Aaron Smith, dancing with Suchi Psarakos, will be artist in residence, choreographing for the spring concert and teaching modern dance.

Visiting professor teaches dance, choreographs for spring concert

by Jim Haug
Reporter

Aaron Smith, assistant professor of dance at the University of Colorado, Boulder, will choreograph a new dance for the spring "End of the Year Dance Concert" and will teach modern dance classes during April, dance instructor Lynn Banka said.

Smith is coming to Creighton as an artist in residence. The Nebraska Arts Council is co-sponsoring him with Creighton, Banka said.

"I am excited for our students to be exposed to him," Banka said.

Banka described Smith as a prolific choreographer with a distinct style. Often dance is just organized movement, but his works usually have a strong message, Banka said. "His choreography is very pleasing for the dancers as well for the audience to watch," she said.

"He is making a dance especially for our students," Banka said. It will be performed at the concert May 4-6.

Smith often writes his own music to go along with his pieces. "We are hoping that he will do that for us," she said. "The music and the dance are even more closely enmeshed when they come from the same source."

Auditions for the concert are open to Omaha-area dancers. Audition dates will be April 4, at 4:30 p.m., and April 6, at 5:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building, room 109.

Smith will teach modern dance at Creighton and the Omaha Jewish Community Center, and a master's class at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

The dance department tries to bring in a guest artist once a year, Banka said. She first worked with Smith when he was one of her professors at the University of Colorado.

Smith's arrival will also be an advantage because he is a man, she said. It will be a good change since the dance department has an all-female faculty. There simply are not many male modern dance instructors, she added.

He has performed with the Colorado Repertory Dance Company, Luise Wykell, Jean Erdman, the Glen Lund Dance Company, among others, Banka said.

Smith holds a Master of Arts degree in Dance from the University of Illinois, Urbana.