
KiNETiC STUDiO

January 29 & 30, 2005 Showcase

January 29-30, 2005 the Kinetic Studio Series wards off the winter blues with a showcase dancers guaranteed to set your imagination ablaze when choreographers **Kym Butler, Mary Ellen MacLean,** and **Nancy Sherwood** take the stage in another program of contemporary dance. Performances take place at **8:00 PM** at **DANSpace-on-Grafton, 1531 Grafton Street, 3rd Floor,** Halifax and feature new works by these exciting performers.

"An exciting dimension of the contemporary dance scene in Nova Scotia," says series administrator Sheilagh Hunt, "Is how choreographers from different backgrounds are combining influences from a variety of sources. This showcase is an superb illustration of that trend with elements of percussion, physical theatre, music, acrobatics, narrative, Celtic legends, and flower essences all surfacing within the diverse works of these talented dance artists."

Kym Butler is herself a dancer and choreographer with diverse interests and roots that range from Jazz and Tap to Funk and Modern dance. Her choreographic portfolio has over 40 works including three award winning self-produced shows created in Cape Breton and commissions from Live Art Productions, the Halifax Dance Young Company and the Maritime Dance Performance Group. In *Nagoya and Other Reichness*, featuring dancers **Rhonda Baker, Cassandra Belanger, Emma Kerson,** and **Jennifer Loane**, she plunges into the work of contemporary classical percussionist and composer, **Steve Reich**.

Reich has been called "America's greatest living composer." (The Village Voice); "The most original musical thinker of our time" (The New Yorker); and "Among the great composers of the century" (The New York Times). He was an honours philosophy student before embarking on his musical career, working chiefly with percussionists to develop a music of gradually changing ostinato patterns that move out of phase, creating an effect of shimmering surfaces.

"This is certainly not the first time a choreographer has used Steve Reich's music," says Butler. "Nor is it mine. There's something beautiful about the repetitive, hypnotic sounds, as if the notes are dancing right off the page. I've been listening to this piece for a while. I guess it has simmered in me long enough."

Nancy Sherwood, from Mahone Bay on Nova Scotia's south shore, is also drawn to the contemplative. Since 1987 she has been involved in shamanic dance and performance art and many site specific projects. Now working with musicians **Paul Newton, Michele Haddal,** and **Maria MacKenzie-Cann** she has created *Flower Essence*, a dance which explores our connection to nature and the floral kingdom. Fascinated by the magic forms of flowers, their colours and scents, she explores the beauty that they bring to the soul. An inspiration is the Celtic legend of Blodeuwedd, a druid who created a woman from flowers who embodied the essence of the wild and magical realms.

"I believe that our vitality, and the source of our life, rests upon our connection to the natural world and the very geometry of nature," says Sherwood. "The forms of nature are part of our forms and essence. It is a privilege to express that connection."

Mary Ellen MacLean is a performer with diverse interests and backgrounds. Long known as a performer of physical theatre with the Jest in Time ensemble with whom she toured North America, Australia, and the Far East, MacLean also has deep interests and strong backgrounds in comedy, dance, stage combat, and theatre. She has performed at Neptune Theatre and with Symphony Nova Scotia. She has toured the country with Frankie, her award-winning one-woman play and has appeared in Daniel MacIvor's acclaimed feature film, *Wilby Wonderful*.

Now she takes to the Kinetic Studio stage her work-in progress, *Bicyclette*, a remarkable movement play which explores the history of women and bicycles in wartime and in the modern age. It's a visual feast that borrows elements from clown, acrobatics, movement, dance, physical theatre, and story telling. It features a cast of some of the most talented performers on the province's stages including **Carolle Crooks, Sarah di Quinzio, Penelope Evans Spicer, Sara Harrigan, Kathryn MacLellan, Mary Lou Martin, and Alicia Orr.**

"Bicyclette is both a movement play and a marriage of text and physical theatre," says MacLean. "It's a love story between two women which takes the audience on a whimsical ride through love, women, history, and a beautiful object – the bicyclette."

With a fascinating and diverse program of dance and music from some of Nova Scotia finest performers it's an evening not to be missed. Performances take place on **Saturday and Sunday nights, January 29 & 30, 2005 at 8:00 PM at DANSpace-on-Grafton, 1531 Grafton Street, 3rd Floor** in Halifax. Tickets are \$8 (\$5 for students & seniors) and will be available at the door.

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