

a body of work



WINNIPEG'S CONTEMPORARY DANCERS 40TH ANNIVERSARY 1964 - 2004

A Body of Work | Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers | 40 Years of Moving Images | 1964 - 2004

Editing and Text: Stephanie Ballard

WCD is pleased to present *A Body of Work* as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary. This collection of photographs provides an extraordinary look at our first 40 years of dance creations. Our rich and diverse history is captured through this collection of exquisite images. Thank you to all the artists who have made it all possible.

WCD is committed to the ongoing development of innovative modern dance. Throughout its history, WCD has nurtured dancers and choreographers of provincial, national and international significance. Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers is an important part of our Canadian cultural fabric and continues to aspire to the artistic standards of excellence established by Founding Artistic Director Rachel Browne in 1964.

It is our hope that *A Body of Work* will inform and inspire future generations of artists and audiences alike. Here's to the next 40 years of new creations and new directions - Stephanie Ballard



Stephanie Ballard is an acclaimed choreographer, personal coach and dance educator. Formerly an apprentice, company member and Associate Artistic Director for Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers, she continues her close affiliation with WCD in her capacity as guest choreographer and archivist. Her work with the Margie Gillis Dance Foundation (1983 - 1996) included extensive touring of Asia, the U.S., Canada and Europe. She has a Masters Degree in Therapeutic Counselling and works with Learning Through The Arts in Winnipeg. Stephanie is a member of the Society for Canadian Dance Studies, a national organization dedicated to saving the dance heritage of Canada. She is Guest Artist in Residence/Archivist for the School of Contemporary Dancers' Professional Program and continues to create independent dance projects.

WCD extends special thanks to its 40th Anniversary Season Sponsors:



Special thanks to the photographers whose work appears in this book: J. Coleman Fletcher, Andrew Oxenham, David Cooper, Ian Bradshaw, Gerry Kopelow, Robert Tinker, Keith Freeman, Larry Clawson, Tom Fijak, Cylla Von Tiedemann, Paul Martens, Bruce Monk, Lydia Pawelak, Ian McCausland, Treasure Waddell, Hugh Conacher, Otto Hammer and Ken Gagliotti/Winnipeg Free Press.

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Front cover photo credit
Dorothy A (1964) CHOREOGRAPHER: Fred Robinson PHOTO: LARRY CLAWSON DANCER: DOANNE KELLY

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Rachel Browne, C.M.L.
Founding Artistic Director



Tom Stinson
Artistic Director

Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers creates, teaches and presents professional contemporary dance with a view to furthering the art form for professional artists and audiences alike. WCD's values, programs and activities are driven by its historical significance, commitment to the ongoing development of the artist, and place in the community.

the early years

1964 - 1978



Variations (1969) choreographer: Rachel Browne photo: J. Coleman Fletcher dancer: Rachel Browne

In 1964, Rachel Browne took a risk. She started a small modern dance company with the intention of making a difference. And that she did. With steadfast devotion, discipline, passion and courage, she established what was arguably the first professional modern dance company in Canada.

An invitation to join the Royal Winnipeg Ballet originally brought Rachel to Winnipeg in 1957. Dancing with the ballet for five years informed her decision to start her own company. Rachel formed Contemporary Dancers as a vehicle to express her own passionate desire to continue dancing. It was her intention to build a repertoire that would represent the broad diversity inherent in modern dance.

In addition to her own choreography, Nenad Lhotka, James Clouser, Marvin Gordon and Robert Moulton were among the first choreographers commissioned to contribute to the repertoire. Throughout the years, numerous choreographers of national and international acclaim would join the choreographic roster. By 1967 the Company was touring extensively and Rachel was awarded her first grant from the Canada Council. In 1969 a half hour CBC television show, directed by Don Williams, was completed. This marked the beginning of numerous promotional and documentary events that would elevate the Company's profile across the country.

Under Rachel's artistic direction, WCD flourished. She worked tirelessly as the Artistic Director, Choreographer and Company Manager. During the early and middle years she created countless new works, performed exquisitely with the Company and was at the helm of challenging management and touring conditions. Throughout the years she has fostered the talents of numerous students, Company members, independent dancers and emerging choreographers.

In 1972 Rachel Brown established the School of Contemporary Dancers with Faye Thomson as the School's first principal. An apprentice program was initiated in the same year. By 1978 WCD was a critically acclaimed modern dance company. Tours of Canada and the United States provided a platform for significant artistic exposure.

As we celebrate our 40th Anniversary, the Company and the School continue to evolve and play an important role in the Canadian modern dance community. Rachel Browne continues to create and contribute to the WCD repertoire and the School. She remains a legend in Canadian dance.

"O WILD FIG TREE YOU DANCE IN FIRE AND ASHES OVER WORLD'S MOUTH DANCE"

- DOROTHY LIVESAY, ZAMBIA: THE LAND



Visions Fugitives (1965) CHOREOGRAPHER: Nenad Lhotka PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Jill Lhotka, Janice Narvey, Marilyn Lewis, Rachel Browne, Jennifer Ingram



Sonata for Cello & Dancers (1965) CHOREOGRAPHER: James Clouser PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Marilyn Lewis, Bob Land, Richard Browne, Rachel Browne, Janice Narvey, Jill Lhotka, Jennifer Ingram, Cheryl Belkin



Odetta's Songs and Dances (1969) CHOREGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Dawn Osborne, Laura Willows, Anita Hornstein, Myra Miller



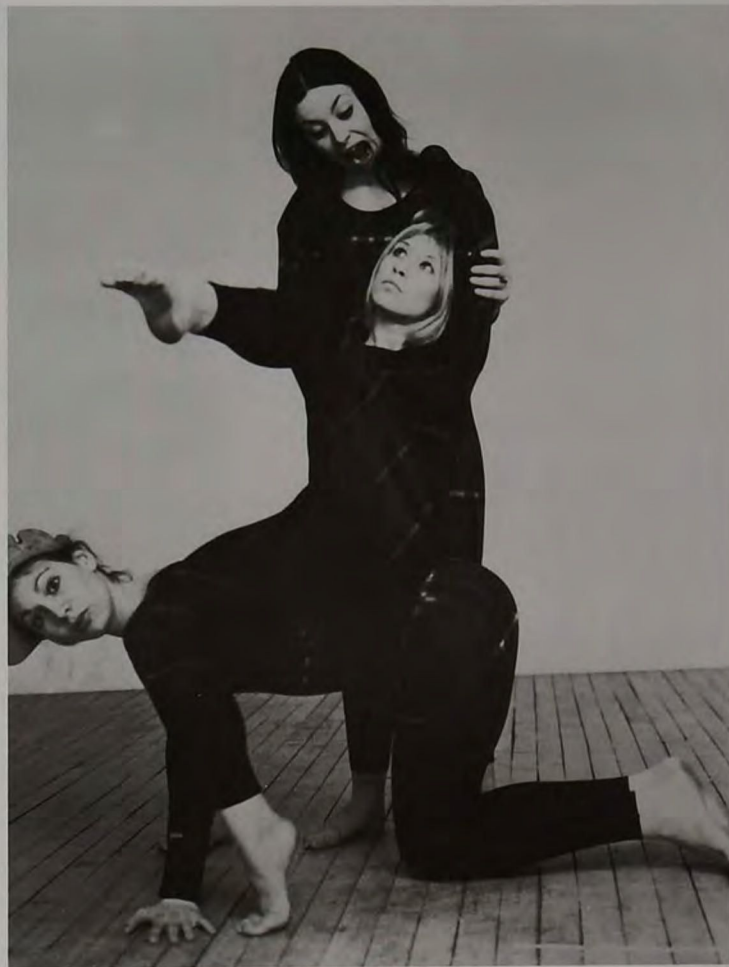
Turn In, Turn Out, Turn On (1968) CHOREGRAPHER: Robert Moulton PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Micheal Baldwin, Dawn Osborne, Mila Zagoda, Raymond Goulet, Rachel Browne, Anita Hornstein, Myra Miller, Don Boucher



