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**MIRACLE OF THE GULLS
MORE THAN JUST SITTING**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

IN

DANCE

DECEMBER 2006

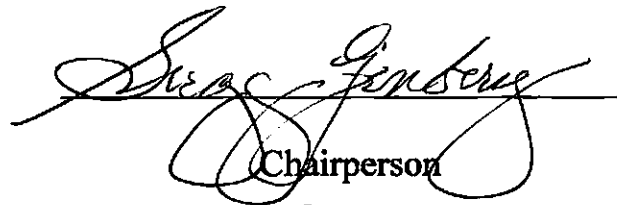
**By
Rosemary Taylor Summers**

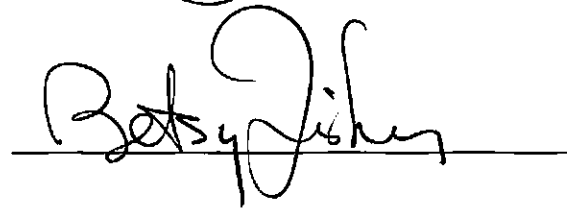
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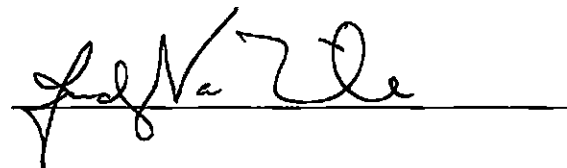
**Gregg Lizenbery, Chairperson
Betsy Fisher
Judy Van Zile**

We certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is satisfactory
in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Dance.

THESIS COMMITTEE


Chairperson





For Mom and Dad. Thank you.

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CHAPTER I. THESIS PROPOSAL, 2006

To fulfill the choreographic requirements for my Masters of Fine Arts degree at the University of Hawai'i, I will contribute two newly choreographed compositions and perform a solo created by M.F.A. candidate Beth Elliott, for Spring Footholds, the student choreography showcase. Spring Footholds will take place at the University of Hawai'i, Earle Ernest Lab Theatre, May 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, 2006.

Miracle of the Gulls

One of the pieces I am creating for my thesis requirement is entitled *Miracle of the Gulls*. My concept for this dance is inspired by a pioneer account that took place in the mid 1800's. I am interested in creating a dance based on this account because of my religious beliefs and pioneer ancestry.

To aid my creative process for this dance, I am researching various versions of the pioneer account. In the different versions of the account I am looking for words, phrases or ideas that lend themselves to movement or qualitative efforts. I will use selected words, phrases and ideas as impetus for improvisational scores to create movement material both individually and with my dancers. An improvisational score is setting up a structure of rules or limits dancers abide by to create movement in the moment.

The account as written by S. E. Schlosser:

In the year of our Lord 1848, vast swarms of crickets descended upon our settlement. T'was a judgment upon us, yea certain, for how else could you explain the desecration of our crops, the dimming hope of survival for the coming winter?

We tried rude methods to destroy the insects: some attempted to burn the crickets, some tried to drown or bury them. But alas, nothing, not even our prayers for deliverance, seemed able to stop the massive destruction of the crickets.

Then, when we had lost all hope, the morning sky was filled with the hoarse cry of gulls and the sound of wings. Before our eyes, thousands of gulls descended over the Great Salt Lake and commenced a great feasting upon the

crickets. Twas a miracle of God. Every day the gulls came to eat the crickets until there were no more crickets left. Our crops were saved and we survived the following winter. (<http://www.americanfolklore.net/folktales/ut1.html>).

For *Miracle of the Gulls*, I will work with twelve dancers. I will divide the twelve dancers into three groups. These groups represent the pioneers, crickets and gulls. Rather than literal characters, the groups are impetus for movement ideas—jumping-off points. The pioneers are not necessarily pioneers, but could represent any group of people. The crickets are not necessarily crickets, but obstacles one faces in new situations. Likewise, the seagulls are not necessarily seagulls, but rather solutions to life's struggles.

There will be three main sections in *Miracle of the Gulls*. The first section is about arrival and establishing a community. The second section is about tension and struggle. The third section is about resolution.

In creating *Miracle of the Gulls*, I will strive to create a sense of time progression, as in a day or a year. Metaphorically, this piece is a timeline of struggle to success. This piece will be approximately twelve minutes long.

The Choreographic Process

The choreographic process for *Miracle of the Gulls* will begin with different improvisational scores. For example, one score will be based on the idea of arrival. I will start with questions: How do we arrive some place new? Upon arrival do we begin to familiarize ourselves right away or does it take us time to warm up to a new environment? What kind of feelings do we have inside when we arrive someplace new? Using questions such as these, my dancers and I will work with both literal and abstract movement to create phrases.

Another choreographic process I will incorporate is having my dancers free-write for ten minutes about the idea of building—either physical, i.e., road construction, or intangible, i.e., interpersonal relationships. We will then read through the free-writes and I will select words that might easily transfer into movement. The words will most likely be verbs or adjectives, giving us specific actions or qualitative efforts as motivation for movement. Using such words, the dancers and I will again build movement phrases.

Part of *Miracle of the Gulls* is about struggle. I am interested in struggle for the individual, between a pair and in a big group. Through partner improvisation we will experiment with the idea of struggle in different groupings and partnering patterns.

