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Monday-Friday, March 12-16, 1990

The University of Michigan

Ann Arbor

*Presented by*

University Musical Society  
of  
The University of Michigan

Dance Department of  
The University of Michigan  
School of Music

March 12 — ~~Dana Reitz~~  
March 13 — Leslie Friedman  
March 14 — Peter Sparling  
                  and Robert Small  
March 15 — Bebe Miller  
                  and Company  
March 16 — Joint Performance

In recognition of Ann Arbor as a modern dance center in Michigan and the Midwest, the American Contemporary Dance Festival was conceived to bring together a group of artists carefully selected from the most interesting and stylistically diverse of America's small modern dance companies. We are especially pleased to present the performances of these artists within the context of a week of classes, workshops, and forums, so that they may bring you the full impact of their work.

Welcome to the Festival!



## Schedule of Events

All Technique Classes, Choreography Workshops, and Forums are in the Dance Building.  
 All Performances are in the Power Center for the Performing Arts.  
 Friday Pre-concert Presentation in the Rackham Building.

### Monday, March 12

12:45-2:15 Technique Classes  
 2:30-4:00 Choreography Workshops  
 4:15-5:15 Forum: "Dance Medicine,"  
 Dr. Steven R. Geiringer  
 8:00 Performance: Dana Reitz

### Tuesday, March 13

12:45-2:15 Technique Classes  
 2:30-4:00 Choreography Workshops  
 4:15-5:15 Forum: "Lighting Design for  
 Dance," Richard Nelson  
 8:00 Performance: Leslie Friedman

### Wednesday, March 14

12:45-2:15 Technique Classes  
 2:30-4:00 Choreography Workshops  
 4:15-5:15 Forum: "Dance and Video,"  
 Jessica Fogel, Michael Knight  
 8:00 Performance: Peter Sparling  
 and Robert Small

### Thursday, March 15

12:45-2:15 Technique Classes  
 2:30-4:00 Choreography Workshops  
 4:15-5:15 Forum: "Music for Dance,"  
 David Gregory  
 8:00 Performance: Bebe Miller  
 and Company

### Friday, March 16

12:45-2:15 Technique Classes  
 2:30-4:00 Choreography Workshops  
 4:15-5:15 Dance Writer's Forum  
 7:00-7:45 Pre-concert Presentation  
 "Dance: A Critic's Perspective,"  
 Debra Cash, Dance Critic,  
*Boston Globe*  
 8:00 Joint Performance: Dana Reitz,  
 Leslie Friedman, Robert Small,  
 Peter Sparling, Bebe Miller  
 and Company

Concert Tickets, 764-2538; Classes, Workshops, Forums, 763-5460

## About the Artists

### Dana Reitz

A graduate of the U-M's Dance and Theater program, Dana Reitz has been developing her own style—"a stream of consciousness moving"—since 1973. She has produced many solo, group, and collaborative projects and has performed at festivals and theaters throughout the United States, Europe, and Australia. The importance of the interplay between light and movement has been of primary interest to her in recent years. *Severe Clear* (1985), created with light/space artist James Turrell and dancer Sarah Skaggs, received a "Bessie" New York Dance and Performance Award for choreographic and design collaboration. *Circumstantial Evidence* (1987), a collaboration with lighting designer Jennifer Tipton, won a "Bessie" award in 1987. Ms. Reitz' most recent work, *Suspect Terrain*—a major collaboration with dancers Steve Paxton, Laurie Booth, Polly Motley, lighting designer Jennifer Tipton, and composer/audio designer Hans Peter Kuhn—was commissioned by, and premiered at, the PepsiCo Summerfare Festival in July 1989. Previous works include *Steps*, *Phrase Collection*, *Quintet Project* (premiered at the Festival d'Automne, Paris, 1981), *Field Papers* (premiered at the Brooklyn Academy of Music Next Wave Festival, New York, 1983), and *Solo in Silence*.

Dana Reitz often paints to visualize the phrasing inherent in her work. She has exhibited these pieces as part of group shows at the Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis, and at the Pratt Institute and Paula Cooper Galleries in New York City. She has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, as well as support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, and the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Fund.

