

Dance companies get relief from government funding cutbacks

by Karen Brooks

Budget cuts to the arts have sparked series responses from the dance community, including the creation of the Dance Umbrella of Ontario.

Funded by arts councils at all three levels of government, DUO provides a wide array of support services for independent choreographers.

Subsidized services include financial advice, resume help, publicity, tour support, audiovisual material rental, a studio rent subsidy program and the choreographer's lab. All services are offered "at a considerably lower cost than in the real marketplace—in most cases, as much as half the going rate."

"We are here to service the independent community," General Manager Jennifer Watkins says. "It's from them that we find out what is needed."

FIDA, the new Fringe Dance Fest that premiered last August, came about when DUO was approached by choreographer/organisers Michael Menegon and Allan Keeja. "Something needed to be done in that area for dance," Watkins says.

DUO has been involved with INDE, the annual festival of indepen-

Analysis

The creation of the Dance Umbrella of Ontario was a response by the province's dance companies to government funding cutbacks.

dent new dance and new music works. This year, DUO will tackle the INDE project without Harbourfront's aid as a producer.

On a more grassroots level, DUO's studio subsidy program has an annual budget of \$5,000, providing reimbursement for studio rental costs up to a maximum of \$420 per project request.

The studio series is an informal performance situation for independent choreographers who are preparing for an upcoming production and wish to present work in a workshop setting. Five to seven choreographers can participate; they are provided with an honourarium, up to eight hours of studio rehearsal time and the basic costs of presenting the event.

DUO's choreographer's lab project, which takes place each summer, provides time and space for choreographic experimentation. The workshop is not product-oriented. Participants range from new to mid-career; each is paid an honourarium for two weeks' work.

Last year, four choreographers worked with eight dancers, exploring the connections between dance and text. This year, the theme is light and movement, "involving an exploration of movement vocabulary with a variety of light sources," a project that was "greatly demanded by the [dance] community."

For more information on DUO, call (416) 360-6429.



James O'Reilly wrote and stars in *Work*, a semi-autobiographical play with characters who simultaneously display lucid anger and comic insight.

One man's surreal show is too real

by Kathryn Bailey

Who says work is a four-letter word? Watching *Work*, James O'Reilly's one-man show, is like watching a stand-up comic paint surrealist landscapes that reflect reality.

O'Reilly, who wrote and stars in the production, has created semi-autobiographical characters who simultaneously display lucid anger and comic insight.

Crammed with contradictions, *Work* is a riveting series of three brief monologues that tell the story of "everyperson" in today's world. It is a work that anyone can relate to, because everyone has been one of O'Reilly's characters.

Jim, Jim and Jim are consecutively a waiter, a garbageperson and a copywriter. Though presented as three separate characters, they are all part of the same whole. They were all born in Uranium City, Saskatchewan, and all grew up in the Jane-Finch Corridor.

Each monologue seems like a chat with the audience. O'Reilly's character is transformed from a gentle, heart-warming human being into an angry, paranoid ogre, suffocating at the bottom of the heap of life.

