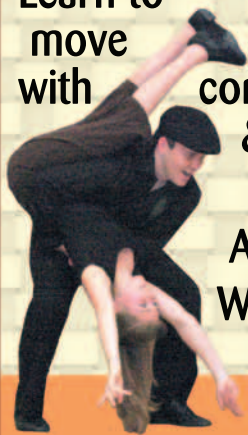


Dance into Spring

U & Me Dance
Swing, Latin,
Ballroom and more!

Learn to
move
with confidence
& style!



All Ages
Welcome

- Lessons available Monday through Friday (also some weekends)

- Dance Every Week

and Fridays @ 8:00 pm

Get Your Tickets to a
Night to Remember!

**JOY OF DANCE
SHOWCASE**

Friday, June 1 @ 8pm

Featuring Professional &
Amateur Performances!

Tickets on sale April 20th!

360-676-0292

www.uandmedance.com



Located at the Majestic Building
1027 N. Forest St. in Bellingham

by **Laurel Larsen**

This year, celebrate the sweet season of new beginnings with Nancy Whyte School of Ballet's "Dance into Spring" event. In honor of National Dance Week, the event will be held April 22 at the Bellingham High School Auditorium.

Nancy Whyte School of Ballet was founded in 1969, making it the oldest dance school in Bellingham. From three-year-olds to adults, students participate in classes exploring all types and aspects of dance. The school is also the official home for the Mt. Baker Ballet, which tours nationally.

The Mt. Baker Ballet is composed of the nine most advanced of Nancy's students. They will be opening their performance season here at home with "Dance into Spring." The dance event is choreographed by Nancy Whyte herself, and includes dancers ranging in age from 13 to mid-twenties. These young women take four strenuous dance classes per week, and also work four to ten hours outside of class on perfecting their performance.

This year's "Dance into Spring" event has been in development since just after the Christmas holiday, when the company's other annual event, "The Nutcracker," had concluded. According to Nancy Whyte, planning such an extensive program is "an intense process, with developing costuming and choreography, tickets and flyers, and more."

The performance will include five very different pieces of dance, all choreographed by Nancy Whyte. She feels that "Summer Night," set to music by Samuel Barber, is the most "enigmatic" of the performances. "It is full of wonderful visual images, including a feeling rather like a group of sleeping, dreaming people," she described. "There is lots of playful imagery, contemplative parts, parts that invoke a sense of heat and humidity. It has been so challenging to choreograph this piece, but so gratifying to have dancers who are up to the challenge."

The second chapter, dubbed "Time and Place," is set to a piece of beautiful Armenian music, as well as Klezmer music. Nancy states that she has always had a love of Klezmer music, but it wasn't until she started choreographing to it did she appreciate it even more: "Only when you start working with Klezmer music do



Mt. Baker Ballet member Nina Deacon in "Summer Night," a new work by Nancy Whyte to be premiered April 22, 2007 as part of the company's annual repertoire performance "Dance into Spring." *Photo by Village Photography*

you realize how complex and layered it is."

Another chapter in the performance is called "Jazz de Paris," a jazz piece Nancy developed in Kansas City last summer. Nancy had the honor of being one of only nine choreographers selected to participate in the Glenda Brown Choreography Project, in which pieces must be developed, rehearsed, and performed in a very short period of time. "Jazz de Paris" was easy and lots of fun to put together [at the workshop]," Nancy explained, making it a natural inclusion for "Dance into Spring."

The younger members of the dance company will perform to a synopsis of a string quartet piece by Beethoven. Although the dancers are young, Nancy is confident in their performance and says, "they are working so hard." The fifth piece will be a "Tango" to the music of Astor Piazzolla, which goes "up and beyond simply being a Tango, and becomes a work of art."

Nancy truly admires the young women who put in so much effort to make an



The barre exercises increase muscular strength, flexibility, speed and help attain balance, control and proper alignment. *Photo courtesy of the Mount Baker Ballet*



Children's Ballet students anticipate their turn onstage at the Mount Baker Theatre for the annual Spring Dance Recital. Photo courtesy of the Mount Baker Ballet

event like this possible: "I feel so lucky to work productively with a group of people who work so earnestly and professionally."

