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 **vision series, 2004**

 Reply

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Review: Vision Series, 2004 March 13, 2004 8 PM  
Cowell Theater, Fort Mason, SF

Donette Heath, Executive Producer, created the Vision Series in 1999, "to bring together a diverse pool of emerging professional choreographers and their companies, with high school dancers, and present their work in a professional showcase format." On Saturday, February 13, 2004, Heath presented a program of thirteen works, by as many choreographers some advanced, some emerging and some at the start. Over one hundred dancers participated. The California Dance Educators of America partnered the production.

Outstanding on the program were "When the Bough Breaks" by the Adage Repertory Company, Mara Williams, choreographer, "Je Suis, Yo Soy, Toi La," by Independent High School, San Jose and "Be the Steps", by Santa Rosa Jr. College, Carrie Stillman, choreographer. Also notable were "Revealed through Tender Betrayal" Kim T. Davis Dance and "Arresting Passage" Lori Bryhni, Choreographer, by Modesto Jr. College Dance Ensemble.

"When the Bough Breaks" is a wistful study of childhood bonding and the pain of the rejected one. A chorus of women echo and reflect the connection and the isolation, provided contact and amplification of relationship stated by the central trio. Their pale gray costumes, by Debbie McMillin, contrasted with the darkness of the family figures

"Je Suis, You Soy, Toi La," to the spoken recorded text of IndependDance (the company) was skillfully performed and stated the students' feelings about themselves, their future and their dancing. The piece is warm, witty and wonderful. All the dancers moved with excellent technique and projection. Humor, so often absent in dance, was also seen in "Be the Steps, a tour de force of daily routine. Carrie Stillman not only choreographed the lively work, full of quick changes and interpersonal contact, but she also did the costumes and, with Nick Ahumada, the score. "Snooze Button." The set design by Kritoffer Jost leant vitality to the 'ups and downs" of daily life so cleverly portrayed.

Kim T. Davis revealed a talent for layering the group movement in her choreography. She has mastered the art of moving a large group with both rhythmic and spatial variation, so that the stage pictures were always pleasing. Throughout "Revealed through Tender Betrayal", the solo figure, Ms. Davis, was frustrated in her efforts to connect. The continual flow of group movement left her isolated at the end. Ms. Davis has produced a work which has a strong emotional message set in beautiful dance phrases.

Similarly, Lori Bryhni, choreographing for "Off Balance", the Modesto Jr. College Dance Ensemble, produced a dance of search and discovery in "Arresting Passage" notable for long sequences of movement that united the ensemble in its quest. The dark red and brown costumes were by Anne Shano.

Every company in the Vision Series, 2004 deserves applause. "Pushing Me Away" by Thomas Dewey High School was a walk-about jazz number. "Busted Bunker" by David Popalisky and the Santa Clara University Dancers dramatized our current political state of fear and chaos. "Whisper" by Jenice Acosta was a study of voluptuous movement. Also appearing was the Adage Repertory Jr. Company in "Touching Yesterday", A.B. Miller High School in "Veniality", El Molino High School in "The Animals" and Beyer High School in "Connections".

A note about music choices. Since CD and computer sound are so readily available, mot of the choreographers chose to use such selections. Unfortunately, they tend to be similarly scored: the sound becomes monotonous and rhythmically dull. It's time for all the companies to look for other music material as inspiration and accompaniment for dance.

The lighting throughout was excellent, though no program credit is given. Congratulations to Ms. Heath, all who helped and all who participated in Vision Series, 2004. We need more such programs to prove to educators, administrators, politicians and the public that dance and the arts make for strong people and great performers.