theatre

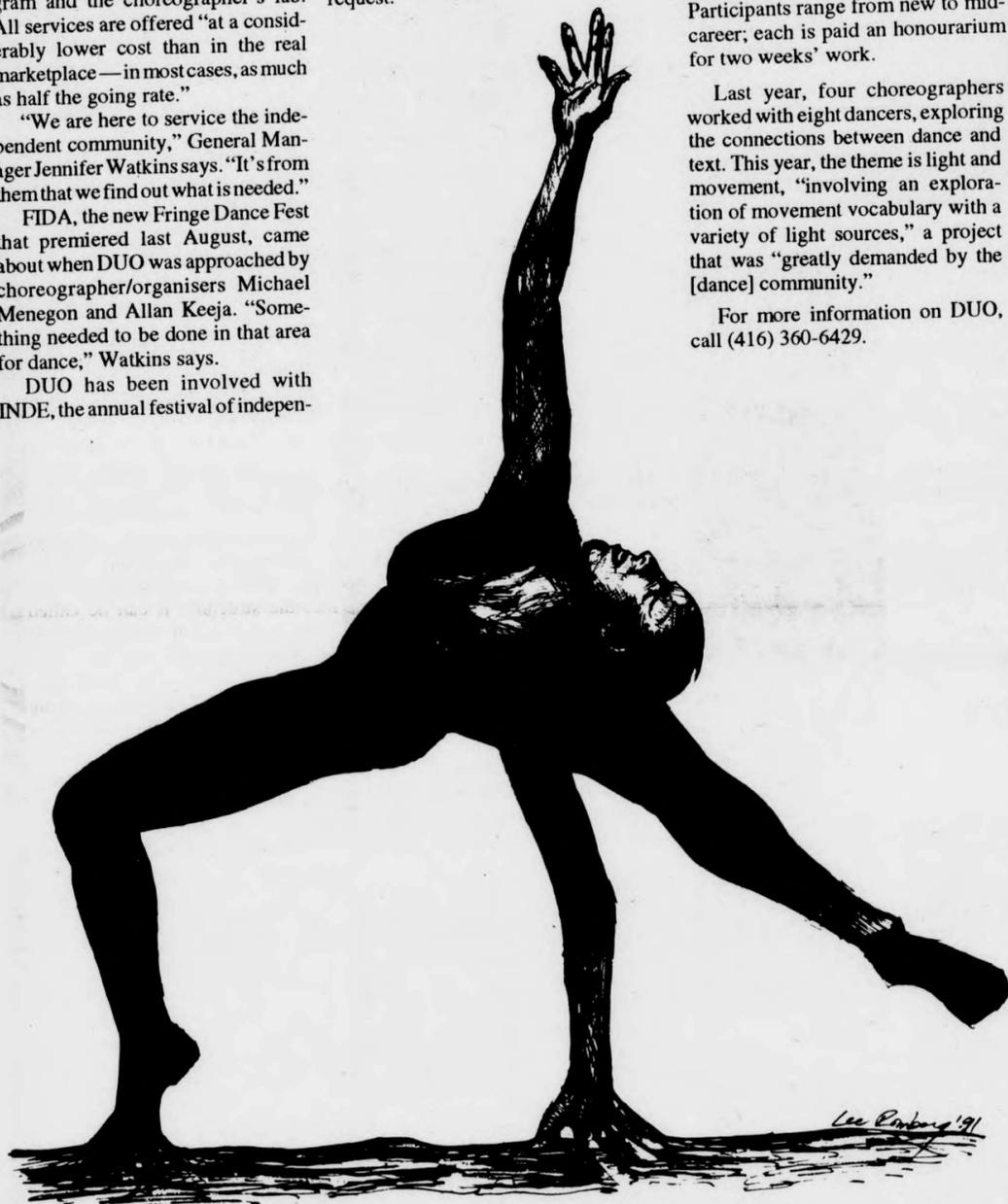
Work
written by and starring James O'Reilly
directed by Sue Miner
Factory Theatre Studio Cafe
until October 27

Lapsing from stand-up comic delivery into stream-of-consciousness speech, O'Reilly helps us perceive both the character's anger with society and the attempt of each character to deal with or suppress reality.

In certain instances, like when Jim the waiter begins to serve a rather indecisive couple only to envision the woman's brain coming out her ear, we glimpse the force of anger seething beneath the surface of the character.

Although *Work* is fuelled by anger, O'Reilly turns it into beautiful, humorous, almost poetic theatre. The impact of placing reality beneath the surface of comic fantasy is greater than a straightforward angry drama. Audience members can enjoy themselves while they are in their seats, then choose to reflect on the way home.

The next day, when they go into their own work, they will understand the serious meaning of O'Reilly's work.



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