

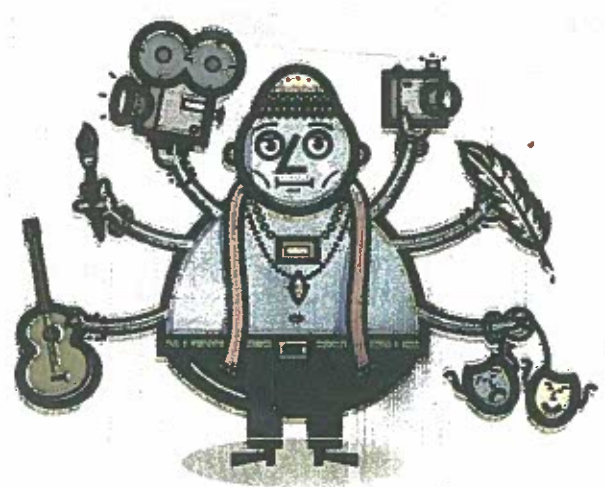
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What's Your Problem?

Helping D.C.'s arts scene talk through its many issues

THE AFFLICTED: Jane Franklin, artistic director of Arlington-based Jane Franklin Dance, founded in 1997.

DIAGNOSIS: Sudden dismemberment. When a company member dances out of the picture, it can be hard for the troupe to get back on its feet; Franklin tries to keep up to eight dancers in the company, but four have left in the past year. "There's quite a bit of changeover, and that's difficult when you're trying to maintain any sort of repertory," says Franklin. "When a role has to change, it affects the whole group."

SYMPTOMS: Insufficient body doubles. A new dancer's arrival can set the stage for a rough transition. "The person who originally developed the role has such an insight into the part, because they built it," says Franklin. "In two rehearsals, a person can learn the so-called steps and the way to go," she says. "What they're missing is what they learn from process." Newbies also tinker with the company's delicate body balance—a new dancer's weight, height, or particular technique can send an entire movement back to the drawing board.

TREATMENT: Type-cast. Franklin can't provide the big salaries to keep her dancers from moving up to New York City—or back to their day jobs. Sometimes, doppelgängers are the next best thing. "I've had dancers come in to audition who, just by their size or movement quality, remind me of a dancer I've worked with previously," says Franklin. "I might consider them more without even thinking about it, just because I know things will fit easily."

—Amanda Hess

Artist with a problem? E-mail problem@washingtontypaper.com.