

Performance mixes different dance styles

Central Dance Theater of Omaha combines classical and Pop-era dance.

By Jason Hardy
Staff writer

When Bryon Heinrich founded the Central Dance Theater in 1998, he set out to offer quality ballet and dance performances while incorporating other Nebraska art representatives.

This Thursday, Heinrich will take another step toward fulfilling his goal with a Central Dance Theater performance at the Howell Theatre, located in the Temple Building, 12th and R streets.

The show will include excerpts from "Sleeping Beauty" and a tribute to the '40s, featuring live accompaniment by the Omaha Big Band.

Heinrich said including such an eclectic mix gave Central Dance Theater a chance to show its versatility.

"We always have half an evening of classical, to show our repertoire," he said. "Then we show something new and innovative."

He said this particular show also included excerpts from Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and featured a number of Lincoln children and two dancers from New York City.

He said the variance in styles would lend itself well to audiences both well-versed in ballet and those still relatively new to the art.

"If they're not suited to the ballet, they may very well be suited to and more comfortable with the more Broadway or Pop-era type dancing that we'll present," he said. "We have

PREVIEW Central Dance Theatre

WHERE: Howell Theatre, Temple Building, 12 and O streets

WHEN: Thursday, April 13 at 7 p.m.

COST: \$15:adult \$8:student
THE SKINNY: Omaha dance company to bring lively, eclectic performance to Lincoln.

a live singer involved, and the acting ability among these dancers are at a professional level. So you see characters in these dancers, and you see a story unfold."

Kevin Gibbs, a dancer in the show, said the piece offered him a chance to work with different dance elements.

"It's fun to have a variety of dance styles to perform in one show," he said. "It kind of has got me back into performing different kinds of dance."

Gibbs, who is included in a swing number, a jazz number and two duets, said he thought audiences would appreciate the differences among the pieces as much as he did.

"I think so, because if they end up not liking ballet, they might like one of the other dance styles, like the jazz or swing," he said. "It definitely keeps me interested."

Heinrich is hoping Gibbs is right in his assumption, as he is planning similar events for the future.

"Our hope is that this will be successful," he said. "The way that we're integrating the Nebraska Music Society is something that will keep us strong. It's very interesting, and it's educational at the same time, and right now we're doing it at a very affordable level."

'Rules' too predictable to satisfy audiences

By Mike Callahan Jr.
Staff Writer

Most of us are just Starbucks drinkers who've never seen combat.

At least that's how Col. Terry Childers (Samuel L. Jackson), a decorated Marine veteran of 30 years, feels about us as he faces a court martial.

In William Friedkin's "Rules of Engagement," a court-martial drama, we don't quite know who to root for.

Col. Childers is sent to keep peace at a protest outside the U.S. Embassy in Yemen. The mission goes to crap as he winds up ordering his men to fire openly at the crowd of protesters.

Hundreds of civilians are killed. Early reports suggest the crowd was unarmed.

Childers pleads with everyone, trying to prove that the crowd was armed. Three marines were shot, and the colonel was sure the crowd was firing.

But, the question is still at hand: Did Childers violate the U.S. military rules of engagement?

The national security advisor (Bruce Greenwood, a little too pretty-boyish to be convincing) panics, thinking that the United States would take international heat for the massacre.

Suddenly, all evidence proving the crowd was shooting is gone. The surveillance video vanishes. The only other marine with a view of the crowd, dead. The survivors of Yemen deny firing.

Childers seems to be done for, sure to be sent to prison. But then Childers does something unreal. He hires his Vietnam-War-pal-turned-mediocre-lawyer Hayes Hodges (Tommy Lee Jones) to defend him.

Why so unreal? Hodges is retired from duty, a lush and even admits to being a half-assed lawyer. But, despite those lackluster intangibles, the viewer has a feeling Mr. Jones has some spark somewhere in him to save the boring court scenes from their graves.

Really the film is quite predictable. But Jackson's and Jones' performances are stellar. Jackson's piercingly evil wide eyes on the battle field are hauntingly real, and Jones shows the heart of a Cornhusker in the court room.

The only thing that impedes the film from brilliance is unrealistic court room tempers flaring and the worst ending you'll see this year. That's not to say you won't be happy with the result of the film, but it's simply anti-climatic. The film more or less stops going.

I love the decision of the jury in the end, but I wish it would have been executed with at least a little suspense.

It's hard to like a movie that ends so

REVIEW Rules of Engagement

STARS: Samuel L. Jackson, Tommy Lee Jones
DIRECTOR: William Friedkin
RATING: R (graphic combat violence and profanity)
GRADE: B-
FIVE WORDS: Samuel and Tommy save "Engagement".

weakly, but I'm a sucker for individual achievement. Though Childers thinks I'm just a Starbucks drinking pretty-boy, Jackson is worth the price of the ticket.

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