

Dance filmmakers celebrate new partnership

Who: Hole Dance Films, now a part of Dancers' Workshop
What: Fundraiser and performance
When: 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday
Where: Dancer's Workshop
How much: \$10 general admission, \$50 VIP seating
Web: DWJH.org, HoleDanceFilms.wordpress.com

By Katy Niner

After five years, Carrie Noel Richer and Kate W. Kosharek have turned their passion for the emerging genre of dance film into an established program with Dancers' Workshop.

To celebrate the new partnership, Hole Dance Films hosts a fundraiser and performance from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday at Dancers' Workshop.

The Jackson premiere of "Elusive Stranger," a 20-minute piece that weaves video and live performance by Kosharek and Erin Roy, begins at 7:30 p.m. followed by four films: "Dream on Vine St." (11 minutes), "Blue's Not the Word" (3 minutes), "An After Dinner Drink" (7 minutes), and an award-winning 90-second 3-D short (3-D glasses provided). Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

The celebration is open to all ages. General admission tickets cost \$10. VIP tickets cost \$50 and include front-row seating, champagne and a red carpet photo.

Through the event, Hole Dance Films hopes to raise \$25,400 to fund its new programmatic needs.

Artistic vision

Since founding Hole Dance Films in 2006, Kosharek and Richer have poured their creativity into the independent production company and its site-specific dance films. The films meld dance, cinematography, music, costume and set design, script writing and editing. Each piece tells a story through movement, a narrative accessible to all audiences through quirky characters and inventive choreography.

"It's not about beginning, middle and end," Kosharek said. "It's about creating an environment, an atmosphere and an essence that makes people smell and see and feel."

Hole Dance Films considers itself a guide ushering audiences' experiences of dance as an expression of person and place. Nurtured by Jackson, Richer and Kosharek have toted their camera all over, from snowy shoots up Cache Creek and on the National Elk Refuge to after-hour filming at Rendezvous Bistro.

So, too, have the finished films traveled: to the Sans Souci Festival in Barcelona, Spain, to the Cinedans Festival in Amsterdam, to the SLAM Motion in Media



COURTESY PHOTO

Erin Roy and Kate Kosharek in "Elusive Stranger," the live dance and video performance that will make its Jackson premiere Saturday during the Hole Dance Films fundraiser at Dancers' Workshop.

Festival in Brooklyn, New York.

New opportunities

Richer and Kosharek approached Babs Case, artistic director of Dancers' Workshop, unsure of the outcome. Case, who has long nurtured Kosharek and Richer as artists, even attending the "Elusive Stranger" debut in Brooklyn, embraced them, and proposed that Hole Dance Films become a company in residence, an established program, at Dancers' Workshop, like Contemporary Dance Wyoming.

The benefits are reciprocal: Hole Dance Films, under a nonprofit umbrella, can grow with donor support, while Dancers' Workshop can offer its students the opportunity to try dance film.

This summer, Kosharek led student flash mobs around town, spontaneous dances Richer filmed and posted online. Students lapped up the experience.

"It gives another avenue for a young dancer to look and say, 'Wow, I want to be a filmmaker but I love dancing,'" Kosharek said. "Or if they are into the technical side, they could still incorporate their love for dance and movement."

Kosharek and Richer are ecstatic at the opportunities unfolding before them. Now, they can curate a dance film festival in Jackson, like the international gatherings they have been a part of around the world. Now, they can host other dance on camera filmmakers. Now, they can consistently produce two films a year, including a community-inclusive work,

like "Dream on Vine St." which involved more than 20 residents.

"The more we involve community members in the process — that is a whole other level of awareness about filmmaking and art and dance and collaboration," Richer said.

Another avenue

Erin Roy has been a part of Hole Dance Films from the start, having danced in the first film, "Winter Migration." She described the creative process as collaborative: Richer and Kosharek bring their vision, then everyone involved contributes to its creation.

