

12/10-11: CONDER/dance pushing boundaries in Tempe fest

by **Jennifer McClellan** - Dec. 3, 2010 10:48 AM
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This weekend, CONDER/dance, an contemporary **dance** troupe, will showcase the unconventional form, creative movements and collaborative nature indicative of modern dance at its fourth annual "Breaking Ground" show.



BREAKING GROUND 2010

What: CONDER/dance hosts this fourth annual dance festival showcasing innovation in contemporary dance and original films. Interactive preshow starts at 7:30 p.m.

When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday.

Where: Tempe Center for the Arts, 700 W. Rio Salado Parkway.

Admission: \$18, \$15 student with ID.

Details: 480-350-2822, conderdance.com.

"We're looking for something surprising, a new take on movement, culture and art," said Carley Conder, founder and artistic director of the Tempe-based company. "It's important to keep celebrating new creations . . . outside the cut-and-dry formula of dance making.

Basically, different ways to attack the beast."

The show, which will return home to the Tempe Center for the Arts, includes works by 20 juried choreographers and filmmakers from around the country. That's more than double the original eight up-and-coming area artists Conder recruited for the original show.

This year's show will include an interactive outdoor preshow each night and out-of-the-theater performances, a non-traditional touch. Half an hour before the show, performers will dance outside, weaving in and out of the long row of streetlights that line the art center's entrance. Each night, guests will move outside the theater during a quasi-intermission to see performers dance choreographed routines inside the center's art gallery, sculpture garden and along Tempe Town Lake.

The onstage pieces range from whimsical to risqué. During the Saturday night performance of "Walk in the Blue Fields," choreographed by Phoenix-based Mary Fitzgerald Dance, a solo male dancer moves around large paper sculptures representing people and places that have impacted his life.

CONDER/dance will perform the finale each night, a provocative piece called "The Pallid Brawl." Choreographed by Ashleigh Leite, a 15-year veteran of New York stage, the routine features the troupe's six dancers and explores female sexuality.

The piece opens with the dancers dressed Marie Antoinette-style in corsets and giant wigs. It starts demurely, in a classic court dance, then progresses into a sizzling scene as the ladies confront their repressed sexuality.

The tantalizing number is outside the realm of most Valley showcases, said Leite, who grew up in Arizona and lives in Phoenix.

"Very few people really challenge an audience to think beyond what they would experience in a classical performance," she said.

"That's why this show is important, especially for Phoenix. If I'd done the piece in New York, they'd all be naked."

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