



MISSOURI
CONTEMPORARY
BALLET
2011-2012

PERFORMANCE
INFORMATION &
OPPORTUNITIES

Karen Mareck Grundy,
Artistic/Executive Director

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ABOUT MISSOURI CONTEMPORARY BALLET

Celebrating its sixth year, Missouri Contemporary Ballet (MCB) is a professional dance company committed to creating dance entertainment through the art of contemporary ballet. MCB creates exciting, edgy, hip entertainment to make the experience of live dance an artful and joyful event for all ages. Founded in July 2004 to fulfill the need for a professional dance company in Mid-Missouri, MCB is committed to broadening its performance and education base.

Missouri Contemporary Ballet focuses on providing opportunities not only for the talented dancers it employs and brings to Columbia, but maintains an even greater mission and responsibility to the surrounding communities by devoting efforts, education, and outreach programs to schools both local and regional, retirement homes, and communities lacking arts programming. Furthermore, MCB allows new and emerging choreographers the opportunity to set original works on its company members in a professional atmosphere and see their vision come to life on stage, for the benefit and enjoyment of audiences here in Columbia and all across Missouri.

Despite its infancy, MCB has solidified itself in the community by performing at events such as Artrageous Fridays, a quarterly gallery crawl, First Night, an alternative New Year's Eve Celebration, and lecture demonstrations in area schools. Additionally, MCB has successfully organized and produced "Dancing with Missouri Stars" (DWMS), its predominant fundraiser. DWMS pairs local celebrities with classically trained ballroom dance instructors providing for an evening of dance competition in Columbia, Missouri. This competition has swelled to over 1,000 attendees, raising over \$100,000 in 2010 and 2011. Many of MCB's performances are re-broadcast on television, as well.

While arts funding is at an all time low, with your partnership, Missouri Contemporary Ballet will continue its mission to entertain, educate, and evolve.



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110 ORR STREET SUITE 102, COLUMBIA, MISSOURI 65201 | 573.219.7134 |
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GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Grow our audience attendance and awareness of contemporary ballet as an expressive art form through performances, workshops, and education.
- Expand touring schedule throughout Missouri, into the Midwest, and ultimately the nation.
- Grow the number of dancers we employ and train.
- Provide additional outreach opportunities for the youth in both our local community and surrounding rural communities in Missouri.
- Develop, initiate, and sustain the School of MCB to provide an appreciation and discipline for the art of dance through professional training of the youth of our community.
- Continue and expand our efforts to obtain notable choreographers from across the United States providing unique opportunities for challenge, personal discovery, and artistic development of our company members.



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DIRECTORS

Karen Mareck Grundy, Artistic & Executive Director

As the Artistic/Executive Director of Missouri Contemporary Ballet, Karen Grundy states, "My goal is to give dancers a positive yet disciplined space to discover their center core and expand their hearts and minds, while also allowing them to explore the diverse aspects of dance."

Karen Mareck Grundy was born and raised in Las Vegas, NV, where her dance training began at the age of 3. At age 8, Karen began her training in modern dance with Ronnie Greenblatt who trained under Martha Graham. Her extensive classical ballet and jazz training was under the direction of Inez Mourning and Belinda DeBecker. Grundy's love of contemporary ballet was discovered in working side by side with L. J. Ballard as a dancer and as an assistant choreographer. Karen has been a member and featured dancer in various dance companies including Opus Dance Ensemble, New Works Project, and Ballard's Cafe Dance Co. She performed in Las Vegas for 11 years as a featured and lead dancer, as well as working in television. During that time, while working with various choreographers, she was fortunate to work under the direction of Ron Lewis, director and choreographer for Liza Minnelli. Grundy has taught master classes throughout the country and as an assistant for choreographer Tiger Martina.