### Leslie Friedman

Based in San Francisco, Leslie Friedman has toured extensively in the United States and abroad. In 1983 and 1984, she performed and taught throughout India on a Fulbright Lectureship and was subsequently presented in Sri Lanka, Tunisia, and Egypt in coordination with those countries' national cultural institutions. In 1985, she was the first American dancer or dance company to perform in the Soviet Union with official U.S./U.S.S.R. sponsorship in fourteen years. Her performances of her own works and her lectures on modern dance techniques brought an invitation to teach at The National Theatre Institute of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow. Ms. Friedman made her London debut in 1986, when she performed a concert of original solo works at the Place Theatre and was a guest teacher at the Ballet Rambert School. The year 1986 also marked her debut in China, a three-week tour that included Beijing, Shenyang, and Shanghai, where she performed, choreographed, and taught at various national ballet companies. She was the first American modern dancer to perform in China with official U.S./Chinese sponsorship. Other tours and residencies have taken her to Spain and Japan.

Trained in the Alvin Ailey, Martha Graham, and Merce Cunningham Schools, Leslie Friedman attended Vassar College and has her Ph.D. in History from Stanford University. She taught British history at Stanford, Vassar, and Case Western Reserve before devoting her career completely to choreographing and performing her own works. Her creative repertoire includes premières to new music by American composers, such as John Cage and John Felder, jazz works by Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith, and classical works to music by Mozart, Bach, and Bartók.



## Peter Sparling

Peter Sparling, Associate Professor of Dance and Chairman of the Dance Department at The University of Michigan, has danced with the José Limon Company and was a principal dancer of the Martha Graham Dance Company from 1973 to 1987. He has toured extensively, including residencies as teacher, performer, and choreographer throughout the United States and in Melbourne, Lisbon, Taiwan, and Tel Aviv. He also founded and was artistic director of his two companies, Solo Flight and the Peter Sparling Dance Company, in New York City. He has held appointments at New York's Juilliard School and residencies as teacher, performer, and choreographer at numerous American universities, Portugal's Ballet Gulbenkian in Lisbon, ABT (American Ballet Theater) II, and Taiwan's Cloud Gate Dance Theatre. During the 1983-84 season, he was company teacher for the London Contemporary Dance Theater and guest lecturer at the Laban Institute for Movement Studies.

Since coming to The University of Michigan, Peter Sparling has been a major force in widening the community's interest in dance. As a founding member and co-director in 1984 of the U-M's professional dance company, Ann Arbor Dance Works, he balances his time between his commitment to the students and choreographing and performing for Ann Arbor Dance Works and other companies. His participation as artistic director and performer in this American Contemporary Dance Festival is indicative of his love for, and commitment to, his art.

A native of Michigan (he grew up in Detroit and Plymouth), Mr. Sparling received his first dance training while a scholarship violinist at the Interlochen Arts Academy. He has been a recipient of grants and fellowships from the Rackham School for Graduate Studies, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Michigan Council for the Arts, and last year was a recipient of the 1989 Michigan Arts Award by the Arts Foundation of Michigan.

## Robert Small

Dancer, choreographer, and teacher Robert Small has toured nationally and internationally since 1971. From 1971 to 1979 he performed worldwide with the Murray Louis Dance Company and appeared with Rudolf Nureyev on Broadway and in London and Paris. Since 1976, he has choreographed more than forty works that have been presented throughout the United States and, since 1983, on seven European tours of his acclaimed solo program, ROBERT SMALL/Solo Dance Artist. Mr. Small has assembled a repertoire that features pure movement dances as well as dramatic theater works, with sound accompaniment including classical, electronic, jazz, and originally written scores.

Robert Small received a Bachelor of Arts degree from U.C.L.A. and is a recipient of five Choreography Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Creative Artists Public Service Grant, and support from the New York State Council on the Arts. ROBERT SMALL/Solo Dance Artist has been selected for inclusion in the 1989-90 National Performance Network, and he is currently on the roster of artists "highly recommended" for worldwide touring assistance under the auspices of the United States Information Agency.

