

Arts & Entertainment

Dancer teaches meaning of movement

By Terry Field

To most people dancing is a career only for the elite, but to modern dancer Robin Johnson, such a statement doesn't hold true.

Johnson, an assistant professor from California State College at Fullerton, just completed one week's residency on the UNL campus. Besides being busy with

Personality

dancers here, Johnson also has been involved as an artist-in-schools in many of Lincoln's elementary schools.

Johnson is a dance movement specialist for the Artist-in-Schools Program of the National Endowment for the Arts. The dance movement specialist explained how children benefited from his classes. It helps children to discover skills like leadership and cooperation by having to deal with partners and in larger groups. Building trust, sharing group ideas and getting involved can all be achieved through creative movement, he said.

On campus, Johnson has been working with a group of 10 dancers. The group will perform later this fall in many Lincoln schools.

Lori May, a senior dance major in Teachers College, is one group member. May describes the training as having two parts.

"Basically, it is an introduction to all the many ways one can see and experience movement," she said. "Using the elements of time, space and energy, the group demonstrates the many different ways a person can walk—either fast, slow or in between. We also continue on that idea with running, skipping and rolling."

Eventually, the dancers will show the kids some real dancing, relating most of what they had been talking about to movements in the dance.

Johnson is also this year's guest choreographer for the Nebraska Dance Ensemble, a dance company made up of university dancers. The dance piece by Johnson titled "Common Denominators" is the most recent in his repertoire. Six dancers will perform "Common Denominators" in the Nebraska Dance Ensemble concert in February.

"Dancing in Robin Johnson's piece is exciting," May said. "Each movement doesn't seem to have an ending, and it is this constant flow of energy that makes the dance what it is."

Johnson describes himself as a "dancer of exception." "In this world where dancers come a dime a dozen, the job market in our career seems bleak," he said. "But I have a career where my full-time job is to be a dancer."



Photo courtesy of Larry's Showcase

John Hammond, perhaps the foremost solo blues artist in America today, will perform at Larry's Showcase on Saturday. Hammond has been a dedicated musician for 20 years and has nearly as many albums to his credit. He has played with such greats as Duane Allman, John Mayall, Robbie Robertson, Bill Wyman and Michael Bloomfield. George Thorogood has said, "Hammond got me going as a guitar player."



Photo by Pat Kovanda

Robin Johnson

Prior to becoming an assistant professor at California State, Johnson was on tour for six years with the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company of Salt Lake City, Utah. Johnson joined this company after receiving a master of fine arts in dance from the University of Utah. Johnson also has worked with the repertory of many other dance companies that already have visited and performed at UNL, including Murray Louis, Alwin Nikolai, Bill Evans and Pilobolus.

"To anyone in the fine arts, when looking for a job you should try to keep it to your craft," he said. "That way, you won't be too overcome and exhausted being a waiter or waitress, which leaves little to no time left for staying prepared with your craft."

Johnson took his first dance class in a junior college in California when he was 18. Now, at 31, Johnson has become a driving force in the field of dance.

The reason why Johnson has become so successful possibly is because he is a male in a field where there are so few males, yet many needed. Also, Johnson lives his life the way he teaches the children — never stop exploring.

Live, from Lincoln, it's a radio marathon

KZUM, Lincoln's listener-sponsored, community-access radio station, will broadcast live performances during its fall marathon membership drive, today through Oct. 24. Some free tickets for the studio audience are available at KZUM and Dirt Cheap.

The performances are:

"Venezuelan Style," today, 7:30 p.m.

"Ken Winston Trio," Saturday, 7:30 p.m.

"Table for One," Saturday, 7:30 p.m.

"Peter Salter and Jonathan Brodie" Sunday, 1 p.m.

"The Click" and "Pogrom," Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

"Children's Story Time with Sharon Grady,"

Wednesday 1 p.m.

"Sean Benjamin and Friends," Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

"Salt Creek String Band," Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

"Open Stage," Friday, 7:30 p.m.

"Dennis Taylor," Oct. 23, 1 p.m.

"Cost of Living," Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m.

"The Unseen," Oct. 24, 1 p.m.

"Joni Mitchell Stole Your What!?" an original radio play, Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

The poems of Mark Connett

I

Visions lasting of mistrust and betrayal,
Screenplay castings of unnecessary delays.
Characters have their moments on stage,
Then fade away into the night.

Haunting memories of love's painful cost
Bring with them cherished memories of finding what
was lost.

Being human is filled with pain,
Filled with tragicomedy and being insane.
On one hand we are momentarily here.
Do we limp through life feeling death and fear?

The lonely fear of dying alone,
The fear of dying and finding no home,
Being together, retreating from each other,
Fear has no home if hearts love each other.

Sharing at once a blossomed love and spreading force
from above,
We have no need for territorial walls of behaviorism.

So bring our lives more love,
Brought into our mind, centered in our hearts.
We need no other government.

II

Take away my drunken states,
And crazy, power-mad games.
Take away my false facade.
Leave me raw, naked and real.

Let me feel once again
And see everywhere I've been.
I need to know that I'm loved
And that it comes first, first from above.

The world is overcomplicated at times,
But only because we make it so.
I can't quite feel that "what's mine is mine."
I'm so willing to let it all go.

My plea is heard in the heavens,
Even though it's not heard here on Earth.
And that which I call "Father"
Will protect me from death to birth.

Mark Connett is a senior majoring in political science and psychology. His poems are part of the weekly feature Original Work. UNL students interested in submitting photography, art, cartoons, prose or poetry should contact David Wood at the Daily Nebraskan. If material is mailed, please enclose name, phone number, major and year in school.



Photo courtesy of Fayline Productions

Diana Ross, "the leading lady of the rock era," performs tonight at the Bob Devaney Sports Center as part of Homecoming Week. As the lead singer of the Supremes, Ross had 15 No. 1 albums. She has had eight No. 1 albums in her solo career and more top singles than any artist besides Elvis Presley and the Beatles.