Because dance, specifically square dance, was a past time of the pioneers, I plan to incorporate elements of square dance for movement ideas, formations and spatial patterns. I will explore this idea as a structural through line for the piece—something that keeps reappearing and ties it all together.

Sound

My choreographic process for *Miracle of the Gulls* will start with creating movement in silence and not to or with music, though I do have music in mind for the piece. The music I am considering is from the CD, *Heartland: An Appalachian Anthology*, and from George Winston's *Autumn*. I am thinking of using this music for two of the three sections of *Miracle of the Gulls* and then having a contrasting silence for the remaining section. I will experiment with having recorded text played near the end of the piece, providing insight into the story.

Costuming

Costumes for *Miracle of the Gulls* will be simple and not literal. Each group will be dressed in different colors and layers of earth tones. Because the seagulls could

represent more pioneers, or help of some kind, the pioneer and seagull groups will be dressed in similar tones. The costumes of the crickets will be a dramatically different shade of red. By the end of the piece, there will be a transformation so that those remaining on stage will be dressed in white.

Challenges

One challenge I face for *Miracle of the Gulls* is creating movement that shows the essence of the story rather than being too literal. Also, *Miracle of the Gulls* has the potential to be an evening length piece. Thus, my challenge is to not use too many ideas, but make the piece succinct, logical and organic.

Chair Dance

My second thesis piece is currently untitled, but because chairs will be a major incorporation I will refer to it as *Chair Dance*. For *Chair Dance* I am interested in a different approach to the creative process. Over the past two years, I have been exposed to different choreographic techniques using voice and written text as an impetus for finding movement. While initially challenging my comfort zone, this exploration has provided a surprisingly rewarding resource for the development of interesting movement material. I have had exposure to methods of voice and text from past University of Hawai'i M.F.A. candidate Nicole Pouliot and at the Bates Dance Festival in Lewiston, Maine, in Jane Comfort's text and movement choreography class. My goal for incorporating methods of voice and text for the creation of *Chair Dance* is to create a piece of choreography that is physically and qualitatively different from *Miracle of the Gulls*.

The concept of *Chair Dance* is based on the element of time: fast, slow, waiting, hurrying, etc. This piece will be pedestrian-based and will challenge what audiences

generally describe as dance. It will be light-hearted and comedic. Props will be used, mainly chairs with and without wheels.

Chair Dance will have two sections and will feature five dancers. The first section will incorporate chairs without wheels. This first section will also be where most of the vocal text will be included. In the second section, the dancing will incorporate chairs with wheels. The entire piece will be approximately five to seven minutes in length.

The Choreographic Process

In rehearsals for *Chair Dance* I will play different theatre/vocal games with my dancers as part of our warm-up, getting them accustomed to using their voices. We will also experiment with rhythm exercises. For example, there is an exercise where one person starts a beat, with their voice or using their body, and then another person adds a beat on top of that and so on, until everyone is involved in making the music. I will also do similar improvisational exercises as I am planning for *Miracle of the Gulls*.

For *Chair Dance* I am also interested in using retrograde as a choreographic tool. Retrograde is a means of theme and variation that can be aesthetically interesting. I want to see if retrograding movement at different tempos can portray the idea of time traveling backwards.

For *Chair Dance* I want to spend time in each rehearsal experimenting with various tempos. One example might be some dancers moving at an extremely fast speed while others move as slowly as possible.

Sound

I will begin creating the movement of *Chair Dance* to music by Pete Fountain. I want this piece to be energetic and entertaining. Pete Fountain's music suits these ideas.

Costuming

Some ideas I have for costuming *Chair Dance* are old-fashioned secretarial-wear or possibly Catholic school uniforms. I am interested in people's personalities being more obvious in this piece and feel that costumes can add to that idea.

Challenges

A challenge I face with *Chair Dance* is I am not exactly sure where I want it to go. I need to figure this out as soon as possible and then guide my choreographic decisions to a clear ending.

Solo

I have asked M.F.A. candidate Beth Elliott to create a solo for me to perform in the May concert. The concept she has chosen to create the solo around is about leaving something behind and moving forward. Currently the piece has no title. Elliott's husband, Jay Elliott, will be creating an original piece of guitar music that he will perform and record for the dance.

Rehearsals

For me, the early stages of choreography are very experimental. I want to try many approaches for each idea to see what works best. It is easy to create lots of material. The challenge is to pick the best ideas and then organize them in a way that will lead to a "natural" ending. Throughout my creative process, I will continually fall back on the classic modern dance fundamentals—time, space, shape and energy—as means of movement manipulation to see how they can affect the dynamics and interest of my choreography.

I will meet with each group of dancers weekly for two hours. As time for the concert gets closer we will meet more often if needed.

The Concert

With the aid of the Senior B.F.A. students, who will also be contributing work to the Spring Footholds concert, all the elements necessary for a successful Footholds production will be organized. In January we will have a meeting to determine the logistics of leadership and to set a schedule of events that need to happen in preparation for our concert: laying the marley, hanging the lights, getting the press release out, etc. I will give a copy of our schedule and who will be in charge of the individual parts to my thesis committee for their input.

Project Timeline:

Monday November 13, 2005: Give revised thesis proposal to thesis committee: Gregg Lizenbery, Peggy Gaither Adams and Betsy Fisher.

