# Strength and power

## Eisenhower Dance Ensemble opens season with dramatic Trilogy

Laurie Eisenhower leads the leaping dancers across the floor in Varner Hall at Oakland University in Rochester. The ableticism of her choreography keeps the Eisenhower Dance Ensemble in shape — that and classes in technique, modern and ballet, several times a week. The seven-member troughe works nearly six hours a day, Monday through Friday, to remain one of Michigan's premier contemporary dance companies, Eisenhower knows what it takes to remain in the top ranks of professional dance.

what it takes to remain in the top ranks of professional dance. She performed with Pilobolus Dance Theatre and David Parsons in New York City before earning a master of fine arts degree from Arizona State University and landing a position in 1986 as a dance professor at Oakland University.

After a brief break,

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Eisenhower assumes her role as artistic director of the ensemble, taking a sent along the back of the mirrored space. She watches quietly, not interruping dancers as they run through her dramatic Trilogy, one of the pieces in the opening concert of Eisenhower Dance Ensemble's 12th season Saturday, Nov. 2, in Varner Recital Hall. The program features the rovinol of two propersons of the professor Karen Sheridan. Elsenhower Jance Ensemble, a contemporary music of Blue Man. Elsenhower also chorcographed Etchings, a trio set to the contemporary music of Blue Man. Elsenhower Jance Ensemble, a contemporary dance company based at the EDE Center for Dance and directed by former Eisenhower Dance Ensemble a contemporary dance company based at the EDE Center for Elsenhower Dance Ensemble a contemporary dance company based at the EDE Center former Eisenhower Dance Ensemble and include Erica Wilson-Perkins Fight Water, an intense, driven work with images of martial arts and meditation. The company's assistant director, Stephanie.

Pizzo, adds a jazzy flair with her Down With It.

They won't have time to rehearse all the works today though. In a few hours, the company leaves for performances sponsored by the Thunder Bay Arts Council in



JOHN STORWZAND I ECCENTRIC

Christina Tasco demonstrates why she refers to Trilogy as a dance of strength

Alpena. They've already danced in Chicago and Arizona earlier this year.

### DANCE VARIETY

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"It's everything from drama to pure dance to comedy. I try to program a variety so it's fun and exciting," said Eisenhower who founded EDE after the Oakland University trouge she directed, Harbinger Dance Company, folded. "I'm interested in presenting dance as an art form. I love choreography, working with dancers — the process and creativity.

"Trilogy premiered last year at the Macomb Center (for the Performing Arts). It's a dramatic work, my most religious imagery. It takes images like the walk to the crudifixion, Jesus before he knew he was going to be crudified."

The deep burgundy of Leslie Littell's costumes set the tone for the moving piece danced to Carl Orff's Music Poetica and Das Schulwerk. Performing physically challenging dances like Trilogy is one of the reasons Michael Woodberry-Means is excited about joining EDE. This is his first season with the company after receiving a master of fine arts degree

with the company after receiving a master of fine arts degree from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.
Woodberry-Means formerly danced with Peter Sparling.

"With this piece there's a nice energy," said Woodberry-Means of Detroit. You get to dance full. There's lots of partnering, lots of jumps and ensemble work.

Company members have a wariety of reasons for joining and staying with Eisenhower Dance Ensemble. Carissa Wong moved to Orion Township from California after auditioning in New York in June. Eisenhower holds auditions around the country for dancers. Philip Lecte is originally from Washington D.C. Shauna Conzaman danced with the Ohio Ballet four seasons before moving to Rochester Hills.

Jacquelene Bouerad formerly lived in Salt Lake City before joining the ensemble six years ago. She's now in her seventh season.

"It's challenging to balance everything." Boueard said. "With EDE we have a wonderful opportunity to not only perform, but each (at EDE center for Dance) and chorcograph. It's rare to be doing wint you love to do. Dance

and choreograph. It's rare to be doing what you love to do. Dance is very competitive. I've been to auditions where there are 600

people for one position.

"With EDE I like the variety, everything from comedy to dramatics. We always have guest choreographers. It challenges us."

#### LONG-TIME MEMBER

Pizzo has been with the com-

### EISENHOWER DANCE ENSEMBLE

What: The professional dance company opens its 12th season with *On the Move* 

When: 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 2

Where: Varner Recital Hall on the campus of Oakland University, Rochester

Tickets: \$12, \$10 seniors, \$6 students. Call (248) 370-3013

pany since the beginning and enjoys introducing children to dance at motion/lecture demonstrations company

dance at motion/fecture demonstrations company members give throughout the state. The Rochester Hills resident started dancing at age 4 and by 12 joined the Michigan Ballet Theatre. She carned a bachelor of fine arts degree in dance from Coldand University and is now EDE's assistant director.

Down with It was originally choreographed for kids," Pizzo said. "During our demonstrations we talk about dance, how dance can help them to learn. We demonstrate the different styles of dance, what it is to be a professional dancer.

"Down with It is set to muste by John Hanks, Mix 22. It's supposed to be fun and for them to enjoy. Kids like to see what you can do and all types of dance. It has a juzzy feel, kind of MTV. There's lots of movement, Dancers wear a baschul cap. They turn it a round and suddenly they're funky street, hip hop. I heard the music and tried to make it as fun for me as a dancer to do as possible and for the kids."

The second concert of the season, Saturday, Nov. 23. at

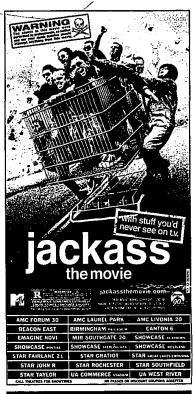
for the kids."
The second concert of the season, Saturday, Nov. 23, at the Seligman Family
Performing Arts Center in Beverly Hills, should delight children as well. The Land of Nod and other dances is billed

Nod and other dances is billed as a "fun and surreal journey into fantasy" that's based on children's tales. NewDANCE/Est follows Friday, Feb. 7, at Troy High School. Steven lannocone's Bolero, to Maurice Rawel's score, premieres Friday, April 11, at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts on a program

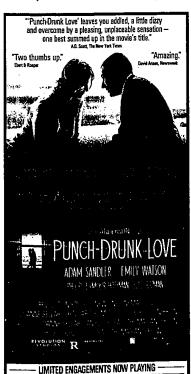
titled Myth and Magic. For the grand finale of the season, EDE joins forces with Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings and the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival to present Igor

Stravinsky's classic L'Historie du Soldat (The Solder's Tale) with choreography by Bill DeYoung of Ann Arbor.

n@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 453-1887







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