In 2000, Karen was brought to Columbia, MO to teach at Columbia Performing Arts Centre, where she taught for 9 years. She has trained dancers who have gone on to The Juilliard School, The Lines School, Dance Kaleidoscope, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, and Broadway! Her dream was to have her own company. Before starting Missouri Contemporary Ballet in 2006, she was the Artistic Director for Cedar Lake II. Grundy has created a style that is fresh and innovative by maintaining her classical ballet, modern training and adding a twist from the productions of Vegas. Her work is accessible to all. Karen is thrilled to be able to create her vision while collaborating with artists of all genres, and the many supporters of dance in Columbia, across the state of Missouri, and throughout the Country.

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DIRECTORS CONTINUED

Shannon West, Ballet Mistress & Resident Choreographer

Shannon West began her classical ballet training with Francoise Joubert before attending the School of Ballet Arizona, studying the Vaganova method under the direction of Kee Juan Han. At fifteen, she began her professional career performing in Michael Uhtoff's "The Nutcracker". During her time with Ballet Arizona Shannon performed in "The Nutcracker", "Swan Lake", and Balanchine's "Serenade". Upon graduation from Arizona School for the Arts with honors, Shannon performed with The Georgia Ballet and Cedar Lake II. Throughout her career, Shannon has been fascinated by the mind's ability to create movement from the body's raw form and has explored choreography with guidance from Kee Juan Han, Anne Marie Deangelo, and Karen Mareck Grundy. Her works have been premiered by The Georgia Ballet and students of The School of Ballet Arizona, Ballet Pacifica, and The San Angelo Civic Ballet. Since 2006, when she joined the artistic staff of Missouri Contemporary Ballet, Shannon has taken on the roles of Ballet Mistress, Resident Choreographer, and Rehearsal Director.

Ken Braso, Ballet Master

Ken Braso comes to Columbia with over 30 years of professional dance experience. Ken has been a featured dancer with Walt Disney Productions, Southern Ballet Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet, Ballet Austin, Cincinnati Opera Co, Children's Theatre of Cincinnati, and the Louisville Ballet. Ken has worked with many notable choreographers including featured roles in ballets by Choo San Goh, William Soleau, Stephen Mills, Septime Weber, David Parsons, Patrick Frantz and Alun Jones. After retiring from the Louisville Ballet in 2002 as a principal dancer, Ken founded and taught for Step One Dance at All About Kids Sports Center and then later joined the Louisville Ballet School, as a faculty member. Ken moved to Columbia, Missouri with his wife in 2008, where he has been working as a freelance dance and gymnastics instructor for DanceArts, Missouri Contemporary Ballet, Flipz Gymnastics, Tiger Gymnastics, and Stephens Collage.



2010-2011 SEASON

Fall/Winter Season 2010

August 30, 2010 - MCB dancers return from summer hiatus.

September 13, 2010 - Guest choreographer Keisha Lalama-White from Pittsburgh

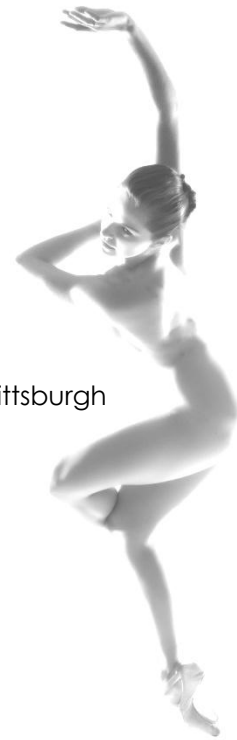
November 13, 2010 - Fall Performance in Sedalia, MO

November 20, 2010 & November 21, 2010 - "Over The Edge"
at the Blue Note

December 2, 2010- Choreographic Installation
featuring the works of the MCB dancers

December 31, 2010 - Performance for First Night Columbia at
Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts - www.firstnightcolumbia.org

January 14, 2011 - Performance at Missouri Valley College featuring "Falling"
in Marshall, MO



Spring/Summer Season 2011

March 20, 2011-The Centennial Celebration of Tennessee Williams at Jesse Hall
on the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus

April 15, 2011-Artrageous Fridays Performance

April 22 & 23, 2011- Guest Performance at Springfield Ballet in Springfield, MO

April 29, 2011-Performance in West Plains, MO

April 30, 2011-Honorary Company for "St. Louis National Dance Week"

May 5, 2011-Fifth Annual "Dancing with Missouri Stars", Hearnes Center, Columbia, MO

May 20, 2011-Choreographic Installation featuring the works of the mcb dancers

May 27, 2011-"Spring to Dance" Touhill Performing Arts Center St. Louis MO



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REPERTOIRE

Alone/Together (2009) by Jennifer Medina
Breaking Patterns (2008) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Cariño (2010) by Shannon Lee Wann
Coming Home (2003) by L.J. Ballard
Desperate Measures (2010) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Falling (2009) by Karen Mareck Grundy and Installation Artist Valerie Wedel
Falling...Apart (2009) by Shannon Lee Wann
Falling into Place (2009) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Falling on His Own Sword (2009) by Shannon Lee Wann
From a River's Edge and **Life Has Loveliness** (2009) by Shannon Lee Wann
hand in hand (2010) by Shannon Lee Wann
History with Me (2010) by Shannon Lee Wann
Hypnotic (2007) by Megan Pulfer
I'm Not Broken (2011) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Oh-Lahm Yeh-Shan (2007) by Shannon Lee Wann
Love and Peace (2007) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Loves and Losses (2011) by Tiger Martina
Marking Territory (2008) by Iquail Shaheed
Much That Can Be Remembered Is Always Forgotten (2007) by David Marchant
Nigel and Marian...A Story (2009) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Rock (2008) by Nick Kepley, Karen Mareck Grundy, Lisa Morovitz-Geger, and Tiger Martina, with the artists of MCB
Saying Goodbye When You've Already Left (2008) by Shannon Lee Wann
Seven (2010) by Lisa Belrose
Six to 1 (2009) by Shannon Lee Wann
Sound Bites and Impulse (2008) by Christopher 'Topher' Benjamin
Stairway to Heaven (2009) by Karen Mareck Grundy with the artists of MCB
Step into the Light (2006) by Nick Kepley
Steam Rising (2007) by Shawn Boyle
St. Louis Blues (2011) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Symbiotic (2008) by Shannon Lee Wann
Tango de Muerte (2006) by Tiger Martina
The Final Hour (2008) by Eric Bean, Jr.
The Masterpieces (2011) by Karen Mareck Grundy
The Story of What Was (2006) by Sean France
The World Lit By Lightning (2011) by Shannon Lee Wann
Three (2007) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Twisted (2005) by Karen Mareck Grundy & Lisa Morovitz-Geger
Unbreakable Code (2006) by Karen Mareck Grundy
Waltz No. 3 (2008) by Shannon Lee Wann
We Are Sacred Vessels (2010) by Jennifer Medina
Wish (2010) by Keisha Lelama-White
Without Consent (2010) by Karen Mareck Grundy

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MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE (M-AAA)

Regional Touring Program (RTP)

The Regional Touring Program (RTP) has an exclusive focus on the talented artists in a six state region: Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas. RTP funds will be awarded to presenters from the M-AAA region to support performances and residency activities involving Mid-America Artists' Registry Members, such as MCB.

Awards will be made on a first-come, first-served basis in response to Applications received by deadlines determined by M-AAA.

- The Regional Touring Program maximum award per application is \$5,000. An organization may apply for a maximum of three RTP grants. Applicants may be awarded up to 40% of the contracted artist's fee listed in the artist contract, subject to available funding.
- Additional support of 10% of the contracted artist's fee may be awarded if the applicant organization is located in a rural community. Rural status is determined by information from the U.S. Department of Commerce and based on the Metropolitan Statistical Area rating (www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/uc2k.txt).
- Awards must be matched at least dollar-for-dollar with other funds. Other than capital expenditures, all expenses associated with RTP activities are eligible.

