is the best way to bridge the social divides. Stage/house, performer/viewer, man/woman, white neo-colonial North American/everybody else, etc...

SW: Your interest as an artist extends beyond dance and theatre to music and spoken/written work. From your perspective, what elements does a work of art need to have to be satisfying?

DM: Mystery, baby. We all need to live with a bit of mystery in our

lives. Leave me with a few questions to ponder when I close the book or walk away into the night. If I wake up the next morning still thinking about it, still questioning, that's art.

SW: Where would you place *[storm]* in your own personal canon – does it belong to a group of pieces that are somehow connected or is it unique. Why?

DM: As I mentioned above, it belongs to the work co-created with Lee Su-Feh. The last of a venerable line - for now. They are all unique in terms of content and how that content gets expressed. In some ways, *[storm]* is the simplest of our joint works, and as such it is also the most challenging to perform. At the moment, we still have questions about where these stories, these dances, unfold, and where the performers and the audience are, in relation to each other. Who are we, and why are we in the room together? I guess I still need the questions to continue performing a piece. I remember "solving" our work *Reptile Diva* in Yellowknife, and feeling "That's it. There's no reason to keep per-

forming this piece now." In *[storm]* there is singing, dancing, and some stories and drink; how this all comes together in what kind of alchemical process is all in the performance. The relationship between the content, the work, the performers and the audience is still a ship whose manifest is unclear. That's why we perform it.

SW: For me, what I have enjoyed about battery opera's work is the layers of meaning, and the textures that come from putting so many forms of expression together. What are your favourite themes, sections, moments of *[storm]*?

DW: I love Max talking about his dad. That resonates on so many levels for me. I love talking to the audience, stepping into the fourth wall, and through it to offer a drink to someone. I love the tension of men dancing in tight defined spaces and the cruel vastness of the elements. I love sharing stories (possibly crudely) that have struck me deeply as a father, as a son, and as a man, and I, in particular, love singing the song *Johnny's Gone* with Max on the baritone saxophone. **FN**



To mark the occasion of our 10th Anniversary Season, Dance Victoria asked writer Robin J. Miller to research and write about the history of dance in the Capital region. This is her third article in a series of four. *The previous articles are in back issues of Footnotes posted on the website at www.DanceVictoria.com (click on Library)*

DANCE IN VICTORIA PART III

Lynda Raino: Modern Dance Arrives in Victoria

By Robin J. Miller

Lynda Raino didn't really intend to open a modern dance school in Victoria – or to set prim and proper tongues a-wagging – but she managed to do both with apparent ease some 28 years ago, in 1979.

"I had just arrived in Victoria and was walking down the street, and there was Constantine Darling," says Lynda. "He and I had danced together in Montreal, with our own company, Shango Dance Company – Shango is the Yoruba god of thunder (hey, it was the '70s!) – then we went our different ways. I went on to Texas and Oregon, he went to Florida and California, but somehow we both ended up here three years later. And we were both pregnant. His wife was expecting, and so was I."

The two immediately began planning their first performances in their new city as well as their first school, Spectrum Dance Circus. "As far as I can remember, we were offering the first modern dance classes in Victoria, with Constantine teaching the advanced people and me the beginners. He also did the administration, got the grants – all the stuff I've never wanted to do."

But it was their performances, even more than the new school, that really caught the attention of Victorians – hitherto exposed only to the gentle and demure world of classical ballet and maybe a little far-from-risqué musical theatre.

Lynda did two performances that first year in Victoria while heavily pregnant. She danced a solo called *Mother Moon* to Claude Debussy's *Claire de Lune* – "full moon, full belly" – that included a deep backbend, as well as a duet with Constantine that was "very physical. I could hear the audience murmuring 'the baby, the baby'," she says. "But it really set me up here as the rebel that I am."