Rondo Ad Absurdum (1968) CHOREGRAPHER: Robert Moulton PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Adele Hall, David Tucker, Ann Britten, Joanne Montgomery, Micheal Baldwin, Michele Presley, Holly Ann Savage



Odetta's Songs and Dances (1964) CHOREGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Marilyn Lewis, Cheryl Belkin, Barbara Barsky, Cherie Smith



Evening in the Suburbs (1966) CHOREGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Morti Mostow, Barbara Barsky, Barbara Conier



True Believer (1969) CHOREGRAPHER: Robert Moulton PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Rachel Browne and Ron Holbrook



The Company (1971) PICTURED: Crew member, Elaine Loo, crew member, Michele Presley, David Tucker, Holly Anne Savage, Barbara Johnson, Janet Oxley, David Weller, Jim Green, Charles Moulton, Larry Brinker, Rachel Browne



Country Music (1972) CHOREOGRAPHER: Sophie Maslow PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Leslie Dillingham, Nancy Paris, Larry Brinker, Stephanie Ballard



I Never Saw Another Butterfly (1972) CHOREOGRAPHER: Richard Gain PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: David Weller, Charles Moulton, Holly Anne Savage, Michele Presley, Jim Green, Janet Oxley, Barbara Johnson, David Tucker, Larry Brinker



Prisms (1971) CHOREOGRAPHER: Shirley Ririe PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: David Tucker, Adele Hall, Jim Green, Holly Anne Savage, Michael Baldwin, Michele Presley



Plaisirs D'Amour (1975) CHOREOGRAPHER: Cliff Keuter PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCER: Shelly Ziebel



The Angel Within (1976) CHOREOGRAPHER: Norbert Vesak PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Sara Brummel and Grant McDaniel



Domino (1976) CHOREOGRAPHER: Linda Rabin PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Suzanne Oliver, Sara Brummel, Shelly Ziebel



Domino (1976) CHOREOGRAPHER: Linda Rabin PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Seth Walsh, Jim Davis, Kim Hughes, Grant McDaniel



The Woman I Am (1975) CHOREOGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Frederick McKittrick, Stephanie Ballard, Rachel Browne, Suzanne Oliver, Nancy Paris, Grant McDaniel



Metallies (1973) CHOREOGRAPHER: Paul Sanasardo PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCER: Stephanie Ballard



Contrasts II (1974) CHOREOGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher
DANCERS: Nancy Paris, Charles Flanders, Kenneth Lipitz, Grant McDaniel, Shelly Ziebel, Stephanie Ballard



The Gift To Be Simple (1976) CHOREOGRAPHER: Norbert Vesak PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Suzanne Oliver, Grant McDaniel, Nancy Paris, Jim Davis, Shelly Ziebel, Kenneth Lipitz, Frederick McKittrick, Stephanie Ballard, Charles Flanders, Zella Wolofsky, David Tucker



Murder of George Keuter (1977) CHOREOGRAPHER: Cliff Keuter PHOTO: Andrew Oxenham
DANCERS: Grant McDaniel, Seth Walsh, Kenneth Lipitz, Kim Hughes



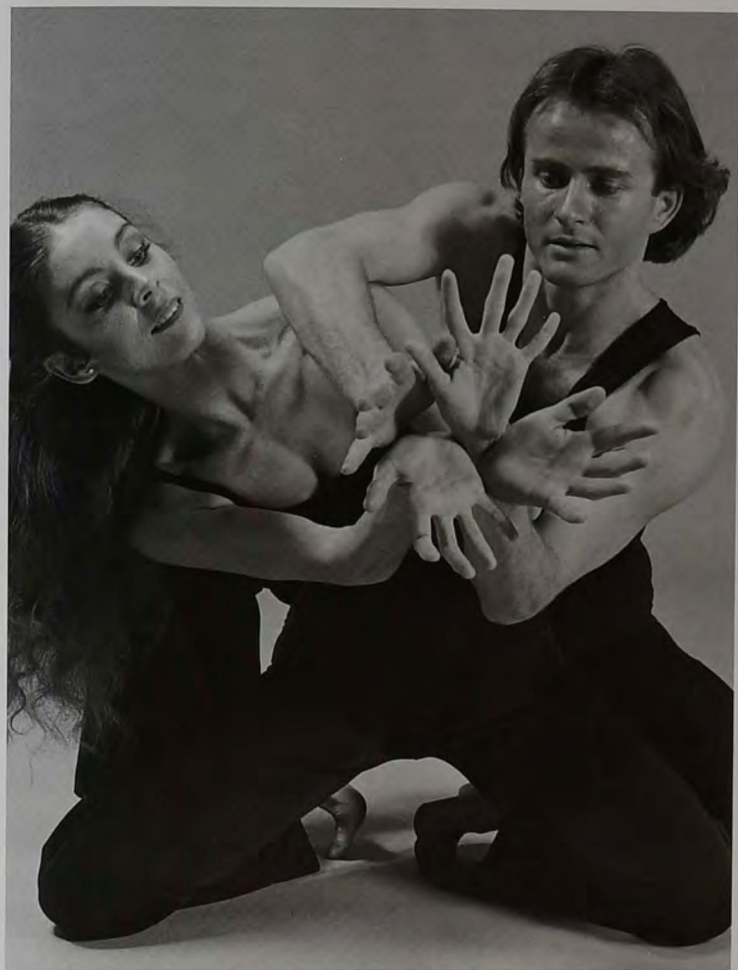
Fellow Voyageur (1974) CHOREOGRAPHER: Richard Gain PHOTO: J. Coleman Fletcher DANCERS: Nancy Paris and William Holahan



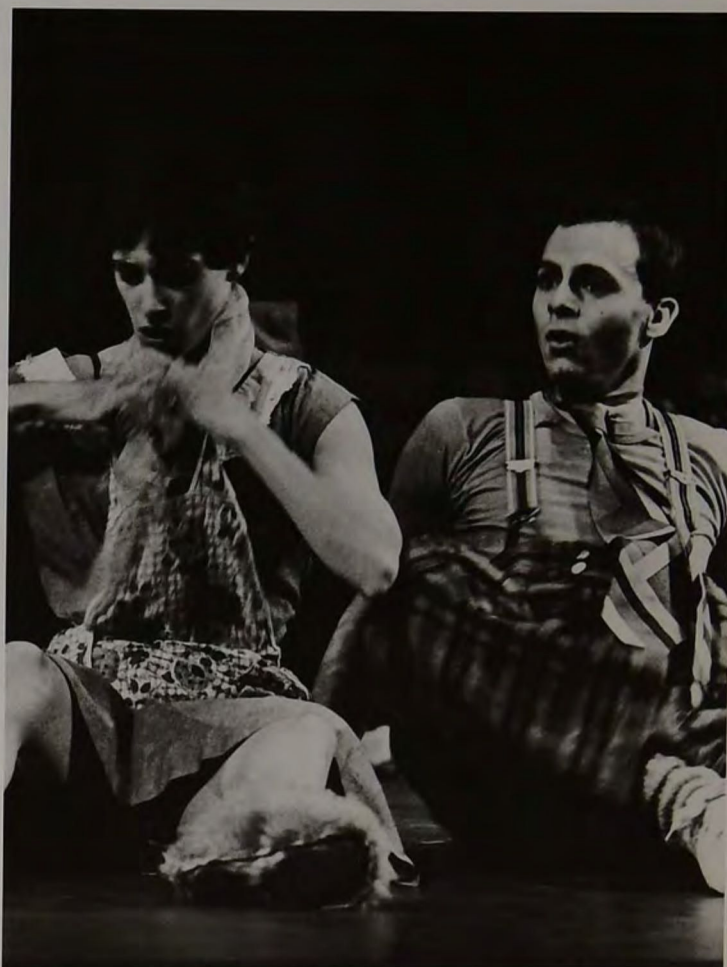
The Other (1978) CHOREOGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCERS: Rachel Browne and Kenneth Lipitz