Community Engagement with Touring Artists Program (CETA)

The M-AAA Community Engagement with Touring Artists (CETA) program supports and promotes touring high-quality professional performing artists throughout the six-state region of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas from outside the presenter's state and metropolitan area. The program is specifically designed to accommodate a presenting series, build new audiences and deepen the impact of the touring performing arts.

Presenters may apply for a single grant of up to \$15,000 covering multiple events or a presenting series. The applicant organization must work with touring artists to promote interaction with local community members and to engage new audiences for professional performances.

Applicant organizations must be based in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, or Texas and be either legally incorporated as a not-for-profit organization with IRS 501(c)(3) status or operating as a unit of a state, local, or tribal government.

For further information on either the RTP or the CETA Programs, including application information, visit; www.maaa.org/performing_arts



MISSOURI ARTS COUNCIL INFORMATION

MAC Funding Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for MAC funding, an organization must be a public or private organization which:

1. Is Missouri-based and has a Missouri Address. Those nonprofit corporations based outside Missouri must be registered in Missouri as a Foreign Corporation, must have a Missouri address, and must provide all MAC-funded arts activities in Missouri.
2. Is tax-exempt as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.
3. Is incorporated as a Missouri not-for-profit corporation and maintain not-for-profit status by filing annual registration report with the Secretary of State's office.
4. Has a DUNS number. If your organization does not possess a DUNS number, it is important to begin the process by calling toll free 866/705-5711. There is no fee for registering for a DUNS number.

Eligible organizations include:

Arts or arts education organizations	Chambers of Commerce
Government Agencies	Youth Organizations
Public School Districts	Private K-12 Schools
Community Arts or Religious Organizations	Social Service Organizations
Colleges & Universities	City Parks Departments

How to Book MCB through MAC

Through the Missouri Arts Council website, www.missouriartscouncil.org, eligible organizations can view the directory listing for Missouri Contemporary Ballet which includes:

- Brief description of the performing artist's programs
- Biographical information
- Contact information
- Performance fees
- Technical requirements
- Availability

The printed fee indicates the cost of presenting a program an average distance from the artist's home area and includes transportation and lodging, unless otherwise noted. Factors affecting the performance fee includes: number and type of performances at a specific location, size and type of audience expected, actual distance traveled, block booking arrangements, and equipment required. However, fees listed are negotiable and subject to change.

Eligible organizations may request funding from MAC to supplement the cost of bringing the artists to the community, up to 60 percent.

1. Contact MCB and discuss the needs of your organization
2. Once a verbal agreement has been reached, formalize this agreement with a written contract or Letter of Intent
3. Apply to the Missouri Arts Council for funding assistance
4. Plan the marketing and outreach for the performance in conjunction with MAC and MCB

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COMMUNITY & EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Lecture Demonstrations

Lecture Demonstrations introduce the audience to dance by taking them through the daily life of the company. In addition to performing a piece from the company's repertoire and demonstrating classical steps, the dancers provide an interactive experience by inviting audience members to the stage and participating in a question and answer period. Lecture Demonstrations are appropriate for all audiences and make a wonderful event for children of any age. If your school or organization is interested in attending a Lecture Demonstration at our state of the art studio, or hosting one at your facility please contact Shannon Lee West at Missouri Contemporary Ballet by email, info@missouricontemporaryballet.com or phone, 573.219.7134

Artrageous Fridays

Artrageous Fridays, a self-guided quarterly gallery crawl, allows the local community free access to the cultural offering within their area. During these events Missouri Contemporary invites participants into their studio space to view open rehearsals. This intimate experience provides the public with the opportunity to not only view the dancers in action, but also cultivates a sense of personal connection as individuals get to meet and interact with the dancers.

Summer Expedition

Columbia Public Schools' five-week summer enrichment program designed specifically for high potential students. Fifteen students, not served by other supportive services, participate in activities designed to increase world knowledge and provide opportunities to think analytically and critically.

