

DESERT TODAY

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Keeping it in step



Choreography Festival features
contest, awards and dancing

BY RICHARD GUZMÁN
THE DESERT SUN

It's not every day that a ballerina can go toe-to-toe with a hip-hop dancer.

Or East Indian dancers may not expect to share the same stage and audience with the traditional steps of ballroom-dancing couples waltzing in harmonized fluid movements.

Inside

Choreography Festival offering workshops D2

But like a collage of competing physical poetry, the sixth annual Dance Under the Stars Choreography Festival will fuse various styles during this weekend's competition to celebrate choreographers and dancers.

"(The festival) is very rich in diversity," said Kajsa Thuresson-Frary, education director for the McCallum Theatre in Palm Desert, one of the festival organizers.

About 17 professional dance companies will compete Saturday at the McCallum Theatre for a \$5,000 grand prize.

Please see FESTIVAL, D2



William Lu's piece "Red Autumn."

Awards

The Choreography Festival will present its Lifetime Achievement Award to choreographer Dee Dee Wood during Saturday's competition.

For the past 50 years, Wood has accumulated extensive choreography credits in film, stage and television.

She won an Emmy for her choreography of the closing credits for the television special "Statue of Liberty 100 Years." She's also worked on various Super Bowl half-time shows, the 1984 Olympics opening and closing ceremonies and the Country Music Awards.

She's choreographed films such as "The Sound of Music" and "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang."



PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

Jean Isaac's piece "Atlantic Man."

The event

What: The sixth annual Palm Desert Dance Under the Stars Choreography Festival.

When: 7 p.m. today for the professional division.

4 p.m. Sunday for the amateur division. There is no walk-in registration for either day.

Where: McCallum Theatre for the Performing Arts, 73-000 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert.

Tickets: \$7 to \$25.
Call: 340-ARTS