Friday December 2, 2005 (5:30 PM TDB): 1st faculty showing of significant sections of both pieces.

Friday February 10, 2005 (5:30 PM TDB): 2nd faculty showing of works completed.

Friday April 14, 2005 (5:30 PM TDB): 3rd and final faculty showing of revised completed pieces.

May 3rd – 7th: Spring Footholds

Wednesday May 3, 2005: Submission of first draft of written work

(November 24, 2006): Deadline for submission of video and written document to graduate division for graduation in December 2006.

Budget:

UH funds: \$500.00

-Costumes

-Chairs

-Miscellaneous necessary items

CHAPTER II. THESIS REFLECTION, 2006

In May 2006, the choreographic requirements for my Masters of Fine Arts degree were completed at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. In Spring Footholds, the student choreography showcase, I contributed two newly choreographed compositions and performed a solo created by M.F.A. candidate Beth Elliott. This chapter is a reflection of my creative process for my thesis choreography: the main things I learned, challenges I encountered, how I dealt with the challenges, my solo experience with M.F.A. candidate Beth Elliott, and what this thesis work will lead me to next.

Miracle of the Gulls

It was a pioneer narrative I often heard as I was growing up that inspired the first of my two thesis pieces, and the title, *Miracle of the Gulls*. This narrative is about pioneers that had settled and planted crops in a new land. Soon thereafter, swarms of crickets came and began eating their crops. The pioneers tried to rid the land of the crickets through prayer, with fire, drowning with water, and other methods, but nothing worked. Finally, when it seemed that all hope was lost, out of the sky descended thousands of seagulls. The seagulls ate the crickets and saved the pioneers' crops. The pioneers believed the seagulls were a miracle from God.

My original goal for the choreography of *Miracle of the Gulls* was to create a piece that captured the essence of the story. For me, the essence of the story is establishment of community, challenges or obstacles interfering with that community and then overcoming those challenges or obstacles. I used these ideas as the foundation for the structure, i.e., ideas for the beginning, middle and end, and also as inspiration for

movement choices. I also employed several improvisational scores (see thesis proposal) to generate movement, then, overtime, pieced the dance together.

For *Miracle of the Gulls*, I had three groups of four dancers. While I categorized each group, one group as pioneers, one group as crickets and one group as seagulls, and I drew movement ideas from these characters, I was not being completely literal about their identities, especially the crickets and seagulls. I wanted my audience to draw their own conclusions and make their own associations about the groups they were seeing. For example, the pioneers could be a representation of any group of people establishing a community, the crickets represented any number of challenges or obstacles that disturb life, and the seagulls represented the help we receive in overcoming challenges, from our own efforts, the help of others, from God, etc.

During fall semester I had rehearsals with my dancers one day a week for two hours, mainly working on sections one and two of *Miracle of the Gulls*. These two sections were made mostly of the pioneer and cricket groups. I began rehearsal on the third and final section at the beginning of spring semester and the seagull group was added to the rehearsal process. Second semester I held a few extra rehearsals when necessary, but for the majority of the time we practiced for two hours once a week.

From the beginning, I had a very clear structure in mind for *Miracle of the Gulls*. My structural idea stayed the same throughout the process.

For costuming *Miracle of the Gulls*, I consulted with Sandra Finney, a University of Hawai'i theatre professor and costume designer, and Hannah Schauer, the costume shop manager. It was helpful to learn from experienced costume designers about construction, look and color.

Lighting

I had ideas of what I wanted from the start for the lighting design of *Miracle of the Gulls*. To reveal my idea of the passing of time, i.e., a day or a year, lighting designer Justin DeLand, created a sunrise/sunset effect for the opening of the piece, a night effect as the struggle section commenced, and then a sunrise/sunset effect again for the resolution and end of the piece. In between there were different gradations of light building and diminishing to enhance what was happening on stage.

More Than Just Sitting

With the incorporation of chairs in mind, I finally settled on the title, *More Than Just Sitting*, for my second piece of choreography. While I had a few ideas for movement and intent, *More Than Just Sitting* began more structurally open-ended than *Miracle of the Gulls*. At the beginning of the creative process for *More Than Just Sitting*, I knew four things: (1) I wanted the movement to be physically and qualitatively different than *Miracle of the Gulls*. (2) I wanted to use vocal and written text as an impetus for finding movement. (3) I wanted to incorporate pedestrian movement and some kind of vocal sound in the piece. (4) I wanted to play with the modern dance element of time, i.e., extreme tempo changes.

Because I did not know what I wanted the structure to be, a lot more time was spent in the experimental stages for *More Than Just Sitting* than for *Miracle of the Gulls*. The cast and I created many small movement segments for potential inclusion in the piece. A section was created where the dancers were sitting on the floor and a vocal rhythm was built using voice and body. A section was created that had a vocal conversation happening between the dancers. Another section used chairs. Big dancing

phrases were built based on words and ideas inspired by a free-write assignment I gave my dancers. I asked my dancers to retrograde these phrases and then we explored linking the phrases. I also experimented with varying and embellishing children's games including: musical chairs, rock-paper-scissors, odd man out and races to see who could walk fastest.

