

Abstract dance ensemble performs eclectic repertoire

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Limelight and Accents performing arts series presented the Brooklyn, N.Y. based dance ensemble on Sept. 29 in Wadsworth Auditorium. Alex Lyons/Asst. Photo Editor

Founded in 2003 and based in Brooklyn, N.Y., the [Dušan Tynek Dance Theatre](#) has toured extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe. *The New York Times* recently named it one of the top five New York City dance performances of the year.

On Saturday Sept. 29, Limelight and Accents Performing Arts Series brought Tynek's troupe to the Geneseo community to perform three acclaimed pieces in Wadsworth Auditorium: "Portals," "Base Pairs" and "Widow's Walk."

The first dance, "Portals," is the final section in a trilogy that Tynek – an acclaimed choreographer from the Czech Republic – has been working on for three years. In a phone interview, Tynek said that in "Portals," he wanted to play with the idea of "one against many," conveying a couple thrown against a group and the different aspects of relationships.

Tynek said he wanted this primal section to take the audience back to an undefined time in the past with an "other world feeling."

The music, written by Serbian composer Aleksandra Vrebalov, combined chiming bells, chanting and children's laughter along with a stirring violin that evoked a sense of the past when paired with the dancers' strong, fast-paced movements.

To further the feeling, Tynek and costume designer Karen Young put the women in deconstructed peplums and cut-up leggings and the men in skirts and vests, which completed the feel of the piece and achieved Tynek's vision. The backdrop resembled an ancient stone wall with its interwoven lines and swirls of dark blues, grays and a hint of red.

The second dance, "Base Pairs," was inventive in its use of a metronome and a pre-recorded love story instead of music.

The story served as a "juxtaposition between the sacred and the mundane ... a love story set against the stark, abstract movements of the dancers," Tynek said.

Originally, Tynek said he envisioned "Base Pairs" to be performed in silence, but he found that by adding in the steady metronome against the complex movements, it kept the dance going and continued the idea of the "steady progression of time."

Tynek said his college background in biology pushed him to explore Darwinism and compare evolutionism to creationism. He found inspiration in Biblical stories, especially Noah's ark, to play with the idea of coupling and pairs.

For the costumes, which were off-white unitards, Tynek said he wanted to further his background in biology by incorporating the idea of an old British museum and the tagged, dusty specimens that reside there.

The unitards were printed with pictures of spines and ribs in geographic patterns to abstractly bring the museum idea to life.

For the final dance, "Widow's Walk," Tynek said he found inspiration in Nantucket, Mass. surrounded by the whaling history of the area. The piece is meant to focus on the idea of the coast and the "toils of the people ... the sailors out at sea and the women left behind."

Tynek said he used the costumers to bring the dance into the past as a means to evoke the historical aspect of the whaling and shipping industry. Female dancers wore swimming caps as a "joke [about] the swimming costumes that women used to have to wear," Tynek said.

The patterns the dancers made on stage represented the ocean and its waves and evoked an image of sailors and the wives they left behind when they were lost at sea.

The Dušan Tynek Dance Theatre Company put on a stirring, powerful show that was extraordinary to watch.

The Chicago-based Second City comedy troupe touring company will perform at the next Limelight and Accents event on Oct. 20. Tickets for the show will be available in the Student Association office.