## Bebe Miller and Company

A native New Yorker, **Bebe Miller** has been actively choreographing since 1978. Her interest in finding a physical language for the human condition has been a connecting thread in her most recent works, including *Thick Sleep* and *Allies* (1989), *The Hell Dances* (1988), and *Two* (1986), choreographed in collaboration with Ralph Lemon. *Two* garnered Ms. Miller the second of two consecutive "Bessie" New York Dance and Performance Awards. In further recognition of her choreographic achievements, she has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and Creative Artists Public Service. In 1988, she received both a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship and The National Corporate Fund for Dance's American Choreographer Award. Her work has been commissioned by the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble, Zenon Dance Company, Concert Dance Company, Creach/Koester, and CoDanceCo and has been mounted on De Nieuwe Dansgroep in Amsterdam. In 1984, she formed Bebe Miller and Company, which tours extensively throughout the United States and abroad.

*Allies* is Bebe Miller's most elaborate work to date and was recently premiered as part of the Brooklyn Academy of Music Next Wave Festival. With the set of three huge panels showing dark figures (actually, they are paintings of underwater photographs of the dancers themselves, overlaid with anatomical drawings) and a commissioned score by the British art-rockers Fred Frith, *Allies* is about "the under-the-table signals we get from people, that say to us, 'This is a friend' and 'This is not a friend' . . . everyone gets along, but at some cost." (*Bebe Miller*)

**Elizabeth Caron** was born in Illinois and grew up in Connecticut. She has danced in the companies of Kenneth King, Ze'eva Cohen, and Nina Wiener, as well as with other independent choreographers in New York. She joined Bebe Miller and Company in 1986.

**Nikki Castro** grew up in Southern California and received her B.A. in Dance from California State University-Long Beach. From 1981 to 1983, she danced with Jeff Slayton and Dancers before moving to New York. She joined Bebe Miller and Company in 1986 and also dances with Donna Uchizono.

**Renee Lemieux** is from Montreal, Canada, where she performed with The Linda Rabin Danse Moderne. She moved to New York in 1983 and since then has danced with Nina Wiener, Ruby Shang, John Carrafa, and Susan Marshall. She recently presented her own choreography in New York and has worked with Bebe Miller and Company since 1985.



**Scott Smith**, a native of Kansas, danced for five years with Kansas City's Susan Warden and also with Marsha Paludan. Since arriving in New York in 1987, he has worked with Lisa Kraus and David Harris. He joined Bebe Miller and Company in 1987.

**Earnie Stevenson** graduated from Ohio State University with a B.F.A. in Dance. In 1985, he received the "Best Performer Award" from the American College Dance Festival Association. In New York, he has also performed with Susan Hadley and Creach/Koester Company. He joined Bebe Miller and Company in 1986.

**Jeremy Weichsel** has a B.F.A. in Dance from New York University. He has performed in the companies of Lynda Martha, David Parsons, Victoria Marks, Ohad Naharin, and Marta Renzi. He joined Bebe Miller and Company in 1987.

### *In Memoriam*

This Festival is dedicated to the memory of Tim Wengerd, who died of AIDS on September 12, 1989, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mr. Wengerd, who had been engaged to perform in this Festival, was a leading dancer in the Martha Graham company until 1982 and a founder and choreographer of the Repertory Dance Theater of Utah.

### **American Contemporary Dance Festival**

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Carol Wargelin, *Performance Production Coordinator*

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### **Power Center for the Performing Arts**

Ralph Beebe, *House Manager*

Barry LaRue, *Senior House Technician*      Ron Cypert, *House Technician*

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### **FELD BALLETS/NY**

**Coming Wed. & Thurs., April 4 & 5, 8:00 p.m., Power Center,**  
first Ann Arbor visit since 1985

*All Choreography by Eliot Feld*

#### **Wednesday, April 4**

CONTRA POSE (1990) Music, C.P.E. Bach  
ASIA (1989) Music, Ravel's *Scheherazade*  
KORE (1988) Music, Steve Reich  
SKARA BRAE (1986) Music, *Traditional*

#### **Thursday, April 5**

AH SCARLATTI (1990) Music, D. Scarlatti  
MEDIUM:RARE (1985) Music, Steve Reich  
CHARMED LIVES (1990) Music, Ravel  
THE JIG IS UP (1984) The Bothy Band and  
John Cunningham

Sponsored by the University Musical Society; for tickets, call (313) 764-2538.