

# Something for all tastes

BY SARAH HALZACK

Inspiration for choreography can come from the most disparate places: the way passengers move on Metro's crowded trains, the freedom a runner feels when she hits the pavement or even the factory-like workflow inside a microscopic cell. These are just some of the frameworks for the half-dozen pieces on the "Dance Sampler" program at Woolly Mammoth Theatre.

It is exactly those differences that curator Jane Franklin sought to highlight when she began lining up local choreographers to participate in the showcase. She deliberately selected pieces that were rooted in divergent dance genres and had varied musical scores and cast sizes.

Franklin, who founded the Arlington-based Jane Franklin Dance, says the evening's title is a nod to the Whitman's Sampler, the variety box of chocolates.

"You have a lot of different choices, but then they might turn out a little bit different than you were expecting when you bite into them," she says.

Franklin's own dance, a duet called "I Do," aims to capture the syrupy, sentimental state of a happy couple, while Meghan Pilling's large-group work, "He Said He Can't (Redux)," uses highly physical movement to depict love's dark, sorrowful underbelly.

Other pieces focus more on physical impulses than on emotional ones. Nancy Havlik based her "Red Line" on improvisations she and her dancers did after watching commuters shuffle home. "Learning to Run," choreographed by newcomer Diana

Movius, is a contemporary ballet ode to the toughness and independence of joggers. Another artist, Wayles Haynes, will present a solo that emphasizes his flexibility.

The work that bears the most promise of offering something novel is Orit Sherman's "Within the Cell," which examines the tiny, complex world within life's basic building blocks.

"I thought about the shape of the cell, which is round," Sherman says. "Everything inside of this actually reacts to a round surface, not a straight one." As such, Sherman felt she should alter the way the dancers made contact with the floor.

Her solution was to outfit some of them in specially made metal shoes with curved, semicircular soles. After input from her engineer father, Sherman hired a blacksmith and cobbler to produce something that was both functional and aesthetically apt. These props make for a dance that is an exercise in adaptability and problem-solving.

Franklin says she hopes one of the benefits of presenting six choreographers on a single bill is that fans of one artist will also become fans of the others.

"It's important for the dance community to pull different audiences together," she says. "I just really like that idea."

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## DANCE SAMPLER

Saturday at 5 and 8 p.m. Woolly Mammoth Theatre's Melton Rehearsal Hall, 641 D St. NW. 703-933-1111. [www.janefranklin.com](http://www.janefranklin.com). \$25; \$20 in advance.

Roxie Thomas performs "Within the Cell," which examines the complexity of life's building blocks. She wears specially made metal shoes with curved soles that mimic the cell wall.



Jane Franklin Dance's "Dance Sampler" features, top, Ken Manheimer, Darrell Duane, Micah Trapp, and Shoshanna Sumka of Nancy Havlik Dance Performance Group; middle, Diana Movius; and above, Daniel Zook.

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