As time passed I knew I needed to settle on something and, surprisingly, the chair section appeared most interesting and filled with potential. From here on, I began to formulate choreography that incorporated the chairs. I decided to use chairs without wheels in the first section and then surprise the audience in the second section with dancers wheeling and twirling around the stage on chairs with wheels.

While *More Than Just Sitting* included elements of my original ideas, the piece evolved into something I had not planned, but something I was just as happy about. It was a good choreographic experience to allow an idea to change over time—letting go of the original design and developing what seemed a stronger concept. For *More Than Just Sitting*, rehearsals were also held once a week for two hours, throughout the year.

Lighting

Lighting design was not challenging for *More Than Just Sitting* because this was a bright and energetic dance and I wanted the lighting to reflect that. To my satisfaction the lighting designer let the lights start low and then the brightness grew and grew matching the energy of the dance.

Committee Change

Towards the end of spring 2006 I realized I needed to make a change in my thesis committee. Due to a family concern, committee member Professor Peggy Gaither Adams

ended up taking a leave of absence during the remainder of my thesis work. With this in mind, I asked Professor Judy Van Zile if she would be willing to take Professor Gaither Adams' place on my committee. Professor Van Zile was willing, and my thesis work continued with no interruptions. Professor Gaither Adams was able to participate through the oral defense of my thesis concert. After that, Professor Van Zile stepped in to facilitate finalizing this written document.

Challenges

With every big task there are always challenges that must be surmounted. These are the main ones I encountered through the process of creating my thesis work, how I dealt with them, and what I learned.

1. Casting Change

In the fall, about mid-semester, I was faced with the challenge of a casting change for *Miracle of the Gulls*. One dancer had to drop out due to illness and another dancer became injured and could no longer actively participate in the rehearsal process. While challenging, it was a professionally realistic experience. As a director, thinking wisely and acting in a timely manner, in moments such as this, can be essential to the survival of a project. It was difficult to judge whether or not this dancer would recover from her injury quickly, therefore I allowed the injured dancer to keep her role. She came to rehearsals and watched, but I soon realized this situation was not the best option. I finally decided the best thing to do would be to give the role to someone else. Telling this to the dancer was not pleasant, but it was necessary. Dealing with this kind of situation is on a case-by-case scenario, but should this occur again, I would get a replacement sooner.

2. Costuming *Miracle of the Gulls*

Part of costuming *Miracle of the Gulls* involved dyeing white leotards. My challenge was I did not know exactly how I wanted the colors to look or how they would actually look after the dyeing process. Nevertheless, the leotards were dyed and unfortunately I did not approve of the result. This was stressful to the person who dyed the leotards because the dyeing process had taken many hours. It was stressful for me because I had to find a solution. Thankfully, with the help of my sister, an avid tie dyer, I was able to re-dye the leotards successfully.

I had a good working relationship with the person who had initially dyed the leotards, so it all worked out happily in the end, but something I learned is that costuming is not always a quick or easy process. Next time I will put my costumes together sooner to allow more time for mistakes or challenges.

Also, concerning costumes for *Miracle of the Gulls*, I ended up discarding my original idea of having a transformation occur, so that all dancers on stage at the end would be in white costumes. As time passed I felt this idea was not important to the overall presentation.

3. Choreographic Process

As I mentioned in my thesis proposal, one challenge in the creative process for *Miracle of the Gulls* was capturing the essence of the story rather than being too literal. I approached this challenge by questioning what the core of the story really was, working movement literally to abstraction, and just allowing ideas to develop over time. For questioning what the core of the story really was, via a suggestion from Professor Gaither Adams, I thought about one or two words that might be the essence of each section. For

example, the first section was about establishing and building, the second section was about conflict and struggle and the final section was about resolve. In terms of working a movement from literal to abstraction, I would take a literal action like digging in a field and then have the dancers vary it through the use of time, space, shape or energy. For example making a small gesture big, changing the tempo or energy of a literal gesture, using the whole body to do the action, etc.

Having the narrative was helpful because I knew where I wanted the piece to end, but it was a challenge to turn the narrative into a more qualitative journey, where the story was shown through effort qualities in the dancing, rather than pantomimic actions. In the end, even though it was a struggle, I'm glad I adhered to my idea of creating a dance based on a narrative. I feel like I grew a lot from staying with the idea and I was happy with the finished product. I am interested in narratives as impetus for choreography and would like to continue investigation and practice in this area.

4. Sound

Midway through the rehearsal process of *Miracle of the Gulls*, and with feedback from my thesis committee, I decided the music I had selected for the piece should be changed. It was a challenge to find different music that completely satisfied what I felt each section required, but via the library and Professor Betsy Fisher's composition class, which I observed over spring semester, I found music that satisfied my ideas. With the help of a friend, the music was mixed to my liking.

I decided to disregard my original idea of having recorded text played towards the end of *Miracle of the Gulls*. As I experimented with recorded text it seemed more of a distraction than a compliment to the dance.

5. Chairs With Wheels

After we had been working with chairs on wheels for a while, for *More Than Just Sitting*, I remembered the wings of the proscenium stage. We had been practicing with the chairs in the spacious dance building and I was concerned about the many entrances and exits that we had set with the chairs on wheels. I wondered if they would be possible considering Earle Ernest Lab theatre's narrow stage wings. With this in mind, I requested a few rehearsals in the theatre before the tech rehearsal began and discovered, fortunately, that no major changes were required.