The wonderful thing about having such an established dance studio in Bellingham is that unique performances such as these can serve not just to entertain but also to inspire. Classes for all ages and experience levels begin seasonally, while this summer's dance workshops are designed to educate, instruct and motivate young students.

The summer dance workshops are in June and August, running four days per age/experience level. The classes include active dance, dance history, ballet videos, creative expression, and more. The class may serve as an introduction to dance for children deciding to sign up for upcoming courses.

The "Dance into Spring" performance takes place on Sunday, April 22 at 7:00 pm. It will be presented at the Bellingham High School Auditorium. Cost is \$12 adults, \$10 children, students, or seniors. Advance tickets are available at Creative Dancewear, 2300 James St., Ste 2C, or tickets are available at the door. No assigned seating is available, so plan to arrive early to sit with your companions. More information on upcoming performances, on the school, or on the summer workshops is available at www.nancywhyteballet.com.

Laurel Larsen lives in Bellingham, likes to write occasionally, loves to edit, and has an English degree from the University of Washington.



(continued from page 7)

Bellingham Country Dance Society

hosts the following Contra dances at the Fairhaven Library – **April 6:** The Noisy Waters Band from Bellingham with caller Adam Carlson. **April 21:** Katz & Dogz from Bellingham. Workshops at 7:30pm, dances from 8-11pm. Suggested donation \$8-\$10. No fragrances please. More info:

An Evening of Contemporary Dance

Northwest Ballet Theatre will perform "An Evening of Contemporary Dance" at the Firehouse Performing Arts Center in Fairhaven on Friday, April 6 and Saturday, April 7. Both shows start at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$15 and can be picked up at NBT, 1417 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham, the Community Food Co-op, or reserved by calling 714-1246. The program will feature a variety of new works by several Pacific Northwest choreographers. This is a preview performance with excerpts from the full production to be presented in May at the Northwest Dance Festival (see below). Seating is limited for this performance so reserve early. Tickets will be \$18 at the door.

Northwest Dance Festival

Northwest Ballet Theatre will perform "Forces in Rhythm" and "Beethoven's 7th Symphony," two major original works featuring the collaborative talents of five Pacific Northwest choreographers. "Forces" is a powerful work that combines jazz, modern, ballet and contemporary styles and explores how the culture of dance has changed and evolved through history. Alyse Clacy, Jaime Monsef, Jacque Robertson and Diane Williams have choreographed it collectively. "Beethoven's 7th Symphony" in four movements with original choreography by John Bishop is set to Beethoven's "Dance Symphony." Featured principals Alyse Clacy and Laura Dolezal highlight a cast of 30 dancers. The program will be presented Saturday, May 5 at 7:30pm at Mount Baker Theatre. Tickets: 734-6080 or www.mountbakertheatre.com. The final performance is Saturday, May 12 at 7:30pm at McIntyre Hall. Tickets: 416-7734 or www.mcintyrehall.org. Discount and group tickets are available. For information about other NBT performances during the year or Northwest Ballet School of Contemporary Dance, call 714-1246 or visit www.northwestballet.org.

visit www.bellinghamcountrydance.org or call 676-1554.

WWU Dance to Host Mark Morris Reconstruction Residency April 13-15

Kraig Patterson, a former company member of the Mark Morris Dance Group, will offer a master class and free public rehearsal as part of a residency at Western Washington University April 13-15. Patterson will conduct the master class for Intermediate-Advanced Modern Dance at the Firehouse Performing Arts Center from 11am-1pm, Sat., April 14. Tickets for the master class are \$10 and can be purchased at the door. The residency will also include a free public rehearsal with Patterson and WWU dance students from 5:30-7pm Sun., April 15 at ...Ving!, Western's dance studio at 311 E. Holly in Bellingham. The

(continued on page 10)

Dance into Spring

Celebrate National Dance Week!

Celebrating 32 Years of Dance Excellence

The Mount Baker Ballet
Nancy Whyte Artistic Director
Sunday, April 22 • 7pm
Bellingham High School Theatre
Admission: \$12 Adults/\$10 Students & Seniors
Tickets available through Creative Dancewear and at the door
—One Night Only!!—

Got Prom Shoes?

Creative Dancewear
2300 James St., Suite #106
Bellingham - 738-9406