

Northwest Dance Project

By Kate Lydon



NWDP dancers
in rehearsal



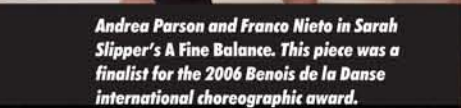
(L to R) Samantha Campbell, Andrea Parson
and Franco Nieto in Andrea Miller's Lewis Park



Andrea Parson and Viktor
Usov in Wen Wei Wang's Chi



Andrea Parson and Franco
Nieto in Luca Veggetti's
Ensemble for Somnambulists



Andrea Parson and Franco Nieto in Sarah
Slipper's A Fine Balance. This piece was a
finalist for the 2006 Benois de la Danse
international choreographic award.



Joni Tuttle and Elijah
Labay in rehearsal



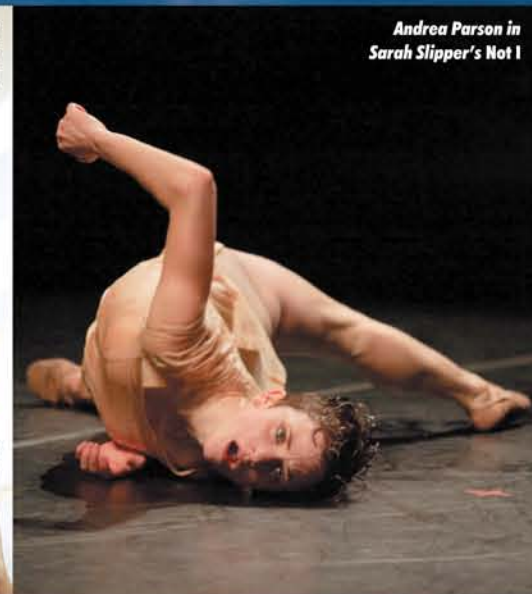
Lindsey Matheis and Lex Dones in rehearsal



(L to R) Franco Nieto and Lex
Dones in Sarah Slipper's Flying E



Lindsey Matheis and
Patrick Kilbane in
rehearsal



Andrea Parson in
Sarah Slipper's Not I



Andrea Parson and Viktor Usov
in Alejandro Cerrudo's Two
Studies for Four Singles



(L to R) Patrick Kilbane and
Viktor Usov in Maurice Causey's
Gender Predicaments



Andrea Parson and Patrick Kilbane
in Ihsan Rustem's State of Matter

the facts

NUMBER OF DANCERS: Currently 9, but usually 10

STYLE: Contemporary ballet

COMPANY HISTORY: Artistic director Sarah Slipper founded the organization in 2004. (Slipper is also one of the company's main choreographers.)

WHAT MAKES NWDP DIFFERENT: The company performs all original, commissioned work. Slipper brings in choreographers from all over the world to create pieces that range from three-minute dances to 25-minute concert works. Last September, NWDP celebrated the creation of its 100th new piece!

DANCE SKILLS NEEDED: "NWDP dancers have to be fast, fast, fast learners," says executive director Scott Lewis. They have to get each piece into their bodies and then retain it quickly. "One time we did ten world premieres in two nights of performances," he says. Last fall, in the span of a two-month creation period, the dancers learned four new works. NWDP dancers live on the creative edge.

WHAT IS LAUNCH?: LAUNCH projects are workshops affiliated with NWDP that bring together professional-level dancers (ages 16-25) with guest artistic directors and choreographers. There are two LAUNCH programs: a two-week summer project, which includes a performance, and a one-week winter project. At LAUNCH, dancers get the chance to explore different movement styles and to network. They also get a crash course in career management. Artistic directors and choreographers at LAUNCH get to test out pieces of choreography and movement on LAUNCH dancers.

To date, NWDP and LAUNCH have helped 45 dancers land jobs. NWDP also uses LAUNCH to find dancers for its own company. "This way, we can see dancers for a week or two, which helps us determine whether or not they'd be a good fit for us," Lewis says.

SLIPPER'S ADVICE FOR YOUNG DANCERS WHO DREAM OF WORKING WITH NWDP: All prospective NWDP dancers must have a strong ballet base, but they also need to augment that with a variety of movement styles. With so many choreographers creating on them, NWDP dancers have to be able to adapt instantly. "I'm only interested in those who are committed, have drive and a willingness to be open and fearless," Slipper says. **DS**

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