Joanna Mendl Shaw, a professor of dance composition at Julliard said, "Every piece is site specific, even on a proscenium stage." With this simple yet profound thought in mind and the experience of working with chairs on wheels, in future choreography I will be more mindful of performance space and how it might affect my use of props.

6. Costuming for *More Than Just Sitting*

Over Christmas break, with images of Catholic school uniforms or secretary outfits in mind, for *More Than Just Sitting*, I searched through the University of Hawai'i's costume shop. Not finding anything satisfactory, I visited the Diamond Head Theatre costume shop. Still not finding costumes I liked, I decided to look for a new idea. Back in the UH costume shop I found some fun, red, black and silver 1940's blouses. After more time spent searching to complete the costume, I found online, complementary pinstriped pants and red gloves to accent the costume. Time was going quickly and I felt grateful that the costuming finally worked out for *More Than Just Sitting*. I again realized that the sooner costumes are complete, the better.

What I Learned in My Process

1. Use Time Wisely

Starting early helped me tremendously throughout my creative process. I began the creative process/rehearsals with my dancers right away in the fall in preparation for a spring concert. This allowed my ideas almost eight months to develop and solidify before performance. Starting early allowed me time to experiment with different approaches before I needed to settle on a particular performance technique. This was especially beneficial for *More Than Just Sitting*.

I had heard from a friend about a poet who got up every morning at five a.m. to write for an hour. Sometimes he would have no new ideas or developments, however he would get up each day and work just the same. He found that as he kept this habit consistently, eventually a new idea would come and clarify or develop his work. He said all those hours of consistent day-to-day work were worth the insights that eventually came, whether the insights were big or small. In my experience, this is what it takes to be successful: consistent time spent working on a project, even when it is painful or boring, eventually “a-hah” moments do come that make the time well spent.

When I choreograph, besides working with my dancers, I spend many hours alone working on movement ideas, writing and thinking about where my work is and where I want it to go. I tried to do what the poet did and work as consistently day to day as possible. While I took breaks, I tried not to let too much time go by, so as not to “lose my train of thought.” In my opinion, this consistency furthered the development of my

choreography in ways that might not have happened had I not allowed substantial time for development.

Scheduling rehearsals early in my process was also helpful. There were faculty and guest artist rehearsals occurring fall and spring so I regularly communicated with faculty to facilitate studio usage. Pre-planning made the creative process and concert preparation a more enjoyable experience.

2. Get Feedback

Feedback is indispensable. After working on dances for days and months at a time, it is easy to feel numb and glaze over problem areas. “Outside eyes” allowed me to see if what I wanted people to see was really happening.

Feedback from my thesis committee was especially valuable. Three ways they guided me were most beneficial. One directive they gave me was to vocally clarify my ideas. While the quote, “I can’t say it and that is why I dance it,” is sentimental, in terms of being a choreographer it almost seems a “cop-out”. While it was challenging to vocally clarify or defend my work I discovered it was helpful to verbally articulate what I intended for my dance. Sometimes I’d stammer as I’d try to explain what I was doing or in what direction I wanted my pieces to head, but having to vocally clarify made me realize what decisions I had made and what choreographic decisions I still needed to make.

The second valuable suggestion made by my thesis committee was at my second faculty showing. After viewing my two pieces of choreography, which had no endings at the time, the faculty suggested I create my endings as soon as possible. They said knowing how I wanted my dances to end might help me build them more logically. Over

Christmas vacation, I followed my committee's advice and created endings for my two dances. While the endings still changed somewhat over time, having an ending in mind did help me build my work more logically.

A third idea I applied to my rehearsal process, I gained from Professor Betsy Fisher. She said as a choreographer she tends to not change movement problems right away. She said in her experience as she allows awkward choreographic moments to stay uncomfortable for a while, often over time they fix themselves either by the dancers coming to a more natural solution in their practicing, or by insight from the choreographer from viewing the moment over and over again. I employed this idea in my creative process and it proved useful. Quite often, awkward areas eventually resolved themselves by insight from the dancers or myself and if awkward areas did not naturally change over time, I knew I needed to take time to work them out.

Going

The solo created on me by Beth Elliott was eventually titled *Going*. I enjoyed the process of working with M.F.A. candidate Beth Elliott. It was interesting and insightful to be a part of her creative process and having a solo created on me was a new experience.

Working with Elliott was a nice break because I did not have to be in charge. The movement material was Elliott's, though she allowed me to personalize it by doing the movement in ways that worked and felt best on my body. Her initial idea of leaving something behind and moving forward remained a choreographic theme throughout the process. Similar to my own process with *Miracle of the Gulls*, there were moments of

struggle in showing the essence of the choreographic intent, but with work and feedback the piece found a life of its own.

Elliott took care of everything from the costuming to the music. She was reliable and committed to creating a worthwhile piece. I enjoyed working with her.

What I Would Do Differently

If I were to do anything differently I would hold more rehearsals. Finding a rehearsal schedule with a big cast amidst other rehearsals, jobs and homework was not easy. Once a week for two hours was sufficient, but especially for *Miracle of the Gulls*, twice a week for an hour and a half or two hours would have been ideal.

Also, the next time I choreograph, I will try to pull costumes together as early in the creative process as I can. This way I can change my mind or work through any problems I encounter sooner rather than later.