Spectrum Dance Circus "naturally folded away" in 1983, with

Constantine creating the Victoria Arts Collaborative and Lynda founding Lynda Raino Dance – a dance school devoted entirely to modern dance (at least at first; today, nine different instructors offer classes in ballet, hip hop, flamenco and jazz as well as modern) and to adults (that has never changed: you will find no classes for children or teens at Raino's Yates Street studio). The actual teaching was, however, almost secondary.

While she loved the interaction with her students, Lynda found that the school gave her other benefits as well. "The school gave me the funds to create my own solo concerts every year or year-and-a-half, which meant that I could bypass the horrors of writing

grant proposal after grant proposal, for money you may never get." It also kept her extremely disciplined as a choreographer. "I had to keep choreographing for classes, had to keep being creative for my students. The school also gave me a sense of my



place in this city, and it gave me the other side of my life. On one side of my life, I was the mother of two sons. On the other, there was my art.”

Lynda’s non-conformist ideas about who and what makes a dancer – “my motto has always been: you don’t have to have a dancer’s body, you just have to have a body that dances” – also brought her and her school major media attention in the 1990s and early 2000s, when television stations vied for the rights to air

“you don’t have to have
a dancer’s body, you just have to
have a body that dances”

a one-hour documentary on Big Dance, her troupe of extra-large dancers, and Entertainment Tonight practically camped out at her studio. “Big Dance was one of the most innovative things we’ve ever done at the school,” she says, “and it became a phenomenon, this idea that large women could take classes and learn to dance and to perform, in spite of their bodies. People loved them. I loved them. It worked for 10 years, but now it seems to be gone, and I have got to ask: where are all the fat girls? I know you’re out there and I know you want to dance!” (She’s also looking for more men: “The world would be a better place if men danced more.”)

Unfortunately, the 1990s also brought a major back injury that left Lynda with painful cramps and muscle spasms in her feet and calves. She finally decided to retire both from dance performance and from teaching at age 55, in 2004. Three years later, the ban on dance performance still remains (although you may have noticed her doing a little light footwork as well as singing in the Belfry Theatre’s production of *Urinetown* just before Christmas), but she was lured back to teaching at her school, which she was intending only to manage, in September 2006.

“It’s absolutely stunning,” says Lynda. “The generations that have been through this school. It just keeps going on and on, year after year, and now we’ve taught perhaps as many as 5,000 adults here. It’s wonderful to know that you can inspire people, but it’s also absolutely humbling. It’s been a great career, and I have no complaints.”

Robin J. Miller is a Victoria-based writer, editor and dance fan. She writes for a variety of performing arts publications, including The Dance Current and Dance International.



Lynda Raino. Photo by Vince Klassen.

Lynda Raino on Modern Dance

“Modern and ballet are the two classical dance forms, and they both will be around forever. They are not trends, which can be fickle – how much do you want to bet that strip-pole dancing is going to be around in 30 years? But modern will be. Modern dance goes through changes, but never dies. It’s so physically brilliant, so wonderful and real. Ballet is limited in contrast, with a very tight vocabulary of movement. Many people, though, have never taken modern to their hearts as they have classical ballet, and sometimes, I’ve got to admit, it’s hard to love. Many modern choreographers are too internal and the audience feels left out or feels stupid, so of course they don’t want to be there. But there is a lot out there that is good, and if you’ve got an open eye, an accepting eye, and you give it a chance, there’s nothing better.” **FN**

DANCE SCENE

Stephen White Photo: Hélène Cyr



There are people, the unsung heroes, who are doing yeoman's work in the promotion and development of dance in our province. The one I met last fall who takes the prize for me is Ballet Kelowna's David LaHay.