Dance outside the Box

In conjunction with The Boys and Girls Club and Dream Outside the Box, MCB dancers expose at-risk youth to the art of dance through specially designed lecture demonstrations. In addition, up to 15 of the children from these organizations are offered a special opportunity to study dance with the MCB once a week throughout the school year. A member of the ballet company coaches the children in the studio so they can learn different types of dance, ultimately giving students an opportunity to participate in the arts as performers.

MCB Master Classes & Workshops

Classes and Workshops are offered in schools, colleges, and other facilities and present a unique opportunity to learn the Missouri Contemporary Ballet technique, style, and repertoire from current company members and directors.

Gratis Guest Tickets

In our commitment to the communal spirit, arts education, and contemporary ballet exposure, MCB offers complimentary performance tickets to Columbia-based organizations which serve the under privileged and At-Risk Youth.

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ENDORSEMENTS

"Artistically the performances were an unqualified success that informed, inspired, and mesmerized everyone in the auditorium...The residency of the Missouri Contemporary Ballet on the Westminster campus was most definitely a tremendous artistic success and a positive promotion of the arts for the life of the community. The troupe helped us recognize how exciting and fulfilling the performing arts can be. At this point our goal is to build upon the success of the visit of the Missouri Contemporary Ballet by planning additional events, and we are especially eager to explore the possibility of a return visit of the Missouri Contemporary Ballet."

-Robert A. Seelinger, *Professor of Classics, Fine Arts Coordinator, Westminster College*

"Commerce Bank has a long history of community involvement and support for the arts. Commerce Bank is proud to support the Missouri Contemporary Ballet, which provides exciting entertainment while enhancing our quality of life and the culture of our local community. We feel the Missouri Contemporary Ballet is a true "gem" that exposes children and adults alike to world class dancing performances, here in Central Missouri."

Teresa Maledy, President and CEO, Commerce Bank, Central Missouri Region

"I have been involved in the business of special events and live music in Columbia for over 30 years. I have had the opportunity to work with many different arts organizations in the community. Karen brings a level of professionalism that is second to none. Every aspect of her dance company is pretty impressive. I must admit that it is a learning experience for me but MCB makes it fun! Karen's business sense is beyond any that I have experienced with any organization. To get the MCB to the high level that it is at is no easy task! I look forward to the next MCB event at the BN."

*Richard King, Owner, The Blue Note
Columbia, Missouri*



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GOVERNMENT & CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

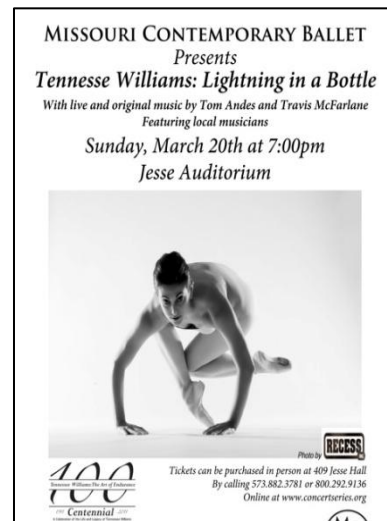
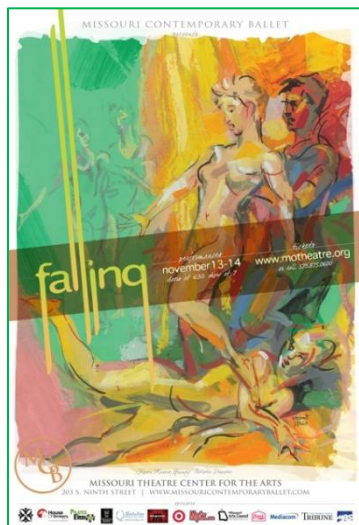


City of Columbia
Office of
Cultural Affairs





SUPPORTIVE MATERIALS



Missouri Contemporary Ballet performance pushes off with power, fluidity, new dancers

By Aarik Danielsen of the Columbia Daily Tribune
Sunday, November 14, 2010



Photo by Parker Eshelman

Some people inch, heel to toe, up to the precipice of a dream or desire, afraid to risk coming too close to the edge, afraid to lose control.