What Next

The process of my thesis work was invaluable. While studying choreography through books, classes, rehearsals, performance and workshops is worthwhile and important, in my opinion, a major part of the learning and growing cannot happen anywhere except in the actual practice of choreography and directing rehearsals. This process of working on two pieces of choreography for eight months gave me enormous insight into what is involved in the choreographic process.

I presently teach modern dance at Sacred Hearts Academy and dance to children at The Movement Center in Kaimuki. I plan to try to find work in other venues, hopefully that will include higher education as well. I plan to continue my choreographic studies, create new work and be an advocate for dance.

I am grateful to those I worked with in my creative process because without everyone involved I could not have done it. It truly was a group project.

APPENDIX A. EMERGING ELEMENTS CONCERT POSTER



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA
Kennedy Theatre

PRIMETIME
EARLE ERNST LAB THEATRE
2005-2006 SEASON

SPRING FOOthOLDS:
Emerging Elements
DANCE CONCERT

*MFA Dance candidate Rosie Summers,
BFA Dance candidates Morgan Cloud, Kiplinn Sagmiller, Marissa Yogi
and other dancers premiere new choreography.
Performed by UH dance students!*

**May 3, 4, 5*, 6 at 8pm,
May 7 at 2pm** **post-show rap*

TICKETS ON SALE MAY 1

\$3 UHM STUDENTS W/VALIDATED Spring 06 UHM ID

\$10 REGULAR. \$9 SENIORS, MILITARY, UH FACULTY/STAFF, STUDENTS

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CALL THE KENNEDY THEATRE BOX OFFICE 956-7655 (VOICE/TEXT)
www.hawaii.edu/kennedy

Production Staff

Lighting Designer: Justin DeLand
 Stage Manager: Amy Fedmond
 Assistant Stage Manager: Stan Egi
 Faculty Advisors: Peggy Galther Adams, Gregg Lizenbery, Betsy Fisher,
 Daniel J. Anteau, Sandra Finney
 Costume Consultant: Hannah Schauer Gali
 Light Board Operator: Chang Wang
 Sound Board Operator: Alvin Chan
 Costume Shop Manager: Hannah Schauer Gali
 Lab Theatre Costume Coordinator: Kaitay Graves
 Costume Construction Crew: Dawn Baxter, Andrea Eordmans, Katherine Greenway,
 Katy Mammel, Angela Price, and students from THEA 221
 Wardrobe Supervisor: Katherine Teodora
 Lab Theatre Coordinator: Danna Banks
 Staff Technical Director: Daniel J. Anteau
 Facilities Coordinator: Gerald R. Kawasaka
 Lab Theatre Technical Coordinator: Dean Bellin
 Scene Shop Crew: Dean Bellin, Nina Buck, Justin DeLand, Josh Greenspoon, Ulu Mills,
 Daniel Oshimura, Daphne Velazquez, Robert Wyllie, Morgan Cloud, Todd Okubo

Front of House Staff

Staff Theatre Manager: Marty Myers
 Box Office Supervisor: Nicole Tessler
 Box Office Staff: Kelsie Pascual, Danielle Williams, Robert Wyllie, Jessica Holman
 Publicity Director: Jessica L. Jacob
 Publicity Assistant: Ashley Logan, Marcus A. Leo
 Photographer and Graphic Designer: Karis Lo
 Kennedy Theatre House Manager: Frank Episate
 Lab Theatre House Managers: Mitch Mattson, Jonathan Cabrera
 Department Office Staff: Tara Martin, Lani Ann Chan
 Department Chair: Gregg Lizenbery

Front of House Information

There will be a post-show discussion immediately following the Friday, May 5 performance.

For large print programs, Assistive Listening devices, or any other accessibility requests, please contact the House Manager or call the Kennedy Theatre Box Office at 558-7655 (voice/text).

Please silence all pagers, phones and digital watches. No photography, video, or audio recording is permitted.

Please refrain from eating, drinking or smoking in the theatre.

Please do not smoke within twenty feet of any building on campus.

Campus Security escorts are available twenty-four hours a day between any two points on campus. See the House Manager for details.

The UH ticket program is supported in part by a grant from the Student Activities and Program Fee Board (www.hawaii.edu/sapfb)

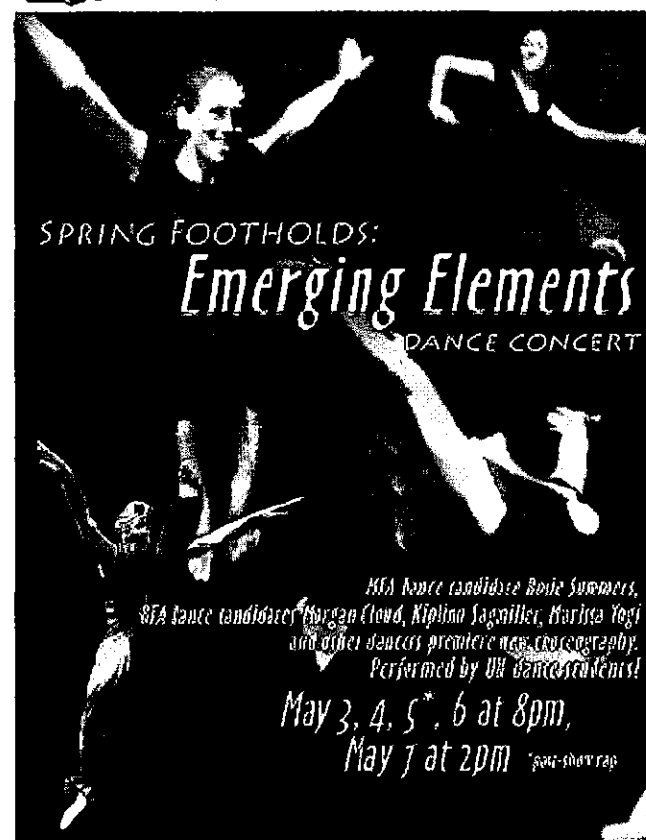
Please visit us on the web at www.hawaii.edu/kennedy/



