

LA WEEKLY

10 YEARS OF HYSTERICA

Kitty McNamee's company celebrates a milestone

BY ANN HASKINS

Wednesday, August 1, 2007 - 12:00 pm

In the 10 years since she founded the troupe, Kitty McNamee has built Hysterica Dance Company into a major force on local stages, recruiting a fistful of dedicated dancers and assembling a band of edgy collaborators, including co-artistic director and resident costume designer Ryan Heffington. McNamee's expressive choreography has put her in demand with other dance and theater companies as well as television's *The L Word* and Los Angeles Opera's *La Traviata* and *Don Carlo*. Her troupe's anniversary performance reprises repertoire favorites — including *Sticks & Stones* (2002), a paean to the “everyman” confronted by technology; the film-inspired *Noir* (2000); and her recent romantic suite, *Rapture* (2006) — and also promises some new surprises. Tin is the traditional 10th-wedding-anniversary present; aluminum and diamonds the modern counterparts. Tickets to this concert plus a picnic with a tin of pâté and diamond-shaped crackers wrapped in aluminum foil are gifts dance fans can give themselves to celebrate this special occasion. *Ford Amphitheatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hlywd.; Fri., Aug. 3, 8:30 p.m.; \$25, \$5 students &*

childunder 12 years. (323) 461-3673 or www.fordtheaters.org



SMALLER THEATERS CONTINUED

THE BALD SOPRANO Eugene Ionesco's Absurdist debut. STUDIO/STAGE, 520 N. Western Ave., Hlywd.; Wed.-Thurs. & Sat., 8 p.m.; thru Aug. 4. (323) 440-1606.

BLOOD WEDDING Federico Garcia Lorca's romantic tragedy. HOLLYWOOD FIGHT CLUB THEATER, 6767 W. Sunset Blvd., No. 6, Hlywd.; Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 3 p.m.; thru Aug. 5. (323) 465-0800.

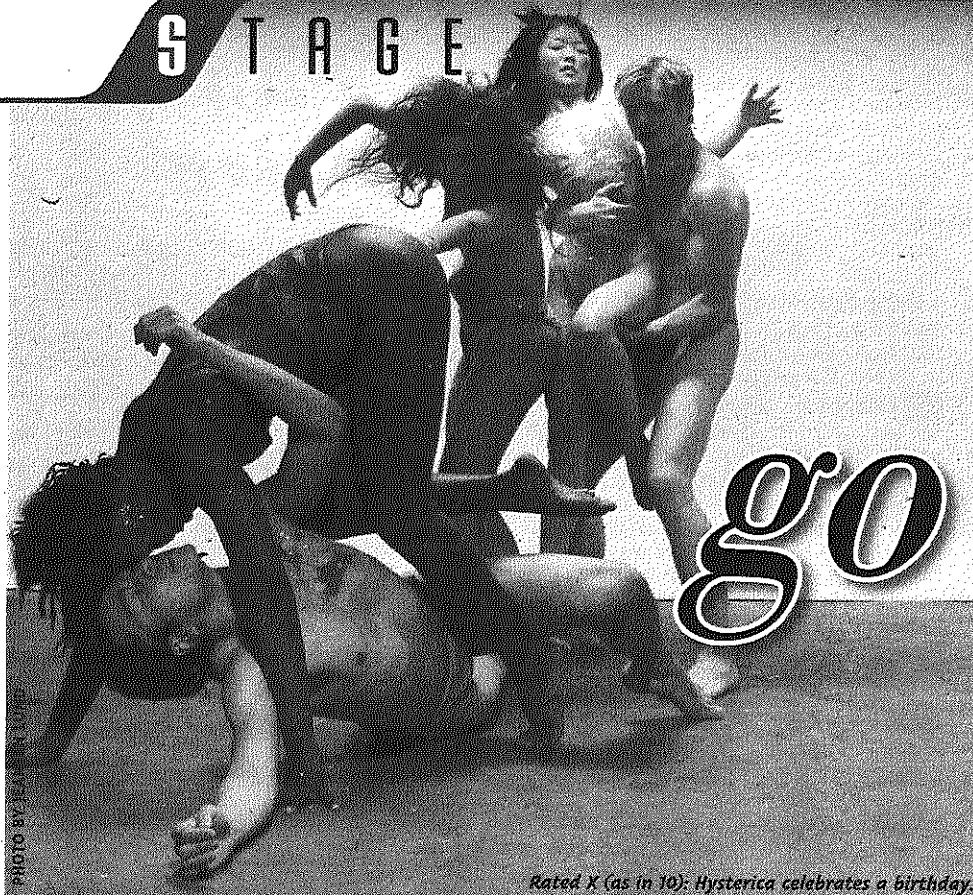
GO THE CAR PLAYS Given that this is a city whose inhabitants live and die by their cars, this unique melding of site-specific theater and freeway crawl should be hailed as a local treasure. The production consists of 15 one-act plays, performed in 15 different cars in the theater parking lot. It's quite amazing how many stories can be told in the front seat of a car, and the production's voyeuristic appeal is undeniable: You feel like a ghost popping in and out of the characters' lives, in plays that are brief and quite charming. Moving Arts and the Steve Allen Theater in the parking lot of the CENTER FOR INQUIRY—WEST, 4773 Hollywood Blvd., Hlywd.; call for schedule; thru Oct. 7. (866) 811-4111. (PB)