Solitude (1978) CHOREOGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: Ian Bradshaw DANCER: Gaile Petursson-Hiley



Diary (1979) CHOREOGRAPHER: Lynne Taylor-Corbett PHOTO: David Cooper DANCERS: Gaile Petursson-Hiley and Mark Chambers



Baggage (1977) CHOREOGRAPHER: Anna Blewchamp PHOTO: Andrew Oxenham DANCERS: Sara Brummel and Grant McDaniel



Spy In The House of Love (1978) CHOREOGRAPHER: Lynne Taylor-Corbett PHOTO: Gerry Kopelow COMPOSER AND SINGER: Judith Landers DANCERS: Nancy Paris, Sara Brummel, Debbie Smith, Rachel Browne, Jim Davis

the middle years

1969 - 1990

"DANCE FOR
YOURSELF.
IF SOMEONE
UNDERSTANDS,
GOOD. IF
NOT, THEN
NO MATTER,
GO RIGHT ON
DOING WHAT
YOU LOVE."

- LOUIS HORST

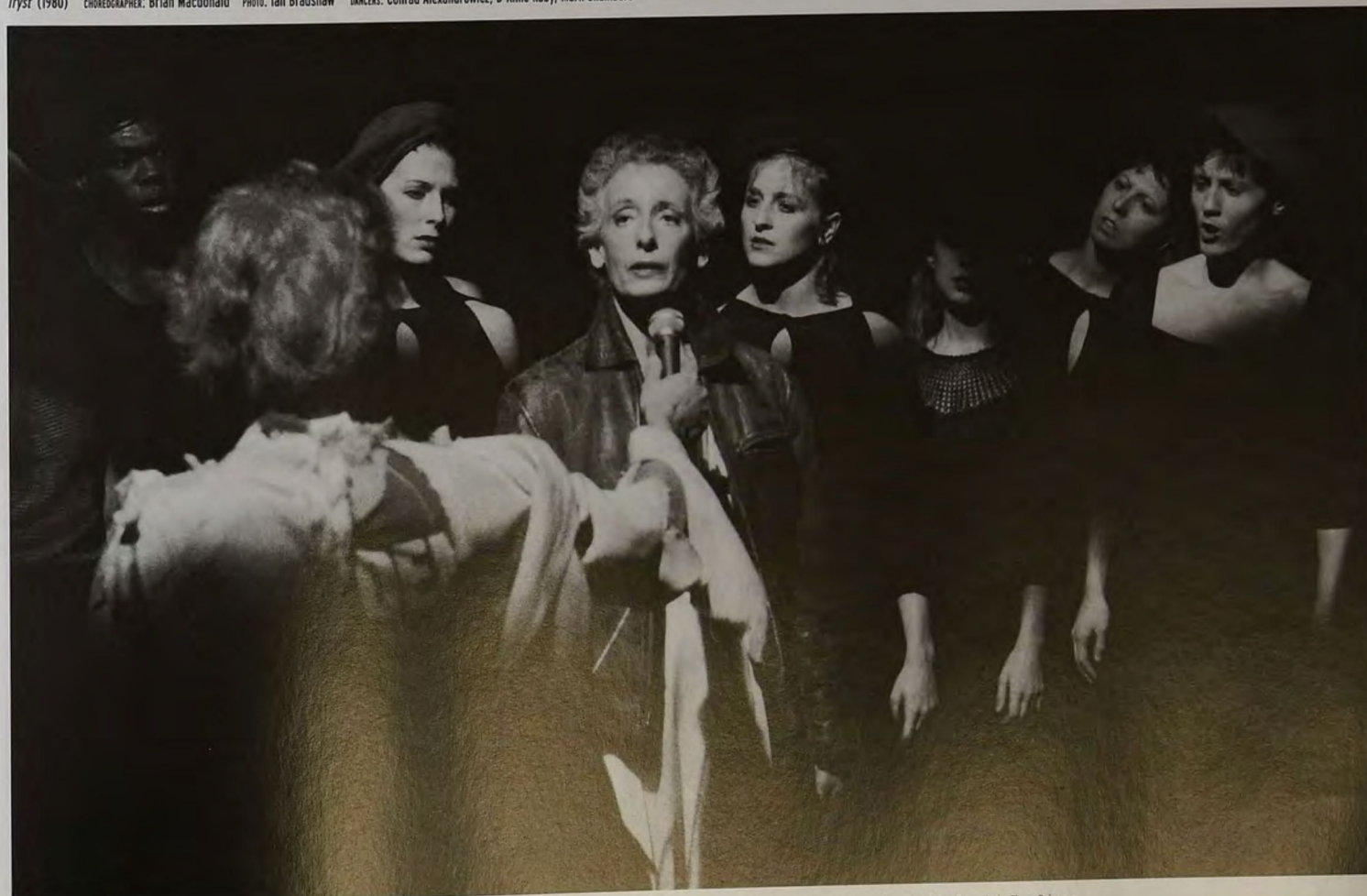
The middle years were filled with a sense of evolving change, growth and risk. From 1979 until 1983 the Company flourished with exciting new creations, extensive tours and the participation in two feature films. *For the Love Of Dance* featured Rachel and the Company on tour, and *Gala* featured *Prairie Song*, a work by Stephanie Ballard. During these years, Browne and Ballard created numerous works for the Company. The Company commissioned eminent Canadian and international choreographers to contribute to the repertoire, including Lynne Taylor Corbett, Norbert Vesak, Judith Marcuse, Brian Macdonald, Norman Morrice, Karen Jamieson and others.

In 1983 Rachel Browne assumed the position of Founding Artistic Director. Bill Evans became Artistic Director for the 1983 - 84 season and continues his association with the Company and School as a master teacher and choreographer. In 1984 Tedd Robinson was appointed Artistic Director and served in this capacity for six years. His innovative choreography brought a fresh face to the Company's image. *'What will Tedd do next?'* became integral to the Company's artistic mandate and marketing strategy. His contribution to the company's repertoire was prolific.

The Festival of Canadian Modern Dance was inaugurated in 1985, and for the next seven years introduced outstanding national and international dance artists to Winnipeg audiences. In the 1990 - 1991 season Artistic Director Charles Moulton would contribute brilliance and discord. By the end of Moulton's reign, Arnold Spohr accepted the position of Interim Artistic Director and a search committee was struck to find a successor to the position of Artistic Director.