Every day, Missouri Contemporary Ballet dancers exert incredible control over their bodies and, indeed, many of their precise, poetic movements involve heels firmly planted in place or toes positioned *en pointe*. Yet Artistic Director Karen Mareck Grundy doesn't want her company to play it safe — she sees MCB heading over the edge of a cliff and is encouraging its members to move forward, excited about the free fall ahead.

“There are so many different things that are happening for us that are taking us over the edge into hopefully more notoriety, more performances,” Grundy said. “... There's a lot of things that are building for us, and

that's taking us over the edge from not being known to getting at” an established level.

Mid-Missouri's premier ballet troupe is celebrating five years of existence in fitting style with “Over the Edge,” a performance Saturday and next Sunday at The Blue Note. Named for the plummet Grundy wants her group to experience, one that ends with a crash into a world where creative dreams and desires become tangible realities, the show is as much about where MCB is going as where it has been...

...By joining erstwhile works with newer ones and rock-star ethos to meticulous movement, MCB reinforces the direction it has headed these past five years. Grundy said audiences enjoy a strange sense of expectation, knowing on one level what awaits — at least one of the group's pieces will appeal to them — yet not knowing what to expect next, asking questions such as, “What can they possibly bring us that's going to be new or exciting?”...

Within the first month of the season, MCB was invited to serve as the honorary company for National Dance Week in April in St. Louis, to appear as one of 30 companies at the third annual Spring to Dance Festival there in May and had secured other gigs around the state. “This is the momentum we've been waiting for to get these performances, for people to be coming *to* us because they're hearing about what we're doing,” Grundy said.

Amplified attention and achievement point to the place MCB occupies in its life cycle — as the company gains recognition, and, as dispatches are sent home from delighted company members, more facile dancers want to audition, allowing the company to push the envelope. “Each year, we get dancers who are capable of more,” West

said. “Because of that, we’ve been able to work more artistically on how you’re going to approach these simple steps and make them art. That’s been something I think is really great for such a small and new company.”

That Grundy and West see MCB at a high point is truly remarkable considering how much has been achieved already in collaborations with arts organizations such as PACE, area musicians such as Tom Andes and Travis MacFarlane, and visual artists such as Frank Stack and David Spear, in taking ballet across the state to regions with little previous exposure and in taking the stage at Columbia’s most prestigious venues.

“Overall, I think in five years MCB has developed amazing support from a close-knit community that has a high regard for the arts, in addition to extending its sights on expanding audiences throughout and beyond Missouri,” Noelle Lelakus, who danced with MCB in years three and four, said in an e-mail. “The company is not afraid to take chances, which is evident in all its growth and accomplishments.”

Yet this exhilaration doesn’t mean MCB hasn’t experienced the second stage of growth — the painful breaking of barriers. In fact, it might be most accurate to characterize it as between stage two and three, the point where an unfettered existence can be enjoyed.

One of the greatest hurdles MCB has had to maneuver its lithe frames over and around is that of unsteady finances. Grundy described taxing periods in which she was unsure whether she could continue to captain MCB; asking her dancers to give their all in the studio while knowing she couldn’t give them all the financial support she wished

was emotionally draining. Grundy’s closest circle implored her to press on, and today, while the company is not fail-safe, she can point to generous grants from the Missouri Arts Council and the city’s Office of Cultural Affairs as well as an evolving donor base as examples of encouragement. “I’m proud that we’ve prevailed and we’re coming through with a vengeance and kind of showing this town that it needs us,” she said.

Still, Grundy remains hungry and eager to push even closer to the edge of the company’s goals. She hopes to expand its mobility with regional tours and, eventually, a national reach. Increased exposure means increased security and creativity; it means attracting new, talented dancers while maintaining and retaining the crew she possesses. It means bringing in nationally revered choreographers to work with her dancers, pushing them to new places. Grundy is grateful for milestones passed yet is incredibly engaged in the present and focused on the future. Others, just a step outside the group’s Orr Street studio doors, identified the places MCB has gone even as it continues to go, go, go.