GO THE CATSKILL SONATA Arthur Godfrey Show writer Dave Vaughn (Kip Gilman) is a freeloading cynic spending a summer in the late 1950s at a struggling resort owned by an old friend, Anne Rosen (Lisa Robins). When he's not chugging screwdrivers and smoking pot, Dave schools waiter and wannabe writer Irwin Shikovsky (Daryl Sabara) while putting the moves on concert pianist Rae Isaacs (Lisa Chess)—and whatever other skirt takes Dave's mind off his marriage. While nothing really happens in this 90-minute one-act, playwright Michael Elias so superbly lays out a sadly funny world of thwarted ambitions and intentions that we hardly notice how sedentary the story is. Director Paul Mazursky expertly guides his talented ensemble through this Chekhovian terrain. MATRIX THEATRE, 7657 Melrose Ave., Hlywd.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 3 p.m.; thru Sept. 2. (800) 838-3006. (SM)

THE COMPLICATIONS OF PURCHASING A POODLE PILLOW Storytelling by Mary Lynn Rajsakub. STEVE ALLEN THEATER, at the Center for Inquiry—West, 4773 Hollywood Blvd., Los Feliz; Sun., 8 p.m. (except first Sun. of the month); indef. (323) 666-4268.

GO DANNY AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA I'm not really a fan of *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*, John Patrick Shanley's 1984 "Apache dance" for two actors. A richly textured examination of generic emotions, it's been done here so often because it offers a showcase for a man and woman who meet in a Bronx bar to play the walking wounded from the lower depths, slide into a moonlit fantasy of love and marriage in her modest bedroom, and then wake to find themselves in a wrestling match with that same fantasy. But actors Deborah Dir and Daniel De Weldon play out Shanley's Apache dance with scrupulous honesty and attention to the details of blackened knuckles and bruised pasts, we see the art and craft of being, the sacred authen-

STAGE



GO

Rated X (as in 10): *Hysterica* celebrates a birthday.

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—Ann Haskins

DANCE

BLACKBIRD DANCE COMPANY Covering the spectrum from hip-hop to ballet, tango to African dance, this ensemble offers three selections. Alexandra Blackbird is the artistic director. The dancers include Alli Bivins, Candice Gordon, Lyne Hardimon, Reegan Haynes, Jose Rincon and Sarah Romanowsky. HIGHWAYS PERFORMANCE SPACE, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Fri.-Sat., Aug. 3-4, 8:30 p.m.; \$20, \$15 students. (310) 315-1459 or www.highwaysperformance.org.

GO CHOREOGRAPHERS & CONVERSATION Deborah Brockus produces the Spectrum series and heads her own company. Here she curates an evening of performances followed by conversation with the 10 choreographers. Why do they do it? How do they do it? All may not be answered, but the talk should be fun and enlightening. DIAVOLO PERFORMANCE SPACE, 616 Moulton Ave., dwtwn.; Sat., Aug. 4, 8 p.m.; Sun., Aug. 5, 7 p.m.; \$15. (562) 531-8949 or brockus@earthlink.net.

FOREVER FLAMENCO This popular Sunday flamenco series continues with its rotating roster of dancers, accompanied by live singers and musicians. Check the Web site, www.fountaintheatre.com, for this week's lineup. The finale encourages flamenco-istas in the audience to display their specialties. FOUNTAIN THEATRE, 5060 Fountain Ave., Hlywd.; Sun., Aug. 5, 8 p.m.; \$30. (323) 663-1525 or www.fountaintheatre.com.

GO KULTURA PHILIPPINE FOLK ART Celebrating its 15th anniversary, this company offers a quick tour of indigenous rituals and regional dances from the many islands that comprise the Philippines. JOHN ANSON FORD AMPHITHEATRE, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hlywd.; Sat., Aug. 4, 8 p.m.; \$25, \$5 students & children 12 & under. (323) 461-3673 or www.fordtheaters.org.

GO PRAXIS PROJECT Choreography from Seda Aybay, Ronald E. Brown, Frit and Frat Fuller, Scott Putman, Lowell Smith, Pat Taylor and Shari Washington Rhone is showcased in this performance, part of Praxis' ongoing efforts to foster choreographers, dancers and dance in re-emerging neighborhoods. NATE HOLDEN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, 4718 W. Washington Blvd., L.A.; Fri.-Sat., Aug. 3-4, 8 p.m.; \$30, \$28 students & seniors. (213) 840-1766 or www.praxisdance.org.

—A.H.