Dancers showcase toes and talents

By CHAS DAVIS
Scene Reporter

The last three months of choreographing, practicing and intense dedication are about to pay off for the Creighton Dance Company.

Next weekend, students, faculty, staff and dancers from throughout the Omaha community will perform the biannual show at the Lied Center.

The show will progress through four pieces, incorporating an eclectic mix of classical ballet, contemporary and modern dance, jazz and musical theater dance.

Creighton University Dance Coordinator Lisa Carter is excited for the opportunity available to both the Creighton community and the dancers in the show. She explains that it is the perfect chance for her students to apply what they learn in the classroom and put it out there for everyone to appreciate, including those who have never been exposed to dance before.

Her hope is that others who have not been to a performance before will give it a try, truly appreciate the art form and possibly feel a spark of interest in it themselves.

Since they arrived on campus this semester, those involved with the performance have been putting in two hours of practice five nights a week, with some members putting in more depending on their level of involvement, in order to prepare for four shows.

"You have to truly love this if you commit to it," Carter said.

These dancers can write off any sort of spare time for the next week, especially with four hours of rehearsal a night starting Sunday, all leading up to opening night next Thursday, April 7.

"It is all a very important process, and it doesn’t happen overnight," Carter said. "But it’s the part I enjoy most, working with a hardworking group of students and watching the process unfold."

The most involving aspect is the choreography of the dances before any actual rehearsal can begin, a two-month process for a three-minute dance, according to Carter.

Carter and faculty members Susan Dickson-Matsuwami and Patrick Roddy have contributed pieces for the performance. A guest choreographer, Kelly Hennerman, and two other Creighton Dance students, Arts & Sciences senior Elizabeth Bergman and Arts & Sciences junior Megan Griffiths, also have contributed their own choreographed pieces.

"Choreography has to sit on you like a pair of old slippers," Carter said. "It takes time to get to that point where you are comfortable."

One aspect of the show that these dancers are comfortable with by now is their fellow dancers. Everyone in the show has the experience of the fall performance under his or her belt and most have been in several Dance Company performances throughout their college years. A strong veteran core of five graduating seniors, whom Carter has worked with since she arrived at Creighton three years ago, leads the current Dance Company.

"Everyone’s been around the block at least once by now," Carter said. "Many of the same dancers return from show to show."

The performances will take place on the main stage of the Lied Education Center for the Arts beginning at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, April 7 to 9. There also will be a matinee performance on Saturday, April 9 at 3 p.m. Tickets are $10 for general admission, $8 for seniors and $5 for all students, faculty and staff.