In mid-November I went to the Okanagan to witness first-hand what the buzz was about. For a couple of years from various sources, I'd heard about how

LaHay had put together a small company of dancers (six to be precise) who were offered 34 weeks of work each year performing evenings of mixed repertoire in small communities dotted through the Okanagan and beyond. LaHay himself spent many years as a principal dancer at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and then moved to Kelowna where he started Ballet Kelowna four seasons ago. The company learns established repertoire as well as new works. The evening I saw included some of LaHay's own choreography as well as a very interesting interpretation of the balcony scene from *Star Crossed (Romeo and Juliet)* choreographed by one of Canada's most respected dance artists Brian MacDonald, in 1973. The score was written by Harry Freedman and (way ahead of its time) includes the spoken Shakespeare text.

The dancers are very well rehearsed with excellent timing and precise ensemble work. The two standouts in the company are Angel Jutzi and Rocky Gagne. Both have been with LaHay for three years and they both have the extra element of "presence" on stage. LaHay enhances each presentation by providing some background, history or context before each dance is performed. These insightful introductions add another layer of interest for the audience. They make the experience richer for the experi-

enced balletomane and offer points of entry for the novice. With his slow and steady approach to developing a company and an audience for professional chamber ballet, it won't be long before LaHay's Ballet Kelowna moves out of the Okanagan and begins touring the province.

In January I attended the 19th annual International Association of Blacks in Dance conference in Toronto where I saw some very strong dance presented at nightly showcases. A highlight for me was Asha Thomas from the Ailey company dancing the 1971 Alvin Ailey classic *Cry*. Originally created for Judith Jamison (current Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater), this 20-minute solo jettisoned Jamison to stardom when it was first performed. Thomas did an admirable job. The work demands not only technical proficiency from the dancer but also requires her complete emotional investment and expression. She made it fly.

There were many other strong performances including the Montreal-based company Danse Carpe Diem featuring a new duet for two men by Emanuel Jouthe. Jouthe pushed the envelope in a ten-minute work that literally tumbled and jumped to an evocative score that seemed to incorporate the thundering sound of a freight train rolling through. The movement incorporated small, quick hand and arm gestures with sudden jarring falls and the lights faded in an out like a box-car transiting under a full moon.

I certainly appreciate the opportunity to travel to see dance. I think in the end it only makes my choices for Dance Victoria's season stronger. **FN**

Youth Passes

Dance Victoria's popular free Youth Pass program that provides youth registered in Grades 8 through 12 with the opportunity to purchase \$10 rush seats to any performance is now fully subscribed for 2006/07. Please look for information about our 2007/08 program in September 2007.

VICTORIA CONDO, in the heart of the city, is the ideal location for business or vacation accommodation. The beauty of Beacon Hill Park and the charm of Cook Street Village are at the doorstep. Comfortable and fully equipped for a short or long term stay.

Visit: www3.telus.net/victoriacondo or phone (250) 381-5581 for rates and details.



THE STARS ARE OUT TONIGHT

Have you heard about our April 21st fundraiser at the McPherson Playhouse?

Borrowing from the success of TV's *Dancing with the Stars*, we've created our own home-grown version called *Stars on Stage – Celebrity Dance Challenge*. In the late fall we recruited local celebrities, pairing them with professional dance instructors. Their challenge over the next couple of months is to learn a two-minute dance that they will perform with their professional partners on stage and you, the audience, vote for your favourite.

Local entrepreneur **Howie Siegel** is learning a modern dance he'll perform with **Lynda Raino**. The elegant **Grania Litwin** (reporter, *Times Colonist*) is discovering her own inner passion as she learns the tango from local teacher **Brent Thomson**. And the list goes on. **Jo-Ann Roberts** (CBC Radio) will dance with **John de Pfyffer**, **Tasha Reid** (*The Zone*) will turn up the heat in a spicy salsa dance with **Lance Bourgeois**, **Karen Elgersma** (*Shaw Cable*) is paired with swing master **Kevin Savage**, **Adam Sawatsky** (*A-Channel*) is learning the flamenco with **Monique Salez**, **Gordie Tupper** (*CH Television*) is leading the rumba with **Wanda Kivitt**, and **Barbara Livingston** (opera singer) will round out the competition with a country two-step.

