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**UCSB DEPARTMENT OF THEATER / DANCE PRESENTS THE FALL DANCE CONCERT
AXIOM, UNDER THE CONCERT DIRECTION OF CHRISTINA MCCARTHY**

Date: 11/25/2014

Santa Barbara, CA – UC Santa Barbara Dance Department presents *Axiom*, a collection of faculty and senior BFA student choreography December 12 and 13 at 8pm and December 13 at 2pm. This year's offerings include works by students Gianna Burright, Maura Harris, Monica Moe Mulvany and Kalalni Hicks along with a remounting of faculty member Jerry Pearson's "Artifice" and a new work by faculty member Christina McCarthy.

Each year, the student work is surprising and different, a true reflection of their voices as artists. In particular this year, the student choreographers have tapped into the natural gifts of the dancers in their casts and capitalized on their strengths while pushing them to the next level of performance.

Gianna Burright came to UCSB with some completed choreographic works under her belt before beginning her training in composition in the Dance Program. Her choreography reflects her experience with subtlety and nuance. Her vision for her new piece, "two universes exactly alike" is completely realized, as she intentionally built her dance to interface with complicated lighting cues, creating a light and dark heartbeat to the piece. As the lights come up, we see her dancers barely moving in a corner of a roped off environment that evokes a mini world. As the lights pulse on and off the dancers appear in other areas within their confined space, their movement constricted in relationship to the restriction of the space they are confined to. As she explores the concept of how we confine ourselves in life and what happens if we allow ourselves to look beyond our habitual rituals, she has built a quietly intense piece that lives in a world of poetic abstraction about the dichotomy of the world as we see it and what it could be.

Monica Moe Mulvany began work on her piece with the acknowledgement that we live in a world that is both deeply introspective and spiritual, but also filled with the

distracting cacophony of social media and unending connectivity. Her title, a nonsense word meant to evoke the relentless stream of both information and bytes of data, “nibuxqniwnykcqbt” juxtaposes highly decorated and elaborate and detailed movement with moments of searching stillness. The dancers performances move in and out of introspection, truly seeing, and fanatical flailing and undulating movements. Monica does not offer a solution to the conundrum of the duality she is exploring, but places the concepts side by side to reveal what draws us, the noise or the silence.

Maura Harris wanted to bring the audience to a place of strange beauty in her piece entitled, “progress in spirals”. She was interested in focusing on coming to terms with the unexpected turns in our dream lives and how we find acceptance and even celebration in the oddness and unpredictability of life. She has created an illogical and sweetly bizarre movement structure that utilizes both pedestrian gestures and abstract movements that feel almost as familiar as the pedestrian gestures. As the dancers transition through the various sections of the piece we feel that we almost know the story, but the point of the piece is to continue to disarm the audience of their expectations and let them enjoy the impressionistic visions that flow in and out of their consciousness as they watch.

Kalani Hicks, in her new work, “For My Mother” has tapped into the deep and shifting emotions surrounding the break up of her parents. She has transformed emotion to movement, hoping to utilize not the story of the break up as fuel for her dance, but the pure emotions as impetus for movement invention. Her work is a simply beautiful piece of abstract dance. Flowing through the space of the stage as dancers come together, fall away, connect, push away from each other in lush full-bodied motion. Kalani has a great sense of both stage geography and counter-point coupled with a skill for getting emotional and fully invested performances from her dancers. The result is a satisfying journey from the lone dancer backing into the space at the beginning, so aptly evoking loneliness, to the larger dance moments that feel like an embodiment of life at its most epic.

“Artifice”, choreographed by Jerry Pearson in 1999, has been remounted for the Senior Student Company. The piece, first conceived for seven dancers has been expanded to eleven giving the moments of leaping abandon a fantastic power and scope. Based originally on the art of Andy Goldsworthy, whose photographs of sculptures, crafted from all natural materials and often located in the habitat from where the materials originated, and on the concept of the stage as a somewhat artificial terrain, Jerry has collided, through video, dance and arcing elongated branches, nature and the artifice of nature on stage. Elements of the raw and natural coexist with the finicky and carefully crafted to create a dance full of momentum and paradoxically quiet gliding movement.

Christina McCarthy, serving as both concert director and as a choreographer for the concert has created a fun and whimsical work. She began by creating a sound-scape with multiple layers of spoken word, beat boxing and music from the comedian and musical artist Reggie Watts. The dance entitled, “Check My Status”, unfolds in a

stream of consciousness, a bit like a twitter feed as the dancers flow through the unrelated stories and movement ideas inherent in the collage of music and text.

The most striking aspect of the student choreographers' work this year is the highly personalized structures of stage placement and counterpoint they are exploring. They are all breaking the mold on what classical structure could be, taking risks and finding their own way to bring the audience through the arc of their concepts. All their works are intended to be deconstructed abstractions that grew from their source ideas, bringing their dances strongly into the realm of dance as its own language.

UC Santa Barbara Dance Department has enjoyed an amount of growth in both numbers and quality. The concert this year showcases the dancing talent of our students and we have an unprecedented number of highly capable freshman dancers performing. When our student choreographers have such a strong pool of performers to work with, their choreographic work also makes a leap up to a new level. With this winning combination, audiences are sure to fully enjoy "Axiom".

FALL DANCE CONCERT - AXIOM

concert director, Christina McCarthy

Dec 12 - 13 / 8 PM

Dec 13 / 2 PM

UCSB Hatlen Theater

Tickets:

\$17 General Admission

\$13 UCSB Students/Faculty/Staff/Alumni, Senior/Child

www.theaterdance.ucsb.edu

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