Tryst (1980) CHOREOGRAPHER: Brian Macdonald PHOTO: Ian Bradshaw DANCERS: Conrad Alexandrowicz, D-Anne Kuby, Mark Chambers



Nothing Past the Swans (1986) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tedd Robinson PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCERS: Algeron Williams, Tedd Robinson, D-Anne Kuby, Rachel Browne, Desiree Kleeman, Ruth Cansfield, Alana Shewchuk, Fiona Drinnan



Christmas Carol (1980) choreographer: Stephanie Ballard photo: David Cooper dancers: Gaile Petursson-Hiley, Joel Simkin, Karen Ross, Robert Jayne, Karen Unsworth, Philip Richardson, Ruth Camfield, Tedd Robinson, D-Anne Kuby, James Sava



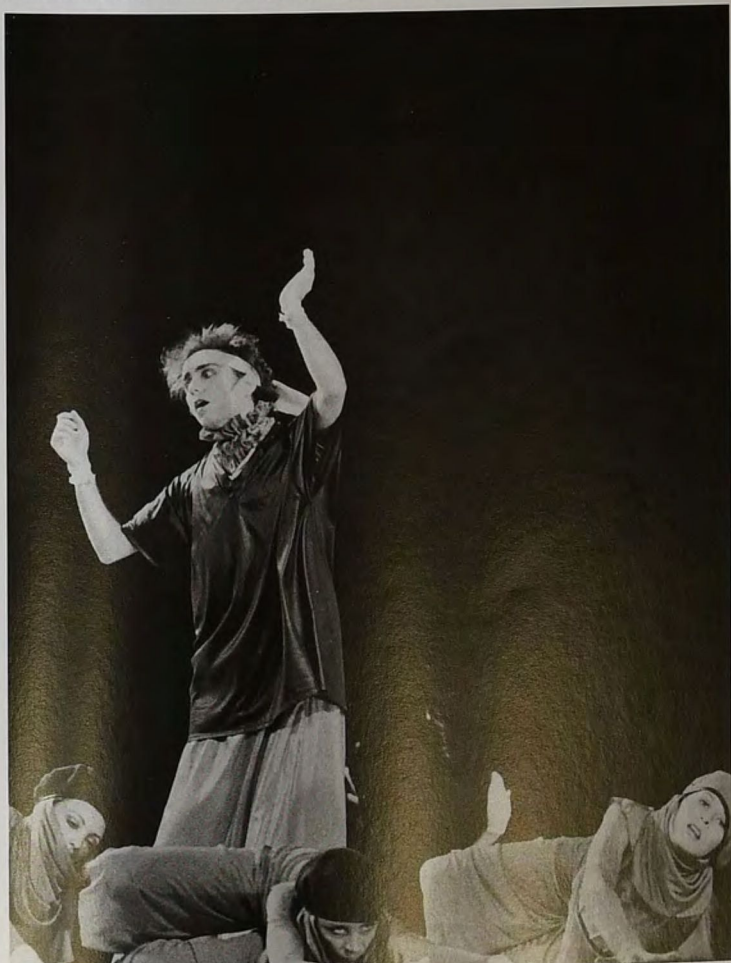
The Swan Lake (1980/1981) choreographer: Stephanie Ballard photo: David Cooper dancers: Gaile Petursson-Hiley, D-Anne Kuby, Robert Jayne, Tedd Robinson



Snakes and Ladders (1980) CHOREOGRAPHER: Karen Jamieson PHOTOGRAPHER: David Cooper DANCER: Tedd Robinson



Alternating Currents (1984) CHOREOGRAPHER: Bill Evans PHOTO: Larry Glawson DANCERS: Christopher Gower and Karen Unsworth



Attitudes of Risk & Uncertainty (1980) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tedd Robinson PHOTO: Robert Tinker
DANCERS: Tedd Robinson, Ruth Cansfield, Gaile Petursson-Hiley, D-Anne Kuby



Flying Colours (1981) CHOREOGRAPHER: Fred Mathews PHOTO: David Cooper DANCER: Robert Jayne



Re-Entry (1978) CHOREOGRAPHER: Judith Marcuse PHOTO: David Cooper
DANCERS: Robert Jayne, Philip Richardson, D-Anne Kuby, Ruth Cansfield, James Saya, Joel Simkin



Construction Company (1980) CHOREOGRAPHER: Stephanie Ballard PHOTO: David Cooper
DANCERS: Tedd Robinson, Monica George, Mark Chambers, David Holmes, Marilyn Biderman, Francisco Alvarez, Gaile Petursson-Hiley



Morningtide (1981/1982) CHOREOGRAPHER: Cliff Keuter PHOTO: David Cooper DANCERS: Claire Whistler, Joost Pelt, Gaile Petursson-Hiley, Karen Unsworth, Robert Jayne, Philip Richardson, Joel Simkin, Ruth Cansfield, D-Anne Kuby



Spiked Sonata (1983/1985) CHOREOGRAPHER: Dan Wagoner PHOTO: Larry Clawson
DANCERS: Deirdre Tomkins, Joel Shweky, Ruth Cansfield, Christopher Gower, Karen Unsworth, Betty Harless, Dana Nicolay



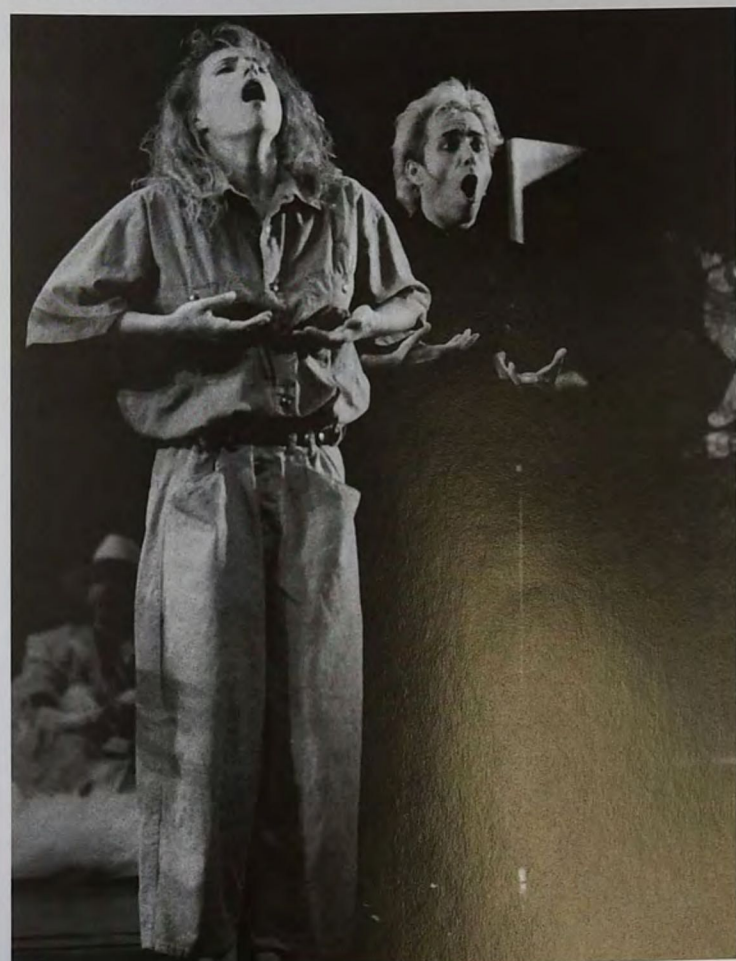
Entertainment for Dictators (1984/1985) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tedd Robinson PHOTO: Larry Clawson
DANCERS: Desiree Kleeman, Christopher Gower, Joel Shweky



Camping Out (1986) CHOREOGRAPHER: Robinson/Browne/Darroch PHOTO: Otto Hammer DANCERS: Fiona Drinnan and D-Anne Kuby



Sub Urban Tango (1984/1985) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tedd Robinson PHOTO: Tom Fijal DANCERS: David Kurzer, Deirdre Tomkins, Fiona Drinnan, Christopher Gower, D-Anne Kuby, Ruth Cansfield, Desiree Kleeman, Algernon Williams