Our Emcees **Michael Forbes** (*The Ocean*) and **Diane Dakers** (Vice President, Dance Victoria) will introduce you to our celebrity commentators **Lisa Marshall** (*The Ocean*), **Sarah Murphy-Dyson** (former principal dancer, RWB), and **John Threlfall** (Acting Editor, *Monday Magazine*).

At intermission, you'll cast your vote for your favourite dance team and during the second half of the show watch knock-out performances including a dance solo by **Sarah Murphy-Dyson**. By the end of the evening the first *Stars on Stage* champion team will be crowned.

Our After Party celebration is sponsored by Swan's Hotel. In the Marquee Room at Swan's you can dance the night away with the stars while enjoying a glass of champagne, appetizers and the music of a professional DJ.

All proceeds go to Dance Victoria to ensure the continuation of our youth and community outreach programs.



TICKETS

Show: \$85/\$65/\$35 plus service charges - \$15 discount for children and youth 17 and under

After Party: \$40. Please Note: you must be 19 years of age to purchase an After Party ticket.



Endowment Fund: we did it!

In our pre-Christmas newsletter (FN#18) we told you that the clock was ticking on our new Endowment Fund and we were looking for donors to get us to our goal of \$10,000. Well... we made it! Actually, we more than made it.

In late November we put \$10,000 on deposit with the Victoria Foundation in our brand spanking new Dance Victoria Endowment Fund. On the advice of the Foundation we held back another \$2,500 in donations we received to put on deposit January 2, 2007. For all those mathematicians out there, you're right – we were actually successful in soliciting \$12,500 from our donors to make this happen.

The good news is that we are already at 25% of our goal for 2007 and the triple match formula is still in effect. (triple match = the province and federal government match funds on deposit). This means that by the end 2007 we could have more than \$60,000 in our Endowment Fund!

Donations to our Endowment Fund can be made at any time.

Endowment Fund Donors

Thank you to the following folks who generously gave so that we were able to start this fund:

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386-3844**

Volunteers Needed

This year, *DanceArts, DanceWorks* annual Festival is bigger and better. The organizers report a 20% increase in registration. Also new, the dates have moved to March 12 through 16 with events taking place at both the McPherson Playhouse and the Royal Theatre.

Each year Festival is produced because an army of volunteers gives their time to all aspects of the event. Specifically, the organizers are looking for volunteers to assist with:

- front of house
- backstage monitor
- master of ceremonies
- transporting people and equipment
- dance specialist's technical support
(must have a knowledge of dance terminology)
- master class supervisor and music coordinator

If any of the above volunteer positions pique your interest, please contact Heather Roberts at 370-7125.

Nutcracker Shopping Spree WINNER!

Many of you will recall that Mayfair Shopping Centre, our Presenting Sponsor for *Nutcracker*, offered a \$500 shopping spree as part of contest we promoted on the back of our *Nutcracker* post-

card. The lucky winner, announced before Christmas, was **Suzanne Joy** who, I am told, went shopping immediately after picking up the prize. I didn't get a chance to tell her my sizes!
THANKYOU, MAYFAIR!

Buy Online, Buy Often!

Sleepy provincial (beautiful) Victoria slipped quietly into the 21st century a couple of months ago, and many of you probably didn't even notice. Years in the making, the new era of purchasing tickets on-line has hit the island. Now when you go to www.DanceVictoria.com and click on a show to get more information, you will notice a new "button" that says "Buy single tickets online via the Royal and McPherson secure Box Office site." That button will deliver you to the Box Office website where, using your credit card, you can purchase tickets for any of our productions.

Now it will be some time before we can make subscription tickets available – but that is in the works. Right now, the service is limited to full price adult tickets and student/senior discount tickets. But because, as a subscriber you can qualify for a 15% - 25% discount on single tickets, your best bet is still to call the Box Office directly to request your "Friend of Subscriber" discount. Did I say we had slipped into the 21st century? Perhaps it would have been better to say we've started a long slide in that direction.