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Kennedy Theatre

PRIMETIME
 EARLE ERNST LAB THEATRE
 2005-2006 SEASON



Department of Theatre and Dance College of Arts and Humanities

More Than Just Sitting (Premiere)

Choreographer: Rosemary Summers
 Composers: Charles Dant, Pete Fountain, Bert Kaempfert,
 and Herbert Rehbein
 Dancers: Beth McKee Elliott, Marisol Garcia, Becky Helfert,
 Alexandra Holden, Carolyn Will

The Flower That Frowns (Premiere)

Choreographer: Marissa Yogi
 Composer: John Schneider and Amy Shulman
 Dancers: Mayuko Ayabe, Lindsay Jarvis, Jacqueline Nil,
 Kiplinn Sagniller, Janelle Senqui, Shannon Yamamoto



Ma Vie (Premiere)

Dancer and Choreographer: Arturo C. Mariano
 Composer: Zazie

Introductions (Premiere)

Choreographer: Morgan Cloud
 Sound Score Editor: Morgan Cloud
 Dancers: Chanell Green, Allison Lee, Arturo C. Mariano,
 Jacqueline Nil, Kiplinn Sagniller

It's Still Rock 'n Roll to Me (Premiere)

Choreographers: Beth McKee Elliott and Maryann L. Peterson
 Composer: Billy Joel
 Dancers: Travers King, Maryann L. Peterson

INTERMISSION

Miracle of the Gulls (Premiere)

Choreographer: Rosemary Summers
 Composers: Edgar Meyer, Pat Metheny
 Dancers: Mayuko Ayabe, Sharon Adams Bott, Mikaela Brady,
 Sarah Hartley, Alexandra Holden, Maya Iida, Travers King,
 Allison Lee, Arturo C. Mariano, Maryann L. Peterson,
 Jennifer Sherburn, Shannon Yamamoto
 Inspired by an account of the early pioneers of the Great Salt Lake.

Study (Premiere)

Choreographer and Dancer: Morgan Cloud
 Speakers: Various Guests

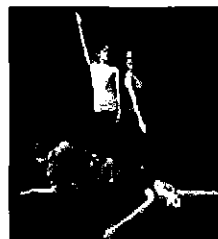
Six years, thousands of dollars, two injuries, and a room of paper... for what?

Going (Premiere)

Choreographer: Beth McKee Elliott
 Composer: Jay Elliott
 Dancer: Rosemary Summers

Taking Shape (Premiere)

Choreographer: Kiplinn Sagniller
 Composer: Kitara
 Dancers: Mayuko Ayabe, Morgan Cloud, Lindsay Jarvis,
 Allison Lee, Arturo C. Mariano, Jacqueline Nil



Rosemary Summers' work in this concert is in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Fine Arts degree in Dance.

The choreography of Morgan Cloud, Kiplinn Sagniller, and Marissa Yogi is in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance.

APPENDIX C: CONCERT REVIEW

Honolulu Advertiser, The (HI)

May 5, 2006

Section: Island Life

Page: 6E

Author: CAROL EGAN

Like choice wines, exceptional classes in university dance programs seem to occur in cycles. That being said, this year's group of students performing in the Spring Footholds Dance Concert at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa is one of the best vintages in recent years.

A good illustration of their collective gifts can be seen in Morgan Cloud's "Introductions." The piece uses five dancers' individual strengths and idiosyncrasies to exhibit the ensemble's formidable talent. Danced to a score also created by Cloud, the voices of the choreographer and his cast tell us about each of the dancers in turn. Amazingly, the movements, though abstract, never overpower the narration, and vice versa.

Although each of the 10 dances on the program has merit, several are particularly memorable. Kiplinn Sagmiller's "Taking Shape," danced to a dynamic percussion score by the Japanese composer Kitaro, shapes the space with clean-cut gestures and strong, sharp leg extensions and virtuosic balances. Dressed in tri-colored bodysuits, the six dancers execute the choreography with elegance and precision.

Beth McKee Elliott's solo for Rosemary Summers, "Going," takes advantage of the dancer's long-limbed sinuous grace. Summers herself produced the program's largest group work, "Miracle of the Gulls," which features 12 dancers divided into three groups. The non-narrative dance creates an atmosphere of mystery and suspense. A world inhabited by gentle creatures is invaded by an aggressive tribe, though the conflict is resolved. The aggressors are defeated and peace reigns once more.

Thanks to Summers' effective delineation of the groups through differentiated thematic material and costuming, this piece creates an alien world, but one we can somehow recognize and empathize with.

