

# Festival Dancers mark 25th anniversary

## An old folk tale gets a new twist

The Festival Dancers of the Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit will celebrate the company's 25th anniversary with an unusual production of "Peter and the Wolf" 1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2 at the West Bloomfield center.

This all-woman troupe will give the favorite storyline an unusual twist: Peter will be transformed into a girl and the grandfather will become a grandmother.

The choreographer is Cathy Lichtman, who has a master's, with a dance specialty, from University of Michigan. She has been on the dance faculties of the National Music Camp at Interlochen, Oakland Community College and the Jewish Community Center for five years. She has also taught dance at Oakland and Wayne State universities.

Last year, she was guest artist for the Creative and Performing Arts Program in the Livonia Public Schools. She has worked with the New Youth Repertory Group in Ann Arbor and collaborated with Polish composer, Andrzej Dutkiewicz, on a new dance, "Ezra," for dance majors at the National Music Camp.



Cathy Lichtman choreographer

The performers are Patty Ceresine as Petra; Margo Cohen, the cat; Michelle Millman, the wolf; Rosalyn Leiberman, the grandmother; Linda Sherman, the duck; Chayala Pesis, leader of the hunters; and guest dancer, Suzanne Jonna, the bird.

The program will open with a selection of original songs by Elaine Serling, former festival dancer, stylist and children's entertainer.

The event will be in the Aaron DeRoy Theater, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster and the center's ticket office. For information, call 661-1000, ext. 335.



Margo Cohen plays the cat in "Peter and the Wolf." The costumes were designed by Melinda Pacha.

# Sculpture honors long-time dancer

A sculpture, "Dancers," honoring Harriet Berg, will be dedicated at the reception after the performance of "Peter and the Wolf" Sunday, Dec. 2 at the Jewish Community Center of West Bloomfield.

The sculpture, by Michigan artist Morris Brose, was presented to the Center by Maurice and Margo Cohen to honor Berg, founder and artistic director of the Festival Dancers, choreographer and dance teacher at the Center for three decades.

The Festival Dancers came into being when Berg, founder and artistic director was commissioned by Tuesday Musicale of Detroit to do choreography for Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms. She used the 12 advanced dancers from her contemporary dance class for the work which became "Make a Joyful Noise." It was presented in churches and temples throughout Michigan.

When the group participated in the Jewish Community Center's Festival of the Arts '68, the name Festival Dancers was born.

Since that time, the all-woman company has performed a wide variety of original works by nationally known and local choreographers.

In 1969, the Festival Dancers performed "Mostly About Women," a satirical look at feminist foibles, by Charles Weigman, one of the founders of American modern dance and Brahms Waltzes, Weigman's tribute to choreographer, Doris Humphrey.

In 1987, the Festival Dancers did "Song of Songs," which Margalit, lead dancer of the Inbal Dance Theatre, staged for them in Yememite style.

In 1982, Sophie Maslow, former member of the Martha Graham Company, created an original work for the Festival Dancers dedicated to the survivors of the Holocaust, "Tavling - The Twins."



Harriet Berg artistic director

Other works the company performed were "The Electric Playground" in 1971 in collaboration with Mark Hardin, filmmaker and Avrum Ben-Zeev, pianist; "Field Pieces" by Ann Arbor choreographer, 1974; "Art Moves," choreographed by Berg, Becky Malm and Jennifer Noyer, 1977; "Womenspectives," in collaboration with Esther Broner, author, and Don Snyder, sculptor, 1979; "Israeli Melodies," with Jacob Lascu, ballet master, and music by Julius Chajes, "Carnival of the Animals," 1982; "Four Portraits," choreography by Berg; "Tribute to Irving Berlin," 1986, Cathy Lichtman, choreography with music arranged by William Balcolm; "Dances of Our Heritage, 1987-89; and the all-female "Peter and the Wolf," 1990-91.

Over the years, the company has taken many of these productions on tour to schools, nursing homes and religious centers in the Tri-County area.

STATE SEN. Jack Faxon (D-Farmington Hills) will narrate the new "Peter and the Wolf." Members of the Detroit Chamber Winds will provide the live music with jazz artist Gary Shunk at the keyboard and synthesizer.

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# Symphony String Quartet to perform

The Scandinavian Symphony Society will present its Scandinavian Symphony String Quartet in a performance at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7, at Trowbridge Apartments, 24111 Civic Center Drive, Southfield.

Tickets are \$8 and \$5 for seniors and students. For information, call 476-7689.

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