Being involved with the dance films has helped Roy hone her sense of self as a dance artist. "Working with Kate and Carrie has helped me determine who and what I want to be as a dancer artist," Roy said, "and how what we do contributes to society in a positive way. That if you do something that is true to who you are as an artist, it's relayed to the audience and the audience is affected by it in a very big way."

Roy is poised to move to New York City to pursue her passion for musical theater.

"Working with them is a huge part of why I have decided to go into musical theater," she said. "That's the part I connect with, and I am not sure if I would have figured that out if I had not worked with [Kosharek and Richer], specifically on 'Elusive Stranger,' but other things as well. That's how we connect with society — through our stories."

Review

Maceo and band funk up sold-out Center Theater

Beloved saxophonist leads high-energy group though its usual paces.

By Richard Anderson

It would not be hard to make the case that Maceo Parker — the 68-year-old funky sax player who got his start with James Brown in 1964 and played with George Clinton and Bootsy Collins before launching his solo career — is a one-trick pony.

Except that his one trick is so thrilling and entertaining to witness.

Saturday night, Parker came to Jackson and did what Parker does: He led his band through a nonstop two-hour-plus set of precision-engineered grooves.

The group of eight worked hard to make its act look effortless. Seamlessly interlocking parts made for a blizzard of syncopation. Parker exercised tantric-like control over the proceedings, leading the sold-out Center Theater to near orgiastic heights only to bring the energy back down with the flick of a finger or shake of his head — an impressive display of showmanship.

Every member of "the tightest little funk orchestra on Earth" was given time in the spotlight. Trumpeter Lee Hogans played tight unison and close harmony with Parker and also blew some compact, tidy solos. Guitarist Bruno Speight played a screaming solo that evolved into a virtuosic display that brought to mind prog rockers like Adrian Belew.



DAVID STUBBS

At the Center Theater, funk legend Maceo Parker bonded instantly with the crowd, which took to its feet and danced throughout the second half of the show.

Corey Parker, Maceo's son, sang backup with Martha High and also took center stage a few times to rap. "Whatcha know about funk?" he chanted in one segment, schooling the crowd about how James Brown, Parker and other funk pioneers blazed the trail for many later musical phenomena, including hip-hop.

Another family member, Marcus Parker — the saxophonist's nephew, son of drummer Melvin Parker, who joined Brown's band at the same time as Maceo — manned the drum kit, playing with deadpan professionalism

as he hammered out dense patterns. His solo, about halfway through the concert, was finely structured, maintaining the same funk rhythms but varying them, expanding upon them and ultimately taking them to a new place in a display that was inspired yet also mostly understated.

Aside from Maceo, Rodney "Skeet" Curtis, the bandleader's longtime bassist, enjoyed the most solo time — and rightly so. Often the center of a swirling maelstrom of sound, "Skeet" brought down some heavy weather himself, on occasion sounding like two

instruments in one.

And New York City keyboardist Will Boulware also played a prominent role. He enjoyed many solos, was featured in several duets and trios and provided the full, fat foundation over which the rest of the band built its sound.

But though the band itself deserved to pack any club any night, there was never any chance of forgetting who the star was. Parker kept up a steady torrent of music, playing alto, picking up his flute for three segments, singing quite a bit — perhaps more than he played — and erupting in James Brown-esque hoots, grunts, "good God!"s and other interjections on songs with titles like "Off the Hook," "Make it Funky" and "Give It Up." He bonded with his audience the second he walked on stage, presenting an upbeat message of good times and good vibes, and telling the crowd all evening long, "We love you."

At one point, to demonstrate what he was *not* going to do, he and Boulware played a bobbish duet, reminiscent of another Parker, that would have impressed almost any jazz fan. Later, Boulware accompanied him as he channeled his hero Ray Charles on "But You Don't Know Me."

People familiar with Parker knew what to expect Saturday, and they got it. If one joyously upbeat funk eruption sounded more or less like the next, well, no matter — each was engaging and irresistible. The Center Theater crowd shouted out its appreciation all night, and for the second half of the show, the entire house was on its feet, shaking everything it had.