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QUARTER NOTES

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS!

Remember, as a subscriber you can buy additional tickets to any performance at any time throughout the year at the subscriber discount. Just call the McPherson Box office at 386-6121 or 1-888-717-6121 and tell them you want the Friend of Subscriber discount.

Ailey® II: Mixed Repertoire
February 27 & 28 @ 8 pm
Royal Theatre

"The dancers proved indefatigable, virtuosic and relentlessly sexy" — LA Times

battery opera: [storm]
A co-presentation with
the Belfry Theatre
March 13 through 17 @ 8 pm
Belfry, 1291 Gladstone Ave.

A thoughtful, raucous, bawdy and moving evocation of men and their relationships with their fathers from one of Canada's most inventive companies. Warning: Coarse Language. Not suitable for children

Canada's
Royal Winnipeg Ballet: Dracula
Sponsored by: MINI Victoria
March 30 & 31 @ 8 pm
March 31 @ 2 pm
Royal Theatre

Complete with flying bats, dancing gargoyles and mysterious transformations, *Dracula* is contemporary ballet at its atmospheric finest.

Decidedly Jazz Danceworks
Magnetic Consequences
With vocalist Jackie Richardson
and a six-piece band
April 3 & 4 @ 8 pm
Royal Theatre

An evening that will celebrate the blues through many of its rockin' to soulful incarnations. DJD has the top jazz dancers in the country.

Dance Victoria's Connection with the Best

I have always loved the end of the year when all the media create their lists of the best and worst of the previous season. You can read about the best dressed, the best Hollywood gossip, or you can even get a little more highbrow and read about the best in the arts. In the week between Christmas and New Year's the *Globe and Mail's* Review Section included dance critic Paula Citron's picks for the best in dance. What impressed me was the number of times dance artists and dance companies with a connection to Victoria were mentioned.

Victoria's own Crystal Pite was cited as the Most Versatile Choreographer in 2006. Citron gave a nod to Victor Quijada and his company Rubberbandance as the "Next Canadian Superstar." Victor and his company will be part of our 2007/08 season. Also part of next season is a new work by Edmonton's Azure Barton commissioned by Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal. Citron called Barton her "Most Happy Surprise."

This year, Dance Victoria is commissioning a new work by Vancouver's Tara Cheyenne Friedenbergh, who was singled out as one of three "Choreographers who never disappoint." Another of these was Malgorzata Nowacka, who just completed a residency in Victoria in January.

Dancing on the Island

Victoria's Suddenly Dance Theatre is the recipient of some great honours. Their recent dance film *OPIUM* was shown at the 35th annual Dance on Camera Festival at the Lincoln Center in New York in January 2007. *OPIUM* was based on an early stage work by Suddenly Dance and was co-directed by David Ferguson and Miles Lowry and featured dancer/choreographer Jung-ah Chung.

Just before Christmas the company also received notification that they had been awarded a \$15,000 grant from Bravo! Television to create a 4-minute dance film. The film will interpret a poem by Irish writer Liam Mac Uistin and will be entitled *AISLING* (The Vision).

Local dancer/choreographer and Suddenly Dance Theatre alumni, Lori Hamar has taken a temporary position as "producer" of Nanaimo's Crimson Coast Dance Society. Like Dance Victoria, Crimson Coast presents a season of dance performances annually. The company also presents a September festival of contemporary dance called InFringing. Long time producer, Holly Bright is taking a well-deserved sabbatical and Hamar will be managing the company in her absence. **FN**



Erratum: on page 5 in our last issue of *Footnotes*, Robin J. Miller wrote about two dance instructors who shaped a generation of dancers in Victoria — Wynne Shaw and Vivian Briggs — and we ran a photo of Vivian Briggs next to an article about Wynne Shaw. Here is the photo once again of Vivian, well-known in the dance community as a philanthropist and advocate for dance.