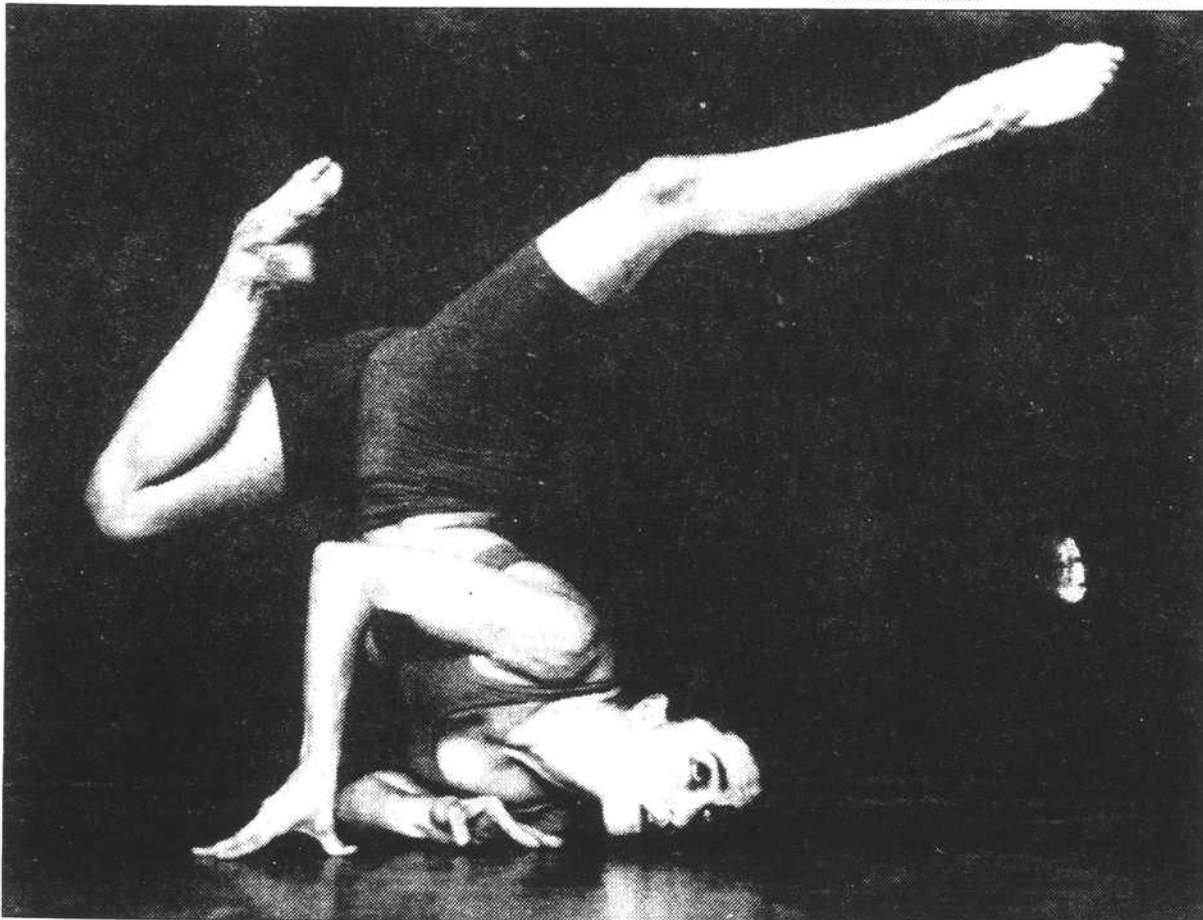


# A modern twist



**KELLY HOLCOMBE**, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln dance instructor, will perform in this year's "Nebraska Dancing" concert sponsored by the Omaha Modern Dance Collective. Holcombe will perform her original piece, "I Spy," and also will dance in a group presentation of "Angelica."

COURTESY PHOTO

## Concert showcases dance diversity

BY LIZA HOLTMEIER  
Staff writer

In the modern dance world, Nebraska probably doesn't appear on anyone's list of dynamic hubs.

But a few local choreographers are trying to change that.

The Omaha Modern Dance Collective, a nonprofit group for modern dancers, choreographers and audience-goers, will present its fifth annual "Nebraska Dancing" concert this weekend in Omaha. The concert is one of the few chances in Nebraska to see modern dance created by local artists.

This year's concert features a number of highlights, including a piece OMDC commissioned from University of Nebraska-Lincoln dance teacher Kelly Holcombe and a performance by guest artist Sandra Organ, a former Houston Ballet soloist.

OMDC commissioned a piece from Holcombe after her performance as guest artist at last year's concert.

Taffy Howard, OMDC president, said the organization wanted a piece that would provide a friendly introduction to modern dance.

"Modern dance sometimes gets a bad reputation. It's called weird or avant-garde," Howard said. "But people

only say that because they're not familiar with the movement."

Howard said OMDC asked Holcombe for a light-hearted, humorous piece with which audiences could identify. Holcombe's finished product is a work satirizing '60s spy films and television shows.

She divided the piece, titled "I Spy," into four sections. Set to music from flicks such as "James Bond," each section plays upon different kinds of spy imagery. Dancers blast on stage with guns, sneak through alleys and coyly seduce the "other side." The fourth section includes a surprise ending.

Gail Ogden, an OMDC board member, said Holcombe's choreography reflects the variety of influences in her dance career. A strong ballet background gives her movement a sense of precision and focus, while her time spent performing with the modern dance troupes Pilobolus and Momix has instilled in her a high level of creativity.