Ultimately, West said MCB’s greatest accomplishment to date is the camaraderie created among members past and present. “You work at a standard classical ballet company or even a contemporary company, and you’re going to have close relationships, but it’s still very much like work, and it never feels like that here,” she said. “It feels like a family, dysfunctional and awesome at the same time.”

PICK OF THE WEEK: Ballet dancers transform themselves on stage

By John Hansen of The Sedalia Democrat
2010-11-05



On their 2008 hit single “Human,” the Killers asked “Are we human, or are we dancer?” The answer, to judge by Missouri Contemporary Ballet’s “Over the Edge,” is “dancer.” When these human beings hit the stage, they transform into different characters for each of the six pieces in the show.

“That’s what’s unique about Missouri Contemporary Ballet. All of our pieces are so different, so our dancers are challenged to transform,” artistic and executive director Karen Mareck Grundy said in a Friday phone interview.

“Today, for instance, they’re going to rehearse at least four of the six pieces. They have to change their mindset. For one piece, they might be harried, then the next one is soft and light. They have to transform for the choreographers, switch roles, bring on a different attitude.”

The theme of “Over the Edge,” which will be staged Nov. 13 at the Liberty Center, is growth, Grundy said. She launched the company five years ago, thinking that Columbia was big

enough to support professional dance. She guessed right, but she’s not resting on her toe shoes. Her goal for the future is to tour more, both near and far, and she’s happy to bring MCB to Sedalia for the first time.

“I brought in two choreographers that aren’t in Columbia,” Grundy said. “Kiesha Lalama-White (of Point Park University in Pittsburgh) brought in a piece called ‘Wish,’ and it’s about shedding yourself of personal barriers and the celebration of freedom. The other person I brought in was Jennifer Medina out of St. Louis to do ‘Sacred Vessels,’ which is about a sense of positivity and joy and hope. And then my resident choreographer, Shannon Lee West, has set a new piece. It’s pretty edgy and different and fun, technical and athletic. And we’ll do three pieces from our repertoire.”

“Over the Edge” will emphasize the “contemporary” part of MCB, Grundy said.

“I wouldn’t say that any piece that we do is traditional,” she said. “Obviously, the classical is the base of all dance. In order for these dancers to be able to execute, they have to be very technically trained, but then they have to be able to move. A lot of times ballerinas can’t move like we require, so it’s hard to find the right dancers for the company.”

Although “Over the Edge” won’t feature any modern pop songs like “Human” — which Grundy admitted would be a great song to dance to — one of the pieces, “Unbreakable Code,” will feature a string quartet arrangement of a song by the rock band Tool.

“It’s a kick-butt show, appropriate for all ages,” Grundy said. “Every single person will find something that they love in this show. People get scared by ballet, but they’re not going to see ‘Swan Lake’ or ‘The Nutcracker.’ ”

It’s appropriate that MCB shies away from the traditional ballet classics, because Grundy herself took a nontraditional route to this point. Whereas many dancers start out in a studio or company environment and later do shows in Las Vegas and other entertainment-themed cities,

Grundy actually started dancing in Vegas. At age 3, no less.

“I was born and raised in Las Vegas, and it was inevitable that I would get into dancing,” she said. “When I got out of high school, I started dancing in shows in Vegas, and I danced in shows for 11 years. During that time I also worked with different companies throughout Vegas. Although I was dancing every night, my artistic outlook was to work with companies.”

In 2000, she took a teaching job at the Columbia Performing Arts Centre, and five years later, she started MCB at age 34, which is somewhat young to transition from dancer to director.

“I wasn’t ready to stop dancing when I moved

here, but I knew in my heart I’d excel at being a director,” she said.

And the key to growing the company, as “Over the Edge” suggests, is to keep moving and keep taking on new roles — and to hire performers who are always ready to transform from “human” into “dancer.”

“I’m still learning, that’s for sure,” Grundy said. “I certainly don’t pretend I know how to do this. Every day is a learning process.”