The gifted Cloud contributes another crowd-pleaser with his "Study." Danced by himself with a reader seated on-stage (on this occasion, Chansri Green), it is a dance about learning the lingo of Laban Movement Analysis, a system and language developed by dance theorist Rudolf von Laban in the 1940s to record body movement. Cloud demonstrates through dance movements the terminology: jab, flow, flick, etc. As in his group work, Cloud takes the material freshest in his mind and molds it into a little piece of art.

Rosemary Summers' opening dance, "More Than Just Sitting," is another crowd-pleaser. Five dancers manipulate chairs in myriad ways. The second half of the dance is done almost exclusively seated or lying on rolling chairs. Sliding across the stage, joining hands to twirl a partner are just a few of the inventive moves Summers created for her adroit, gutsy dancers.

Additional works include a virtuosic solo by Arturo C. Mariano; Beth McKee Elliott and Maryann L. Peterson's tap duet, deftly performed by Peterson and Travers King; and Marissa Yogi's excellent sextet, "The Flower That Frowns."

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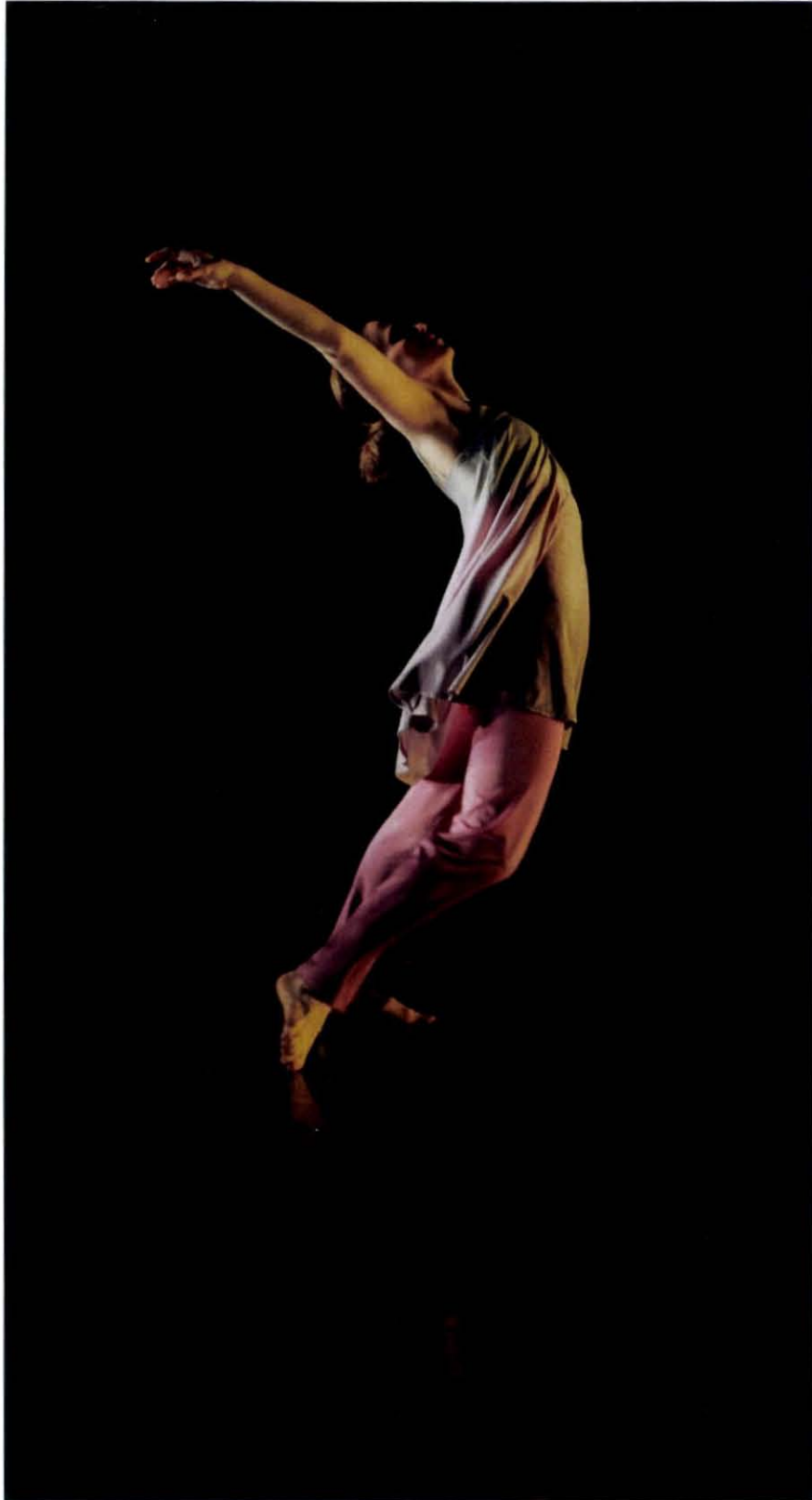
MIRACLE OF THE GULLS
(Taken by: Beth Elliott)



MORE THAN JUST SITTING
(Taken by: Stephan Sagmiller)



MORE THAN JUST SITTING
(Taken by: Stephan Sagmiller)



GOING
(Taken by: Steve Coy)