



A scene from *Making Magic*, a 90-minute all-student show from the Dance Department. The show has 14 pieces, ranging from ballet to jazz to ethnic and will be on at Burton Feb. 8 - 10.

## Koyaanisqatsi aims for the gut

*Koyaanisqatsi*  
Directed by Godfrey Reggio  
At the International

By ADRIAN IWACHIW

In 1974, Godfrey Reggio decided he would make a film that would fuse together images, music and ideas—while ignoring the conventions of narrative cinema, to provide a visceral experience of the modern world from an "alien" point of view. Seven years and \$2.5 million later *Koyaanisqatsi* was released, and to date it has played in some 23 countries and in over 50 American cities. It opened in Toronto last Friday.

*Koyaanisqatsi* (pronounced Koy-yanniskaht-si) is a Hopi Indian word meaning "life disintegrating, life in turmoil, life-out of balance." It is also the only word heard (chanted, actually) in the film, as part of Philip Glass' award-winning soundtrack, which shapes together and propels the spectacular flood of images on the screen.

*Koyaanisqatsi* begins in the arid desert of Arizona and gradually carves its way to the urban megalopolitan world of New York and Los Angeles. The sacred, reverberating ambience of the sculptured desert is accompanied by slow and darkly majestic music. Later the hectic and hypnotizing pace of city life (assembly lines, highways, stock markets and shopping malls, sped-up through time-lapse photography to reveal a colorful and efficient but grossly inhuman industrial machine) is driven forward by Glass' pulsating and hypnotic soundtrack.

Reggio, a 43-year old former monk, claims he isn't a filmmaker, but just someone who wanted to express an idea. He had only made a few short films before attempting *Koyaanisqatsi*.

As a Christian Brother in the 1960s, Reggio spent several years working with street gangs in Santa Fe, helping them to cooperatively organize a self-sufficient community. In 1972 he co-founded the non-profit Institute for

Regional Education, which financed the production of *Koyaanisqatsi*. In line with his political intent, Reggio has offered opening nights of the film as benefits to the German Green Party, *Mother Jones* magazine, public radio stations, anti-nuclear information groups and the like.

With *Koyaanisqatsi* Reggio is attempting to bypass the intellect and instead "go to the instincts," to provide an experience "that would be as intense as life is itself if we were conscious in ordinary living." To accomplish this aim traditional background images—architecture, landscapes, moving masses of people on city streets, are brought into the foreground and, under the cinematographic direction of Ron Fricke, are effectively manipulated through the use of time-lapse and slow-motion photography and multiple exposure.

Many of the ideas and techniques prominent in *Koyaanisqatsi* have been attempted before by experimental filmmakers, though not on the same scale. The film has a few awkward moments—the extended middle (city) section, for instance, is unnecessarily long and repetitive.

But there are enough redeeming moments to keep *Koyaanisqatsi* from collapsing under its own weight. The sudden silences following the lengthy sections of accelerated motion and sound leave the viewer suspended in a shocked state providing intense moments of reflection. The inevitable bomb explosions and, at one point, implosions of apartment buildings into heaps of rubble—these also affect the viewer instinctually, creating a mixed feeling of cosmic humor and pathos.

The ultimate futility of it all, it seems to say—the hollow vacuity of humanity's racing, self-obsessed and hyper-tense activity. *Koyaanisqatsi* seems to be saying that we're so preoccupied with ourselves that we don't even notice the monstrous inhumanity of the world around us, let alone the grandeur of nature and of the universe.

## Hoofing female existence

By SARA MERULING

*Collaboration*, a multi-media dance presentation at McLaughlin Tuesday, is just that. It's a dance and performance presentation revolving around film and video of two dance pieces and a discussion of the medium; the "collaboration" is two women's investigations of the contemporary female existence. The pieces, a combination of dialogue and dance, were written by York dance criticism instructor Gail Vanstone and choreographed by former York dance instructor Peggy McCann.

The works to be presented are: studies of women in old age, including a piece derived from Margaret Lawrence's *The Stone Angel*; an excerpt from McCann's recent Harbourfront production, *Lady's Home Journal*, exploring the woman as commodity myth; and an investigation of the interaction of mothers and daughters. Vanstone refers to these works as "artistic explorations of intellectual con-

cerns," with emphasis on the sociological aspect of the issues.

The film, by Toronto filmmaker John Brooks, is scripted by Vanstone, and is adapted from *The Stone Angel*. It uses actors, as well as McCann dancing the part of the old woman, (complete with rocking chair).

The video will include *Lady's Home Journal* and the piece on mother/daughter relationships. The discussion will be led by McCann, who will speak on the collaborative dynamics of scriptwriter and choreographer, as well as her own use of props in dance. Vanstone will speak on the increasing trend in dance to working with a more theatrical and mixed media.

The presentation should be an interesting one, including as it does, the sociological as well as artistic aspects of dance. *Collaboration* will be presented Tuesday at noon, in McLaughlin Senior Common Room. The series is free, and so is the coffee.



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