Dancer credits nursing for her inspiration

By Brian Kokensparger
Special to the Creightonian

Lynn Wenning Banka, assistant profes-
sor in the fine and performing arts
department, credits her nursing training
for inspiring her works featured this
weekend in the “A Company of Dancers”
fall concert.

She joins choreographer Valerie
Roche and a full company of Creighton
dancers in the concert, continuing tonight
through Sunday in the Interim
Performing Arts Center.

“I’m really excited about the show,”
she said.

Banka credits her twelve-year nurs-
ing career for developing the crucial
observation skills needed to be truly cre-
ative as a choreographer.

“There’s a vast difference between
children’s movement and adult move-
ment. And a whole other world between
young adult and geriatric movement.
The gait is different. They respond to
danger and compassion in totally differ-
ent ways,” she said.

“Nursing helped me to create com-
positions involving real people, not the
same old stereotypes.”

In addition to insight into movement
patterns, Banka discovered that nursing
and dancing balanced one another.

“Changing from my leotards into my
nurse’s uniform was a definite change of
gears,” she said, “but the respect for
human dignity and sensitivity to the
human condition are the same. You need
that in anything you do. But dancing
opened my eyes to a world that nursing
couldn’t touch.”

This year’s “A Company of
Dancers” fall concert features Ms. Banka
in two roles: performer and choreogra-
pher.

She is the choreographer and solo
performer in “Bulwark,” an abstract
modern piece with a personal, human
theme. “Bulwark” is a personal issue
played out to universal dimensions,” she
said.

A large plastic sculpture, designed
by Bill Van Deest, provides an abstract
representation of an emotional conflict.
The sculpture virtually becomes another
character on stage. “It’s a challenge; it
appears strong but has its weak points, its
stress points, just like we do. The sculp-
ture has a rhythm of its own, and I have
to adjust my own movement to compen-
sate,” she said.

“Time Piece Sonata,” Banka’s
choreographic piece, is “a fun, light
piece.” “Time Piece” investigates peo-
ple’s relationship with time.

Set to jazz music by Billie Holiday.

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