He Called Me His Blind Angel (1988) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tedd Robinson PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCERS: Karen Kozak and Tedd Robinson



He Called Me His Blind Angel (1988) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tedd Robinson PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCERS: D-Anne Kuby and Bruce Mitchell



Trouble in the House (1986) CHOREGRAPHER: Stephanie Ballard PHOTO: Robert Tinker PICTURES: BACK ROW - Jack Udashkin, Hugh Conacher, Ruth Cansfield, D-Anne Kuby, Anne Bruce Falconer, Deirdre Tomkins, Alana Shewchuk, Desiree Kleeman, Fiona Drinnan, Janet Angel
MIDDLE ROW - Bruce Wood, Gailie Petursson-Hiley, Odette Heyn-Penner, FRONT ROW - Margie Gillis, Faye Thomson, Stephanie Ballard, Rachel Browne, Leslie Dillingham



Valentine (1986) CHOREGRAPHER: Charles Moulton PHOTO: Tom Fijal DANCERS: Ruth Cansfield, Algernon Williams, Fiona Drinnan, David Kurzer, D-Anne Kuby, Christopher Gower, Desiree Kleeman, Deirdre Tomkins

In 1991 Tom Stroud accepted the position of WCD Artistic Director during very difficult times. Surviving financial ruin was his first and only task. His new initiatives for collaboration and new models for residencies assured the continuum of the Company. Over the years, his emotionally charged choreography has earned him a reputation as a creator of passion, wit, humanity and intelligence. Stroud's unique approach to the creative and collaborative process continues to inform and inspire dance artists and audiences alike.

His work with the Professional Program of the School of Contemporary Dancers strengthened the relationship between the Company and the school. In 1995 he supported the School and Co-Directors Odette Heyn-Penner and Faye Thomson in a decision to incorporate separately from the Company. This decision worked to the advantage of both WCD and SCD. Over the years he has worked with countless students and has nurtured graduates by offering apprenticeship positions that often evolved into Company positions.

Under his artistic direction, WCD has celebrated its 30th, 35th and 40th Anniversaries. Stroud's vision has allowed WCD to become financially stable and experience a spiritual rebirth.

Tom Stroud is attracted to works in the humanist tradition that speak to people in essential ways. He and his dancers continue to evolve and explore the creative process in the original spirit of WCD.

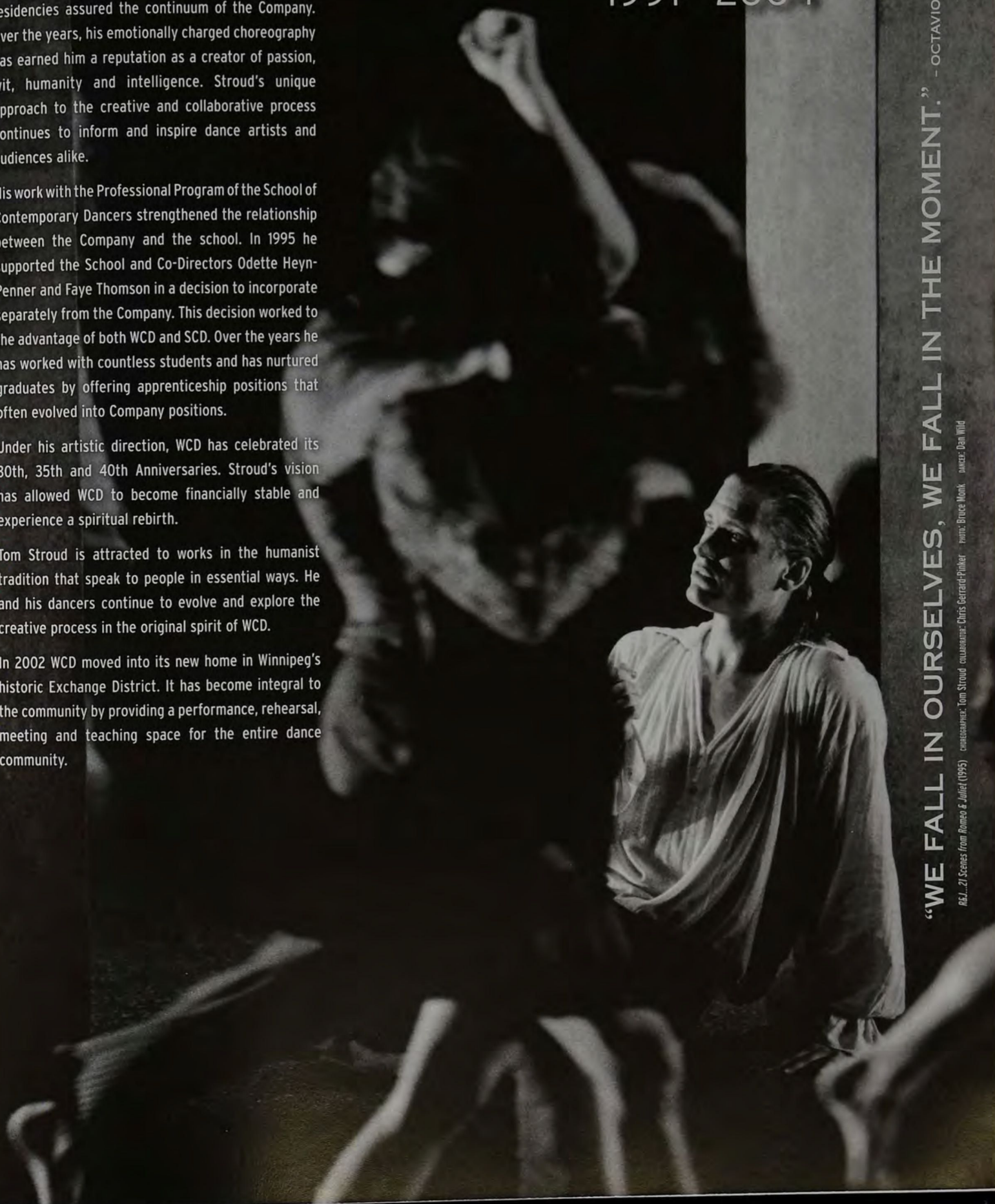
In 2002 WCD moved into its new home in Winnipeg's historic Exchange District. It has become integral to the community by providing a performance, rehearsal, meeting and teaching space for the entire dance community.

the present

1991 - 2004

"WE FALL IN OURSELVES, WE FALL IN THE MOMENT." - OCTAVIO PAZ

REEL 21 Scenes from Romeo & Juliet (1995) choreographer: Tom Stroud costumes: Chris Gerard-Pinkner props: Bruce Monk dancer: Dan Wild





Tom Stroud and Company (1992) PICTURED: Sharon Moore, Christopher Gower, Sioux Hartle, Tom Stroud, Eve Lacabanne, Bonnie Kim, David Rose, Alana Shewchuk, Mark Shaub



Arthur Hill - Creators and Dancers (1993) CHOREOGRAPHER: Randy Glynn COLLABORATOR: Chris Gerrard-Pinker PHOTO: Paul Martens
 PICTURED: Randy Glynn, Tom Stroud, Alana Shewchuk, Karen Bennedsen, Chris Gerrard-Pinker, Carol Prieur, Kim Knight, Barbra Grant, Dan Wild, Bonnie Kim, Allen Kaeja, Heather MacCrimmon, Tom Casey, Christopher Gower



