

MAGAZINE

Dancer

VOLUME 18 • ISSUE 9
MAY 2007 • \$6 US

Kirov Academy of Ballet

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When To
Go On Pointe

Dance Place
San Diego

Dancer MAGAZINE

america's favorite dance publication

owen goldman publisher

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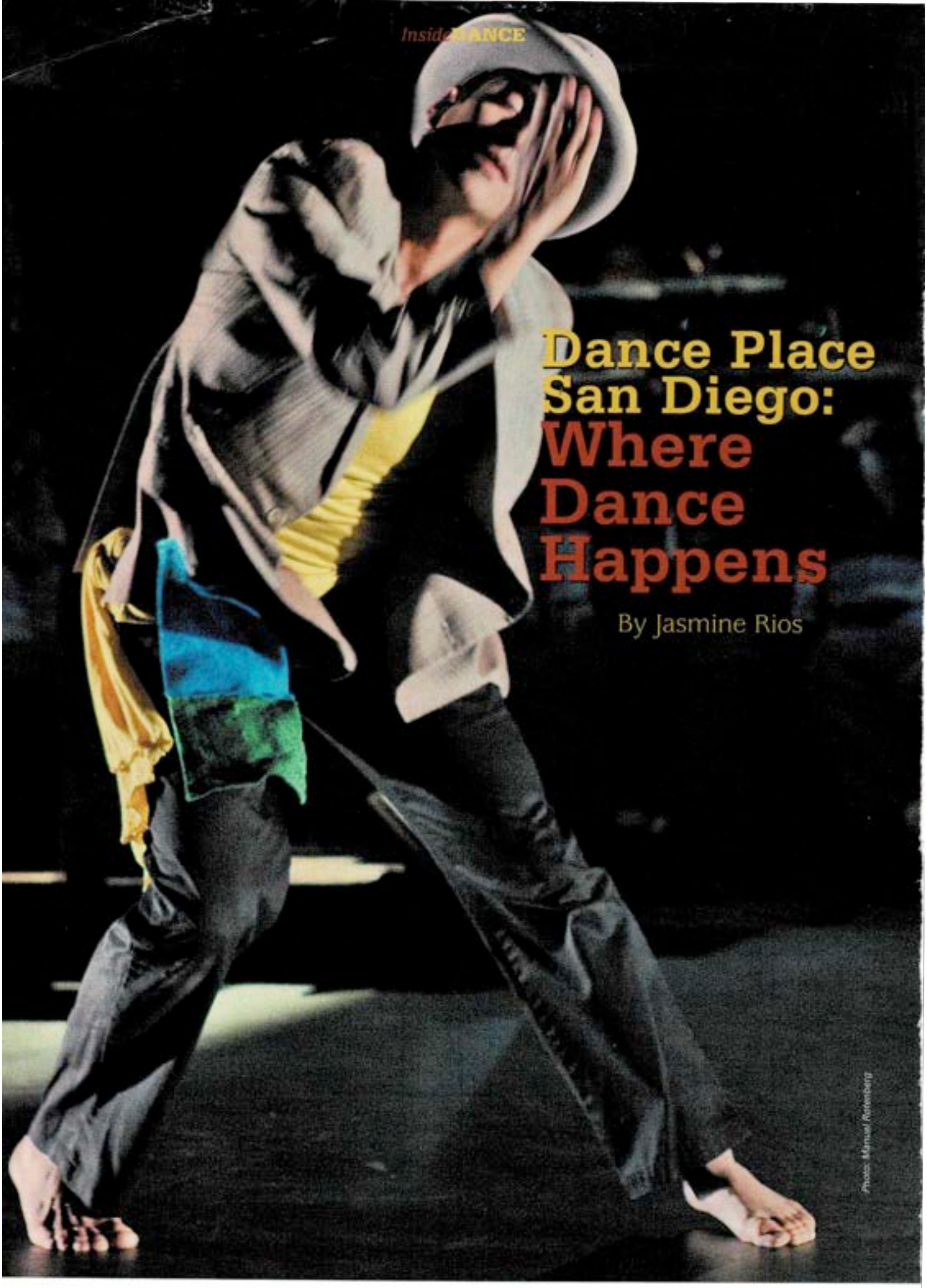


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Inside **DANCE**

Dance Place San Diego: Where Dance Happens

By Jasmine Rios



(L-R) John Diaz, SDDT; Heather Gentner, Abby Avery, Trudy Cunningham, Kristy Cirillo in rehearsal for "Shakespeare's Sonnets" at San Diego Ballet, Dance Place San Diego studio; Askar Alimbetov & Chelsy Meiss in rehearsal at San Diego Ballet's new studio inside Dance Place San Diego.

San Diego is a culturally rich city, internationally recognized as a leading destination for world premiere musical theatre. Broadway bound productions such as Twyla Tharp's "The Times They Are A-Changin'," "Chita Rivera: The Dancer's Life," "Thoroughly Modern Millie," and "Jersey Boys" all originated in this great city. No question about it, musical theatre has a strong foothold on San Diego. The art of dance on the other hand, hasn't quite yet achieved the positioning of musical theatre in San Diego, but it's on its way.

The recent opening of San Diego's new cultural arts district at the NTC Promenade may be just what the dance community needs to increase awareness in the art form. The NTC Promenade is the former Naval Training Center and consists of 26 historic buildings spread across 28-acres. Among the first buildings that opened in the new arts district was Dance Place San Diego, a two-story, 23,000 sq. ft. building with 11 dance studios. Dance Place San Diego is considered the largest dance facility in Southern California and has been compared to some of the nation's largest cultural arts communities like the Fort Mason Center in San Francisco and the Seattle Center.

