

# Mile Zero Dance is filling the void

by Dean Bennett

Filling a void on the Edmonton dance scene is the Mile Zero Dance Company — a five member group celebrating their one year anniversary with their upcoming performances this Friday and Saturday at the John L. Haar Theatre.

"We're a modern jazz dance group," said Andrea Rabinovitch, dancer and co-founder of Mile Zero. "Nobody else is really doing modern jazz dance in this city."

Mile Zero is the brainchild of Rabinovitch

and Debra Shantz, both currently teaching dance at Grant MacEwan. Last year Rabinovitch had just returned from New York and was looking for an outlet for her choreography skills. That was when Shantz suggested they start up the company.

In their first year Mile Zero has done one full concert. The rest of the time was taken up with administrative details to get the group off the ground. During the summer they also did some performances at the Fringe Theatre. To date, the reception has

been positive.

"We've had a really good response," said Rabinovitch. "We try to make dance very accessible to the audiences. We feel that if you're going to do something self-indulgent, do it in your basement. We perform a wide variety of pieces, from comedy to lyrical dance."

Mile Zero has grown over the past year from three dancers to five. Besides Rabinovitch and Shantz, Darlene Schlademann, Carolyn Woods, and Stephen Findlay perform. Two of these — Schlademann and Woods — are graduates of Grant MacEwan.

For dance groups, getting some financial aid from the government is hard enough at the best of times, but lately it's well nigh impossible. "This summer we worked with STEP grants, but there have been huge cut-

backs lately and, of course, arts is one of the first ones to go."

Mile Zero does get help from Grant MacEwan. They give the group rehearsal space and the free use of the theatre.

Cutbacks aside, Rabinovitch and Shantz are adamant that Mile Zero will be a professional dance troupe.

"We pay all our dancers," said Rabinovitch. "We'll sacrifice money for expensive sets and costumes to pay our dancers."

Presently the co-founders are working hard part-time just to make the company work. But down the road, their hopes are, of course, for critical and financial success.

"(In five years) we'd like to be touring Alberta and Canada and be able to hire a publicist, a manager, and dancers full-time."

## Award winning ads

The 1986 Cannes Commercials  
Princess Theatre  
November 21 to 30

review by Glenn St-Germain

I know what you're thinking. Commercials? Commercials are the drivel that gives TV viewers the opportunity to raid the fridge without missing the show, right?

Mostly. But now always. There are exceptions, and every year the best of them get put into a film.

The 33rd Annual Cannes International Advertising Awards Film Festival opens at the end of the week at the Princess Theatre. Over 100 commercials from around the world are shown in an entertaining, often zany look at the world of advertising.

Commercials are made with one purpose in mind: sell the product. While most of what we see on North American television would insult the intelligence of a 12-year-old, some gems show through. The same goes for the rest of the world as well.

The commercials themselves are shown simply one after another in ascending order of award: Runners-up, Diplomas, Bronze Lions, Silver Lions, Gold Lions, and the Grand Prize. The number of winners in each category decreases as the show goes on.

What makes the Festival so much fun to watch is humour. Many of these commercials are funny, ranging from smirks and

smiles to out and out hilarity.

Take, for example, a Scandinavian commercial for batteries. A punk rocker is brought before a judge in a dark room resembling an Eastern bloc court. He's sentenced and taken away, dragged down a dark hallway, and strapped into a chair. A set of headphones is placed over his ears and soft music is piped in. As the punker writhes with displeasure, we see the stereo is powered by the batteries being advertised.

Not all of them are funny. Some are serious, emotional, and/or sentimental. Some are just high-tech glitz. Whatever their style, though, they're a good show.

Watch for high-tech zaniness from the Japanese, subtle and slightly weird humour from Britain, off-the-wall laughs from Australia and New Zealand, and sensuousness from France. Unfortunately, I was able to spot only one commercial that was identifiably Canadian, a disappointment after good showings from us in earlier years.

The Grand Prize winner is also a disappointment: an American insurance commercial so sentimental I wanted to throw something.

All in all, though, it's a great show. Everything that can be sold is advertised: beer, pasta, pop, UNICEF cards, cars, and even condoms. People who have enjoyed the last few Festivals will enjoy this one as much; those who have never seen one of these shows are in for a treat. See it.



Mile Zero Dance Company (left to right: Stephen Findlay, Andrea Rabinovitch, and Debra Shantz)

### Daniel Richler lecture continued

Perhaps the best thing that came out of his long but entertaining lecture is a sense of fear. Fear of the future, fear for our civil rights, fear of the absence of intelligence among kids and the masses.

He left a lot of points to think about. Here are a few. Did you know some schools BANNED the OXFORD DICTIONARY from their libraries because some parents objected to some definitions. Did you know that when

the Meese commission BULLIED 7-11 into removing *Penthouse* and *Playboy* from its shelves, *American Photographer*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Life* were also removed because they were deemed "questionable." Did you know that images of rape and female subversion are the biggest selling attractions of some records. Welcome Big Brother folks, the era of new conservatism is on the horizon.

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