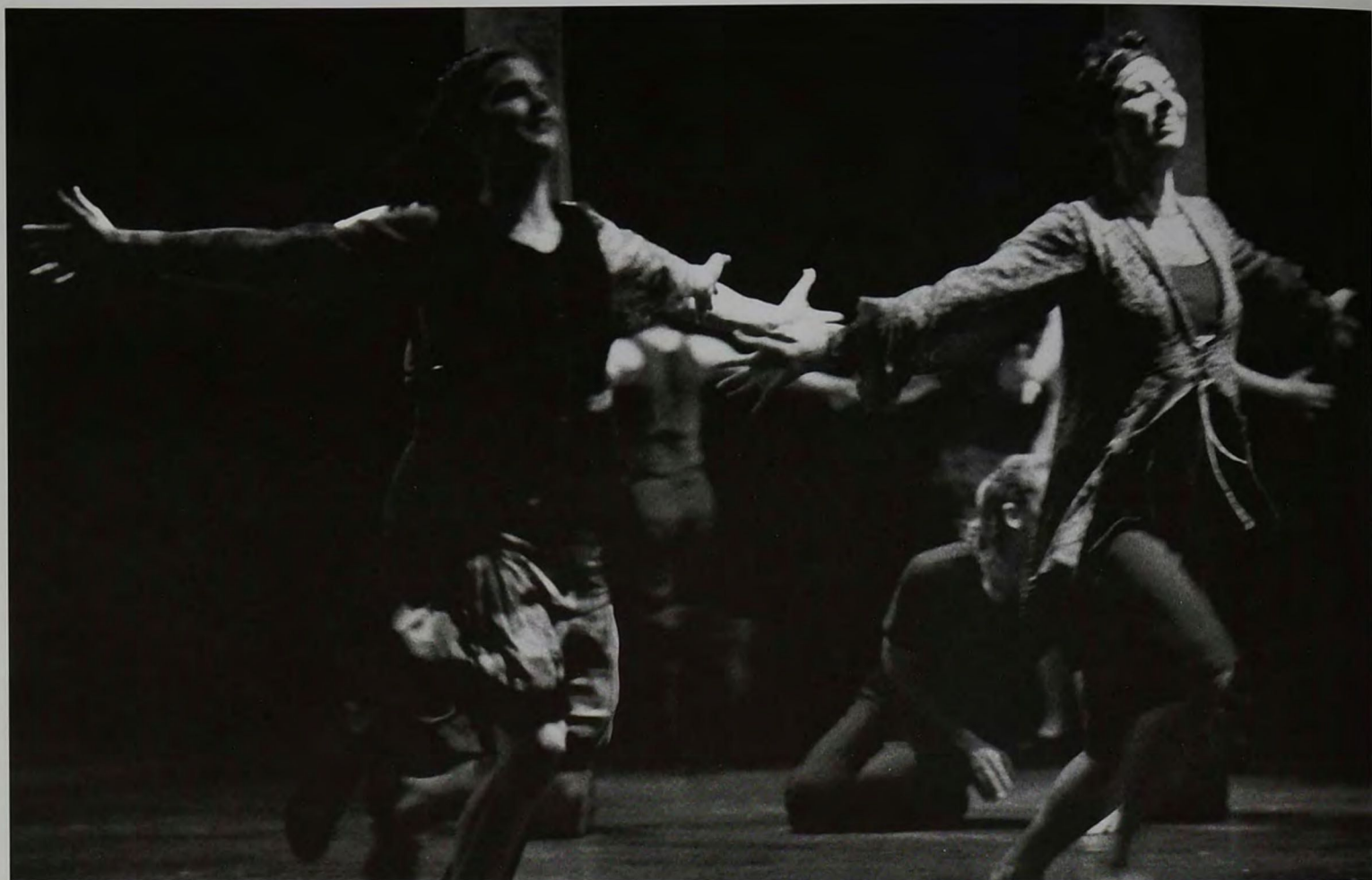
Songs (1992) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Cylla Von Tiedemann DANCER: Bonnie Kim



R&J...21 Scenes from Romeo & Juliet (1996) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud COLLABORATOR: Chris Gerrard Pinker PHOTO: Lydia Pawelak
DANCERS: Deborah Axelrod and Jacques Moisan



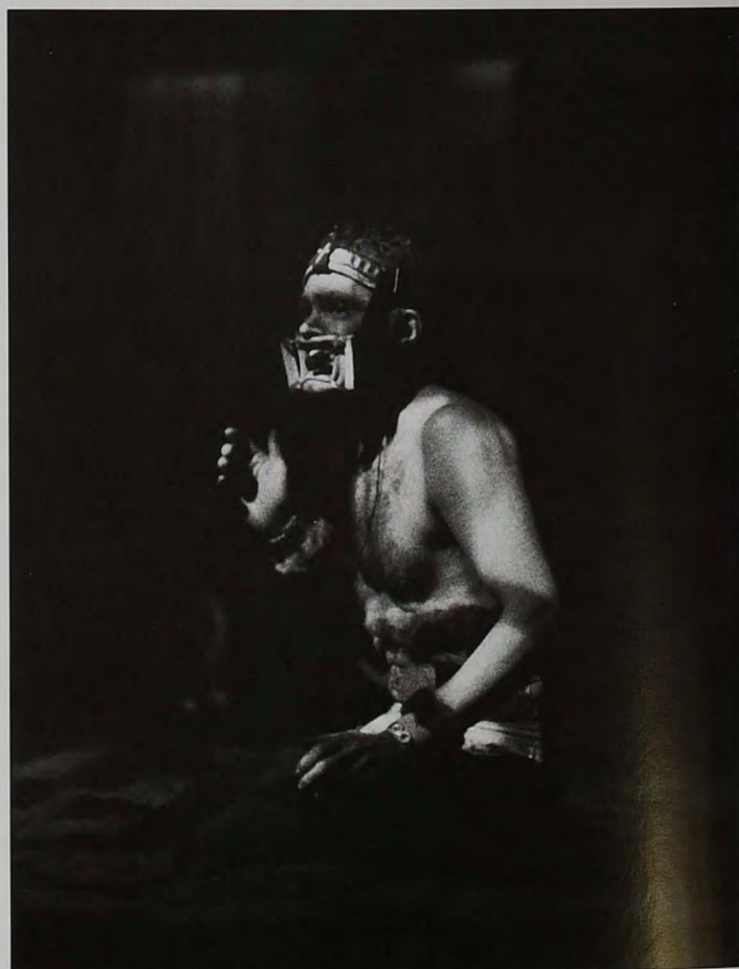
Songs (1992) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Cylla Von Tiedemann DANCERS: Christopher Gower, Mark Shaub, Eve Lacabanne, Alana Shewchuk, Sharon Moore, Bonnie Kim, David Rose, Sioux Hartle



R&J...21 Scenes from Romeo & Juliet (1996) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud COLLABORATOR: Chris Gerrard-Pinker PHOTO: Lydia Pawelak DANCERS: Lesandra Dodson and Alana Shewchuk



Arrows (1997) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCERS: Dan Wild and Deborah Axelrod



The Garden (2001) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Treasure Waddell DANCER: Brent Lott