In addition to "I Spy," Holcombe will present and dance in another piece titled "Angelica." The work is actually an excerpt from a larger piece based on images from "Dante's Inferno" and "Paradise Lost." It depicts three angels, played by Holcombe, Howard and Patti Zukitis, before their fall from heaven.

The concert also will feature guest

artist Sandra Organ, an Omaha native and Houston Ballet's first African-American female ballerina. Organ will perform a modern solo on pointe titled "Mountain O' Things," which she choreographed to music by Tracy Chapman.

The show's other six pieces run the gamut of modern dance. Pieces range from a Martha Graham vocabulary to a Mexican folk dancing influence.

The six works were chosen during an open audition in August. Local choreographers submitted 25 pieces to be considered by a three-member panel of independent judges selected by OMDC.

During the selection process, judges looked for pieces representing modern dance's diversity.

"There's usually something someone will like on some level somehow," Ogden said. "(The concert) usually doesn't leave a bad taste in anyone's mouth."

The fifth annual Nebraska Dancing concert will be presented Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. at the Lied Education Center for the Arts at Creighton University, 24th and Cass streets in Omaha. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$8 for seniors and students and \$6 for OMDC members. For reservations, call (402) 551-7473.

## 'Mothra' invades Morrill as part of fund-raiser

BY SARAH BAKER  
Senior staff writer

Despite the cold weather, students may want to leave the sweaters in the closet this weekend.

Thanks to the good people at the natural history museum in Morrill Hall, Lincoln will fall prey to science fiction's biggest and most menacing moth.

The fabled silver screen nemesis of Godzilla, known to science fiction buffs as Mothra, will be onscreen in Lincoln for one day only.

"Mothra," the 1962 Japanese science fiction classic, pits the famed Godzilla, king of mythical monsters, against a giant insect that can be stopped only by the singing of a secret melody.

The film is being shown Sunday as part of the second annual Dinosaur Theater and Auction, a fund-raiser to benefit the natural history museum in Morrill Hall.

Mary Dupuis, a representative of Friends of the Museum and an organizer of the event, said this is the second year the fund-raiser will feature a science fiction B-movie.

"Last year we showed a Godzilla movie," Dupuis said. "Apparently people who are into museums are also into campy movies."

The fund-raiser will also include pizza and a silent auction with numerous items included.

Dupuis said last year the fund-raiser attracted a crowd of about 100, and this year they are hoping for more.

"We have some really neat auction items, like rugs, bookends and a lot of nice print work," she said.

Items were donated by a number of local groups and concerned citizens.

All of the proceeds from the event will go to support the revitalization of the Nebraska wildlife

gallery in the basement of Morrill Hall.

Dupuis said the gallery currently consists of about 30 dioramas that were built in the early 1960s and needs renovation because of leaks and other technical problems, as well as being out-dated.

"Museums have become much more interactive," she said. "The new displays will give the museum-goer more information than they could ever get through a glass case."

The renovated displays will include bird and snake sounds, as well as model skeletal remains, Dupuis said.

She said this year the group hopes to raise about \$6,000, up from last year's \$5,000 goal, which was achieved.

"We are hoping like mad it will be bigger and better," she said.

The Dinosaur Theater and Auction takes place Sunday at Morrill Hall, 14th and U streets, on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus in the auditorium. The event begins at 3 p.m.



with the silent auction, and "Mothra" will be shown following the silent auction at 4 p.m. A live auction begins at 7 p.m.

Tickets for the event are \$10 per person, \$20 per family and raffle tickets for prizes are \$1 each.

All tickets can be purchased at Morrill Hall. For more information, call the museum at (402) 472-6365.

## Artist brings work to life using movement, elaborate costumes

BY JASON HARDY  
Senior staff writer

Although Halloween is over, Lincoln residents will still have the chance to see some incredibly outlandish costumes.

Sha Sha Higby, a visiting artist from San Francisco, uses art and movement to illicit emotions and sensations from her audience. She combines ornamented outfits, put together like sculptures, with body movements that, in effect, bring those sculptured costumes to life.

Higby will bring her unique and mysterious art to Lincoln this week for both a performance and exhibition. She also will visit different University

of Nebraska-Lincoln classes related to the individual elements that make up her work.

For her show Higby dons the sculptured costumes and dances with ritualistic movements.

Slowly Higby moves in cyclical patterns, delicately showcasing different views of the costumes that she turns into living artwork. Each pose and movement provides a different image while slowly evolving into something different for each viewer, Higby said.

"I want people to feel they were taken to a whole other world," she said. "It's an extremely visual experience. It's a body environment that moves quite slowly, but you want it to move slowly because you want to study all aspects of this sculpture that is moving."

The wearable sculptures Higby uses in her performances are made from a number of different objects layered beneath thousands of pieces of silk, animal skins, seed pods, bells, feathers, lace and mirrors. In some cases, the sculptures have taken more than two years to finish.

Higby's inspiration for the performance and sculptures comes from a number of different cultures she has seen, and elements of nature. Her dancing style has been compared to traditional Indonesian techniques while her masks bear similarities to Japanese "noh" pieces.

Wendy Weiss, associate professor of textiles, clothing and design and gallery director for the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery, said the gallery currently features five of the sculptured costumes

Higby has made

"These costumes are extraordinary," Weiss said. "They're suspended from the ceiling in a very animated way so even when they're not on a dancer, they look like they're moving in space."

Her week will wind up with two performances of her work entitled "Wooden Sun" at the 7th Street Loft, 504 S. Seventh St., third floor. The first show, on Saturday, starts at 7:30 p.m. and the second, on Sunday, starts at 2 p.m.

Her costumes will be on exhibit at the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery in the home economics building, 35th and Holdrege streets, through Nov. 6.

For more information, call Wendy Weiss at 472-6370.