New York City, CU dancers share premiere

When Creighton's "A Company of Dancers" presents the Omaha premiere of "Following," choreographer Dalienne Majors won't be watching.

Majors, who recently spent six days on campus "setting the movements" for the performance, will simultaneously debut the piece in New York City.

"I'm premiering it there (New York) and you're premiering it here," said Majors, a New York-based choreographer and dancer who directs her own dance company.

"Following," which involves five dancers, will be included in a presentation of classical and modern works in the Witherspoon Concert Hall of Joslyn Art Museum Nov. 12 at 8 p.m. and Nov. 13 at 3 p.m.

The program will also include an Omaha premiere by Kenneth Melville, former soloist with England's Royal Ballet.

Instructors direct pieces

He will present "Soires Musicales."

Joellen Meglin, instructor of dance, will present a premiere performance, presently untitled, and Valerie Roche, company director and head of the dance division, will restage "The Enchanted."

The dance company is composed of 15 professionals, faculty, students and alumni.

Roche said dance became nearly a full-time occupation for five company members during Majors' six-day stay. Over mid-term break, "Following" dancers turned in four eight-hour days of practice.

"Everybody worked very hard," Roche said. "It takes a lot of dedication."

Students Petria Fosse, Liz Doherty and Patrick Roddy, along with part-time dance instructor Patti Zukaitis and Lynn Nevin, an instructor at the Omaha Academy of Ballet, will perform Majors' piece.

Second C.U. premiere

Majors, a native Omahan, is presenting her second premiere at Creighton. Last year, the company performed "Light Pieces."

"That experience was so good I wanted to come back," Majors said.

"In Omaha, she said, there are many dancers looking for an outlet to perform."

"The dancers here are well trained and have a strong ballet background," Majors said, "but they have performed less. In New York the dancers are more experienced." She said New York dancers also have a stronger modern background.

Majors began her dance career as a student under Roche. She has since studied and taught at the Juilliard School in New York.

Her current piece, "Following," has taken a year to develop. The dance is performed to Poulenc's "Sextour for Piano and Woodwind Quintet."

Majors will also dance in the New York performance of her piece. "Following" is being performed at Creighton, she said, because, "I wanted to see all the pieces. I wanted to use it as a way to see my craft."

In her six days at Creighton, Majors set the movements for the dancers.

"I would set it, see it and change it," she said. "It was quite an intense few days." Before she left, a videotape of the dance was made to assist further practice.

Majors said she was influenced by images of ballrooms and music halls when developing "Following."

"It's a good piece, I think," she said. "It's gay, exciting and romantic. It has a level for everyone."

Roche said Majors' piece helps make the company's November program one of its strongest.

Program has contrast

"There's good contrast through the entire program," she said.

Tickets for the performances are available at the Brandeis Ticket Offices or in the Student Board of Governors' office.

Admission is $3 for adults, $2.50 for students and $1 for senior citizens.