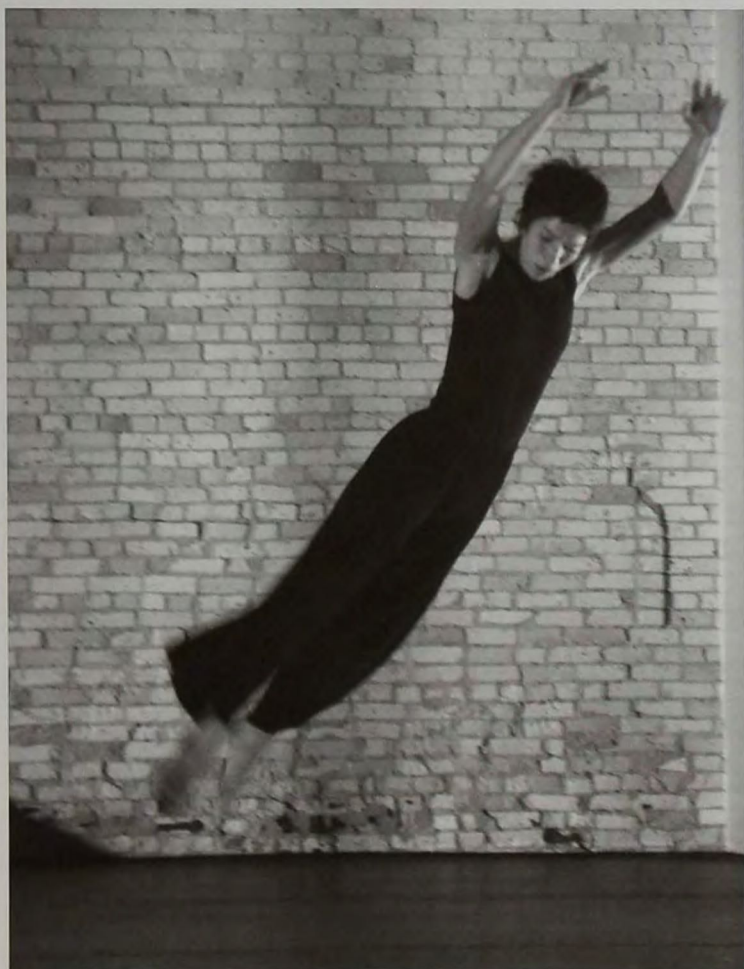
The Garden (2001) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Ian McCausland DANCER: Deborah Axelrod



The Garden (2001) CHOREOGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Ian McCausland DANCERS: Christina Medina and Dan Wild



In Silence (2003) CHOREGRAPHER: Lesandra Dodson PHOTO: Hugh Conacher DANCERS: Jennifer Essex and Gabriela Rehak-Dovgoselets



George (2002) CHOREGRAPHER: Stephanie Ballard PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCER: Natasha Torres-Garner



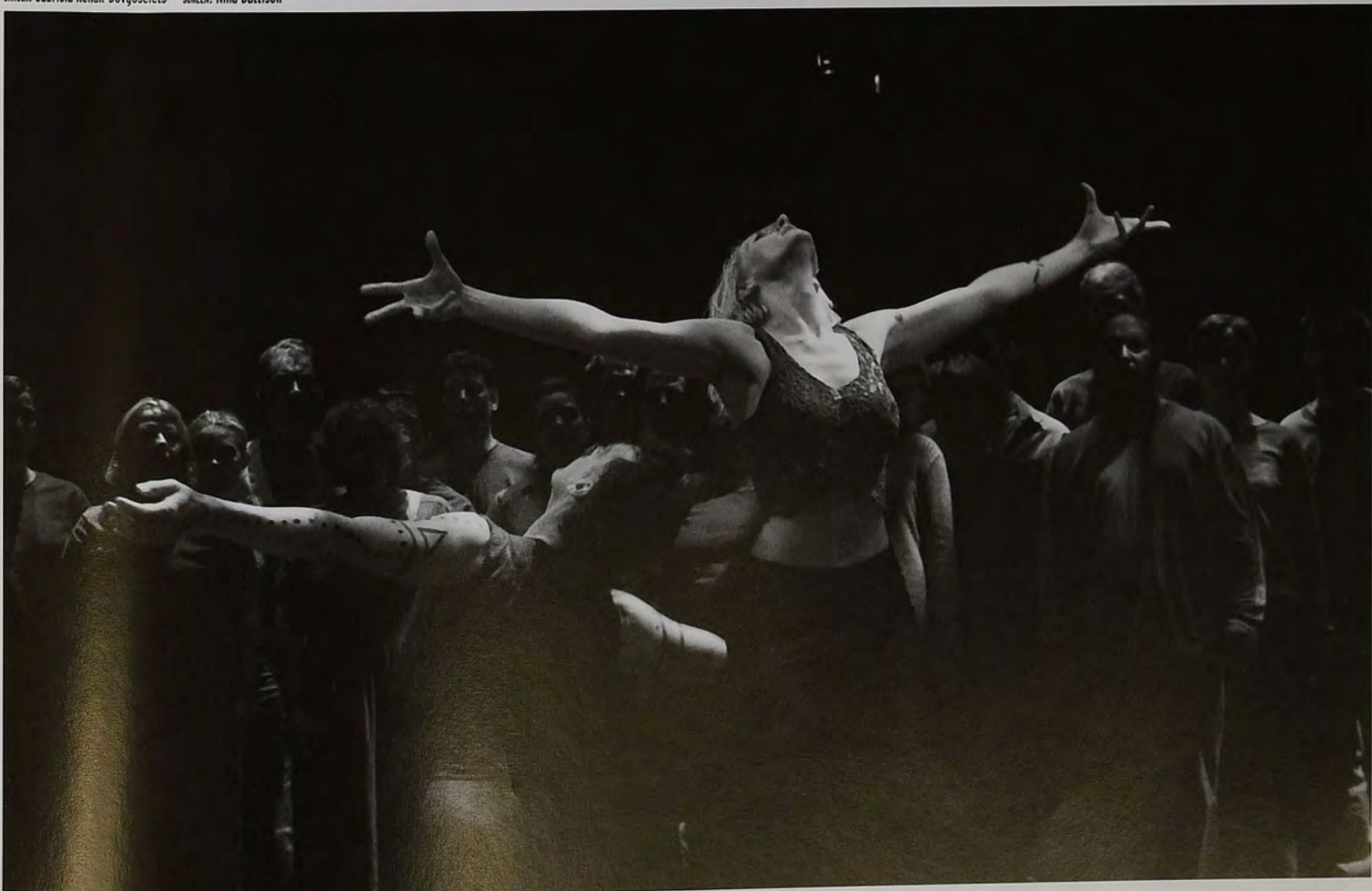
Sunstorm (2002) CHOREGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCER: Kristin Haight



George (2004) CHOREGRAPHER: Stephanie Ballard PHOTO: Ken Gigliotti/Winnipeg Free Press
DANCER: Gabriela Rehak-Dovgoselets SCREEN: Nina Battison



Songs That Dance (2003) CHOREGRAPHER: Rachel Browne PHOTO: Hugh Conacher DANCER: Gabriela Rehak-Dovgoselets



El Rio (2002) CHOREGRAPHER: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Robert Tinker DANCERS: Brent Lott, Nina Battison, Winnipeg Singers



Last Sleep of the Virgin (1995) CONCEPTOR: Tom Stroud PHOTO: Bruce Monk ARTIST: Carol Pfeiffer

An Oral History of Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers

✕ Winnipeg was never known for its arts and culture scene, but in 2011 the city was named Cultural Capital of Canada, emphasizing just how creative this small prairie town really is. For a city of just under 700,000 Winnipeg boasts several internationally recognized dance and theatre company's, a symphony orchestra, many progressive art galleries and an infinite number of amateur artists from every creative background. Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers (WCD) is a longstanding and important part of the city's cultural identity. The company was started in 1964 by dancer Rachel Browne and, through her dedication, has become an influential member of Canada's modern dance world. My intentions for this project were to capture the history of WCD through the unique lenses of four people involved in the company: Browne as Founder, Stephanie Ballard as Choreographer, Brent Lott as Artistic Director and Robert Tinker as Photographer. Although, during my interviews I began to recognize a thread running through each of their stories, which made me realize how connected the acts of creating, experiencing and viewing really are and how similar these perspectives are.

