UNLV dance department spotlights five rising stars

Dancing in the past 10 years has become an intergral part of youthful American culture.

The films "Fame," "Chorus Line," and "Dirty Dancing," as well as MTV, have contributed to the upsurge of interest.

Today's college students, unlike previous generations, feel comfortable studying dance. Students typically grow up playing baseball, basketball, and rollerskating.

Today's UNLV students also grew up dancing and romping in front of TV sets.

The repercussions

for UNLV's Dance Department are from 18- to senior citibeginning to be felt today. Even zens," Dr. Carole Rae, dance department Jaeger, a professional chairman, is surprised at the inter- dancer, working on her est here in studying dance.

"In one academic year, we service more than 2,100 students five years with the St. through classes," Rae said. "This Louis Opera Company certainly was not true 10 years ago.

"The growth in the dance department is reflected in our dance in the famous Latin Quarmajors. They are just as talented ter Review. but much more diverse than when I first started to teach," Rae said. gas for quite some time. "They come from all over the coun- I wanted to get an educatry with varied backgrounds. It is tion. exciting to work with them."

Claudine Hairston. a UNLV freshman dance major from Columbus, OH, started dancing when she was three.

"I was doing ballet and tap. It was very natural. I was tall and thin, so modeling and dancing was what children did."

Hairston eventually plans to have a dual major with political science.

The most interesting and fun hope to be able to teach," aspect of class so far is learning Jaeger said. techniques from the West Coast as opposed to the East. In tap here they are very much lighter on their Lapeer, Michigan, started feet. It's not as much of a Broadway tap which has more emphasis when he was 12. on stomps."

Hairston feels that UNLV is a changed my career. good place to study.

"The different colleges are not ice skating. The reason as separated here as they would be I'm getting a degree in at Ohio State University, so I get to dance is to be able to meet students from many other dis- teach ice skaters how to ciplines. I feel the size of the cam- dance." pus makes it easier for freshmen from small towns."

Dancing has exploded beyond dance department at the end of 1981 Professional Championships. the ballroom, recital hall and the- I was the only non-traditional type student. Now students range in age of ice skating in the amateur world sional dancer, originally from Min- wrote the narration. It was called



The UNLV dance department has many upcoming events featuring, from left to Claudine Hairston, Jacque Jaeger, Kevin Poit, Ramona Shaw, and right: Natalie Fredricks.

said Jacque

Jaeger danced for and was a June Taylor Dancer. She also danced

"I'd lived in Las Ve-

first class I took dance. department in and growing. They offered

Kevin Poit, from a career in ice skating

"I haven't really What I want to do is teach

States National Ice Skating Cham- Shaw. pionships, the World Ice Capades

and Poit passed the highest test in experience was my master's thesis more and more professional." each category.

> Professionally, he skated with the ice capades for four years. He also taught ice skating at the Detroit skating club for three years.

"I came to Las Vegas on

vacation and liked the area so much "The very that I decided to move here, I checked out the dance department was and was very impressed by the well The roundedness of the curriculum.

"UNLV is a young university years but very up and coming. It's going was small but to be one of the top universities in very profes- the west in the next couple of years. sional, innova- I'll be performing with the university's major performances, and with their guest artists.

"The faculty members enjoy tech- what they are doing and are enthunique, theory, siastic; and that enthusiasim is conand history, tagious. When I moved here I I'm specializing in dance history. I didn't know anybody-didn't know

a soul.

"This is second year and I've made a great many friends among the student body. What's nice here is that everybody helps one another."

Another Poit skated in the 1984 United enthusiastic student is Ramona

"Dancing on the stage is a per-"When I came to the UNLV for four years, and in the World fect profession: a chance to dance,

nesota and pursuing her master's degree.

Shaw, who plans to graduate this semester, was with MGM the Grand, now Bally's Hotel, from 1976-1989. For four years she was in Hallelujah Hollywood and

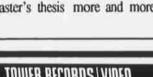
finish school.

wear beautiful costumes and get where I wrote the music, choreo-There are five different types paid for it," said Shaw, a profes- graphed, designed the costumes and

Japanese dance based on Haiku," said Shaw.

"My professional performing experience is helpful...it's more than just technique, it's being able to deal with costumes, sets, props, elevators and realities of live produc-

spent nine years in Jubilee. tion. Also there is an interaction "Students can work pro- with the audience that does not take fessionally in Las Vegas place in the classroom studio. I while they attend school here also teach dance and feel it's imand even better, they can portant to make students aware of find work here when they this constantly. The dance department at UNLV is growing by leaps "My most rewarding and bounds...the concerts here are





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