

Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers

Newsletter
Fall 2004

PLEASE JOIN US IN OUR 25TH SEASON

Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers' mission is to create high quality, concert work opportunities for Los Angeles artists, to present works that communicate to a diverse audience by infusing dance with the cultural influences found in LA, and to enlarge an educated dance audience by reaching out to segments of the population that are typically underexposed to the arts. By directly involving audience members in concerts with participatory activities and indirectly involving them through the utilization of varied, cultural elements used to explore humanistic themes, the

organization aims to demystify dance while preserving the artistic integrity of the medium. In this way, LA C&D is committed to using dance as a unifying force that crosses cultural, generational, language, and socio-economic lines. Since its inception in 1979, LA C&D, a non-profit organization, has presented multiple educational programs and created many new works through its two professional dance companies Louise Reichlin & Dancers (modern) and Zapped Taps™/Alfred Desio (electronic & acoustic tap).

LOS ANGELES CHOREOGRAPHERS & DANCERS CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

"THE PATCHWORK GIRL OF OZ" AT THE
BARNSDALL GALLERY THEATRE
Sunday, December 5, 2004 at 3:00 pm

After packing houses in three states, Louise Reichlin & Dancers, a performing company of Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers, brings its critically acclaimed production "The Patchwork Girl of Oz" to the Barnsdall Gallery Theatre in Hollywood on Sunday, December 5 at 3:00 pm (as well as a performance for students Monday, Dec. 6th at 10am). Adapted from the original book by L. Frank Baum, creator of "The Wizard of Oz," the performance spins out ten dances, woven together with multimedia, music, and narration. The magical, modern-day fable brings to life the adventures of Ojo as he and his companions, including the marvelously contemporary Patchwork Girl, journey through the land of Oz to find objects that will bring his uncle, who has been turned into marble, back to life. Although the original book was written in 1913, Baum was strongly influenced by his suffragette mother-in-law, and the views and experiences of the characters still seem current almost 100 years later. An example is the character called Hip Hopper, the Champion – how did this man discover words like hip-hop?

The performance is perfect for audiences of all ages. While younger viewers will become engrossed in the magical world of Oz brought to life with the help of the original book's storyline, adults will find sophisticated music, costumes, dance, and multimedia imagery. The Beverly Hills Outlook praises the show's musical selection calling it "a delightful surprise, lively, a bit exotic, and an excellent combination of Eastern and Western influences." The Los Angeles Times compliments Linda Borough's designs, saying that the "colorful costumes pleased and there was a certain naive quality that grabbed at the heart." In regards to the show's "jubilant dancing," the Times added, "there is a lot going on choreographically to sate a dance lover's



Adrienne Fisher,
Janell Burgess,
and Wil-son Williams.

appetite." Richard Wainess created the original media for Part 1. Video artists for Part 2 are Michael Masucci, Videographer, and Shinji Murakoshi, VJ Artist.

Reichlin's inspiration for "The Patchwork Girl of Oz" came from an article about the celebration of the first book in the series, The Wizard of Oz, at the Los Angeles Central Library. She remembered that as a child, she would imagine herself as a character in the book, and fill her dreams with their adventures. After viewing the exhibit, she was struck by the dance nature of the illustrations by John R. Neill, especially of Scrap, the Patchwork Girl. The character leapt out of the pages in every book, and one book was devoted to her alone. Although the dance/multimedia work has been updated to include today's technology, an excerpt of Baum's (the book's author) 1914 film is included in Reichlin's piece. The innovative show was developed over a three year period, with performances at venues locally on the way: Part I was at Zipper Hall, the Colburn School of Performing Arts and at Newman Hall, USC, as part of the Thornton School of Music Faculty series in the spring of 2001. The next fall Part I was performed for the City of Walnut's "Dancing in the Streets" outdoors festival and at Cal State Northridge as part of Arts Day that October. That spring Part II premiered at Newman Hall, USC, as part of an international festival on campus. Those three performances were free to the public, with an additional performance at Los Angeles Theatre Center later that spring. Another free performance was again at Cal State Northridge that fall. Then came the ending – Part III was under 20 minutes with a new commissioned VJ video,

Cont next page