Rachel Browne became interested in dance after seeing a ballerina dance when she was six years old. She grew up in Philadelphia and took dance classes until she graduated high school, after which she travelled to New York to train as a professional dancer. Browne came to Winnipeg when her teacher in New York, Benjamin Harkavy, became the artistic director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB) in 1957. The move gave her the opportunity to audition for the ✕ ballet and she danced professionally with the RWB for four years. When Browne was in her mid-twenties she and her husband Don Browne decided to start a family, a decision which caused her to momentarily give up her dancing for domestic life. She quickly realized that life was not fulfilling without dance and began teaching classes at the Nenad Lhotka ballet studio.

Browne was still interested in performing so she started a small group with students from the studio and they first performed at the University of Manitoba, eventually becoming WCD. The group appointed a board of directors and applied to the Canada Council, becoming the first modern dance company to be awarded a grant, the sum was a whopping \$6,000. Browne became an excellent fundraiser and had helpful connections within the city which allowed the company

to continue performing
Spohr, who not only l
choreographers on occ
would be here today.

to continue performing and growing. One of which was the RWB's then artistic director, Arnold Spohr, who not only lent Browne money but also allowed her to use the company's dancers and choreographers on occasion, without this assistance it's questionable whether the company would be here today.

During the early stages of WCD Browne was everything: dancer, choreographer and artistic director, a position she held for nearly twenty years. As the company grew Browne and the board of directors began to have different artistic visions, eventually forcing Browne to step down as artistic director. After which, the position was held by Bill Evans (1983), Tedd Robinson (1984), Charles Moutlon (1990), Tom Stroud (1991) and Brent Lott (2005). During Moulton's short—he lasted less than one season—but tumultuous time with WCD he brought the company close to artistic and financial ruin, and he attempted to ban Browne from using the rehearsal space. After being relinquished of her directing responsibilities Browne delved into choreographing and began creating original dances. She is still very involved in the WCD and at 77 years old is dancing and creating. Her recent focus has been on older women and their place in dance.

Stephanie Ballard was born in San Francisco grew up in Los Angeles and came to Winnipeg when her partner began dancing with the RWB. Ballard, who is classically trained in ballet, called the WCD and was invited over the phone, to audition for the apprentice program in WCD's newly created school. She began taking classes with the school in 1972 and quickly realized that she wanted to dance professionally. Within six months of taking classes she was put in several pieces for the company, her first performance was under choreographer Norman Walker at the Pantages Playhouse. While Ballard was with the school she travelled to practice at Toronto Dance Conservatory and was also invited to perform in choreographer Linda Raban's piece *The White Goddess* in Montreal. Although, before she could make the trip to Montreal she became injured and was forced to walk with a cane in excruciating pain, halting her dance career. Through intensive therapy and extremely hard work Ballard was rehabilitated and began dancing again with the WCD. She also asked to be the apprentice director and created a dance called *Construction Company* which Browne wanted to take into the repertoire which began her career

In the midst of being forced to travel ho-

as a choreographer. At one time Ballard was the associate artistic director and resident choreographer of WCD for three years.

In the midst of her success Ballard's father in San Francisco had a stroke and she was forced to travel home to be with him. When she returned to the dance world she got the opportunity to begin choreographing for internationally renowned dancer Margie Gillis in Montreal, a position Ballard held for thirteen years. During this time she kept her connection with the company and began choreographing for WCD company and for the WCD school's professional program. The connection between the school and the company is one that allows for the growth and development of local dancers as well as giving these dancers an opportunity to stay and work professionally in Winnipeg. By hiring dancers locally WCD has helped Winnipeg establish itself as a modern dance hub, so much so that dancers from elsewhere come to train at the school.

Ballard is a nationally recognized choreographer and has many awards for her work, recently though, her focus has turned to archival work. She is a member of the Canadian Dance Scholars and after a trip to Paris Ballard began working on a combined history of WCD and the RWB to show how interconnected the two company's are. From this her interest to create a full-fledged archive for WCD grew and is currently a work in process. What she has been able to compile thus far is in the basement of the Crocus building, in which the company and school reside. Ballard continues to mentor and work creatively with the company while working diligently to stress the importance of remembering where WCD started.

Brent Lott became artistic director of WCD in 2005 when longtime director Tom Stroud left the company. Lott has been hailed as a saviour of sorts for bringing the company back from the brink of artistic and financial ruin. When he inherited the company had been on concern status with the Canada Council and the Winnipeg Arts Council for fourteen years, putting it at risk of losing its funding. Within three years the books were balanced and the company actually received an increase in funding for the first time in ages. In 2010 Lott took the company on its first tour in over fifteen years and this coming summer they have been invited to dance at the National Dance Festival in Ottawa. Artistically, Lott has worked hard to infuse his own style of choreographing into the company's repertoire and has brought WCD into the community through

initiatives like Random Acts of Dance. He is also working on an emerging company titled Verge which allows for recent graduates and fourth year students of WCD's school to give dancers the opportunity to work in a professional setting before to leave Winnipeg to dance elsewhere.

Lott himself began dancing comparatively late in life as his father didn't allow him to dance when he was young. At 23 years old Lott went to an audition for the RWB apprentice program without any formal training as a dancer and managed to get a spot with the company thanks to his natural abilities. He danced with the RWB for two years until he developed stress fractures and was told he had to stop dancing for two weeks to allow them to heal. At this point Lott was concerned he would get out of shape in that time and so he made his way over to WCD where he could continue dancing because they were unaware of his injuries. He graduated from WCD's school in 1990 and danced with two company's, Dance Collective and Ruth Cansfield Dance, until 1999. He returned to WCD to learn more about the process of choreographing under the direction of Stroud who he danced with until becoming artistic director.

Robert Tinker decided he wanted to be a photographer after receiving his masters in plant physiology from the University of Manitoba. His interest became his livelihood and his involvement with WCD began before he was working as a professional photographer. He began shooting for the company in the 1970s when a former girlfriend's roommate invited him to take some pictures of herself and her colleagues dancing. Tinker has been held positions on the company's board of directors and has been a long time season ticket holder and supporter of WCD. He began taking me to dances as a child and I fell in love with dance and movement because of it. His involvement with the company has created many long lasting connections with the dance world in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Canada.

Tinker talked about how honored he feels to be allowed into the creative process of the dancers and choreographers he works with. One of whom being Margie Gillis, as she invited him to come photograph her in studio as well as her performances. This is a significant privilege considering how famous she has become internationally. Tinker's approach to photographing dance is one of involvement and understanding of the craft. By being able to move with the dancers as he shoots makes the experience unique from photographing other art forms. He continues to work with the company and is often commissioned to take pictures of new pieces.

The process of collecting an oral history of WCD has taught me more about the company than reading a book on the subject ever could. Each individual I interviewed had unique experiences of their time with the company and each story allowed for a different perspective of the events which unfolded at different periods in WCD's history. The most interesting part for me is understanding how connected the dance community is in Winnipeg and how dependent they are on support from each other. The WCD as a single example of the city's rich cultural scene shows the dedication and motivation of those involved in the arts, as well as the desire to see Winnipeg's designation as a cultural hub grow and evolve. In their own way the creators, dancers and admirers of WCD all have a hand in making the company what it is today as well as providing a unique perspective of the company's past, present and future.

- Eva Wasney

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and documents of WCD all have a hand in making the company what it is today as well as

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- Lisa Hanning