Three leading dance companies currently reside at the new Dance Place San Diego facility: Jean Isaacs San Diego Dance Theater, Malashock Dance, and San Diego Ballet. In celebration of the December 2006 opening of Dance Place, the resident companies held an all day Free Dance Workshop. The success of this event brought in droves of people throughout San Diego County.

Located adjacent to Dance Place San Diego is Luce Auditorium, the site for what would be the future theatre for all three dance companies to perform. The proximity to Luce Auditorium made Dance Place an even more desirable residence and ultimately convinced the dance companies to move.

In recent months, the tables have turned and due to the lack of financial support to convert Luce Auditorium into a dance theatre, developers are now considering beginning construction on a commercial endeavor. Despite the odds of losing the previously promised theatre, company members have not given up hope completely.

Jean Isaacs San Diego Dance Theater (SDDT) was founded in 1972. Artistic Director, Jean Isaacs is a critically acclaimed award-winning modern dance choreographer and instructor. SDDT is known for presenting beautiful physical movements that reflect the world around us. The company's signature works, "Trolley Dances" and "Intimate Cabaret Dances" are highly recognized productions performed on an annual basis. Other successes the company has enjoyed include regular across-the-border projects, summer intensive workshops, and the "Invitation to the Dance" Educational Outreach Program.

In January, SDDT performed a new piece entitled "Her It Age" at Danspace in New York, NY. Upon returning to San Diego, the company commemorated its opening of the new SDDT School.

The company's next production during the month of May is "Mandance," a collection of new dance pieces choreographed by various male artists including, Bradley Lundberg, John Diaz, Daniel Marshall, Marcos Duran, and Keith Johnson. Performances will take place at San Diego State University.

Isaacs' immediate plans are to expand performances to nearby Southern California regions and to continue developing her new dance school program. Jean Isaacs also teaches technique, choreography, and improvisation at the University of California, San Diego, Department of Theatre & Dance.

To learn more about SDDT visit www.sandiegodancetheater.org

John Malashock is the founder and Artistic Director of Malashock Dance. He is the driving force behind this dynamic modern dance company and has choreographed nearly 60 original works since the company was formed in 1988. In previous years, Malashock performed with Twyla Tharp and danced in benefit concerts with Mikhail Baryshnikov and Cynthia Gregory. Malashock also performed in the Academy Award winning film "Amadeus."

Malashock Dance is primarily known for producing numerous collaborative works. Among Malashock's many achievements are Emmy Award winning productions, "The Soul of Saturday Night" and "Love & Murder."

Most recently, the company opened its doors to form the Malashock Dance

DANCING FOR HEALTH Conquering and Preventing Stress

By Judith Lynne Hanna



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InsideDANCE



L & R: Malashock Dance



Photo: Fuzze Hurd

School. Plans in late Spring 2007 include a Studio Series performance at Dance Place San Diego: Part I of a "Dead Sea Scrolls" collaborative project.

Next season, Malashock Dance will celebrate its 20th Anniversary, during which two projects will be underway. A major collaborative work called "Stay the Hand" will be produced with composer Shahrokh Yadegari and video artist/filmmaker Tara Knight. Performances are projected for Spring 2008. Also for next season, Malashock will be re-setting the San Diego Opera production of "The Pearl Fishers" which will tour to Miami, FL later next year.

Ongoing efforts for Malashock Dance are to continue building the new school program to compliment the dance company and to continue generating National awareness through touring and active involvement in dance film.

To learn more about Malashock Dance visit www.malashockdance.org

The Founding Director of San Diego Ballet (SDB), Robin Sherertz Morgan, former dancer with the New York City Ballet under the direction of George Balanchine, envisioned a company of her own that would offer her native San Diego an outstanding cast of professional ballet dancers and a varied repertoire of exciting contemporary and classical works.

Since 1991, SDB has realized this vision. SDB is Southern California's foremost presenter of premiere works by the renowned George Balanchine, which includes "Serenade" and "Rubies." With the exceptional talent of award-winning Artistic Director, Javier Velasco, SDB has also enjoyed an extensive contemporary repertoire. Among Velasco's critically acclaimed original works are "Marnobomania," "Opus Swing," "The Brontes," "Luna Lunera,"

and "Sweet Dreams." *San Diego Magazine* has named Velasco as "one of the 50 people to watch" and the *San Diego Union-Tribune* references Velasco as "San Diego's answer to Jerome Robbins." The company is dedicated to creating innovative works that relate to the community and continues to present more world premieres than any other dance company in Southern California.

In January, the company performed "An Intimate Evening with San Diego Ballet" on the premises of Dance Place San Diego. To conclude the 2006-2007 season, in March SDB performed an encore presentation of the classical ballet, "Shakespeare's Sonnets."

Next Fall, SDB will present the world premiere of "Carnival of the Animals," a collaborative effort with Young Audiences of San Diego and Culture Shock Dance Troup.

To learn more about San Diego Ballet visit www.sandiegoballet.org

This Summer Malashock Dance, Jean Isaacs San Diego Dance Theater, and San Diego Ballet will team together for a 3-week collaborative Summer Intensive Workshop. The dates are July 23 -August 11.

The Workshop will be taught by the Artistic Directors from all three companies, company dancers, and prominent guest artists.

The invited guest of Jean Isaacs is Choreographer, Monica Bill Barnes. The invited guest of John Malashock is Michael Mizerany. The invited guests of San Diego Ballet are Elena Baltovik - Kiev National Opera House, Ahita Ardalan Bergman - Paris Opera Ballet, and Alla Osipenko - Maryinski Theatre's last student trained directly by Vaganova. ■