

American Indian Dance Theatre

Hanay Geiogamah, Director
Barbara Schwei, Producer, with Allen M. Shore

Monday Evening, March 25, 1991, at 8:00
Power Center for the Performing Arts
Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Company

Joe Bellanger
Antoinette Benton-Banai
Fred Bushyhead
Fabian Fontenelle
Darrell Goodwill
Ernest Thomas Grant
Kevin Haywahe
Chester Mahooty

Spencer McCarty
Kenny Merrick, Jr.
Marty Pinnecosse
Ramona Roach
Eric Sampson
George Shields
Cassie Soldierwolf
Elvira Spencer

Eddie Swimmer
Morgan Tosee
Sheila Tousey
Norwyn Wesley
Dwight Whitebuffalo
Lloyd Yellowbird

Alan Adelman, Lighting
Buddy Wilson, Stage Manager

Kevin Connaughton, Technical Director
Grant Brittan, Production Assistant

This concert is presented as part of the Native American Indian Student Festival Week at the University of Michigan. The University Musical Society extends special thanks to tonight's Philips Pre-concert Presentation speaker, Michael Dashner, Native American Representative, Office of Minority Student Services, U-M.

The American Indian Dance Theatre is represented by National Artists Management Co., New York.
The American Indian Dance Theatre original recording is available on Broadway Limited Records.

PROGRAM

Opening

- Vocal Solo Chester Mahooty
Soloist Ramona Roach

The spirit in the drum is awakened, and the dancer begins.

Grass Dance

- Dancers Darrell Goodwill, Ernest Thomas Grant,
Marty Pinnecoose, Lloyd Yellowbird
Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

The grass dance is an ancient dance and the basis of many men's dances. In the Northern Plains, the elders would ask the young men to stomp down the tall grass to prepare the ceremonial clearing. The dance circle is formed.

The original outfits worn by dancers on these occasions were adorned with tufts of grass. Today, the grass tufts have been replaced by strips of cloth or yarn to give the effect of rippling grass as the dancers move around.

Traditional Dance Suite

- Men Dancers Fred Bushyhead, Kevin Haywahe, Eric Sampson,
George Shields, Morgan Tosee
Shield Dance George Shields, Morgan Tosee
Women Dancers Elvira Spencer, Sheila Tousey

Most dances are traditional, but in recent years, "traditional" has become a meaning for older dances and styles of dress. Men learned many dances and interpreted many things: the old myths, the hunt, animals. The dancers use three styles and rhythms: Sneak Up, Crow Hop, and Ruffle.

Until recently, women never appeared in the dance circle, especially as soloists. The first women wore buckskin outfits; others, later on, chose cloth dresses. Today, depending upon the region, women doing traditional dances will wear either buckskin or cloth.

Buffalo Dance

- Dancers Fabian Fontenelle, Cassie Soldierwolf,
Sheila Tousey, Lloyd Yellowbird
Drum Chester Mahooty

From the Zuni Pueblo, this dance explores the relationship between man and animals. It is believed that one had to sacrifice so that the other might live. The buffalo gave himself so the people would have food, clothing, and tools to sustain life.

Drum Call

- Soloists Joe Bellanger, Eric Sampson

Hoop Dance

Soloist Eddie Swimmer

Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

The shapes of the hoops tell stories; how all natural things are connected and change and grow. The dancer forms a butterfly, flowers, a turtle, an eagle, and more.

According to legend, the Hoop Dance came into being when the Creator answered a dying man's wish to leave something of himself on earth. The Creator gave him a hoop of wood and told him that for each living thing he could create, one more hoop would be added. As more hoops were added, he would become stronger. The dancer interprets this message by manipulating many wooden hoops to form the shapes of animals, flowers, and many other living things. This difficult dance demonstrates how all living things are interconnected in the physical world.

Mother Earth Round-Dance

Dancers The Company

Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

This dance was called the Circle of Life or Owl Dance, because it was often performed at night.

Fancy Shawl Dance

Dancers Antoinette Benton-Banai, Ramona Roach, Elvira Spencer,
Cassie Soldierwolf, Sheila Tousey

Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

This dance originated as the Butterfly Dance and is very popular today on the Northern Plains. When her mate is killed in battle, the female butterfly mourns and goes into her cocoon, as interpreted with the shawl. Her emergence celebrates freedom and a new life.

INTERMISSION



Northwest Coast Suite

Dances in this suite are from the Northwest Coast, especially from the Makah Tribe of Neah Bay, Washington. In the longhouses throughout the coastal region, the people teach and tell stories based on myths and history, featuring characters from the animal kingdom and legends of whaling and hunting.

Paddle Dance

Dancers Antoinette Benton-Banai, Fabian Fontenelle,
Darrell Goodwill, Kevin Haywahe, George Shields,
Cassie Soldierwolf, Elvira Spencer, Eddie Swimmer,
Morgan Tosee, Sheila Tousey

Prayer Song

Spencer McCarty

Raven Dance

Dancers Sheila Tousey, Lloyd Yellowbird

Spear Dance

Dancers Fabian Fontenelle, Darrell Goodwill, Kevin Haywahe,
George Shields, Eddie Swimmer, Morgan Tosee

Sea Serpent Dance

Soloists Antoinette Benton-Banai, Kevin Haywahe
Dancers Cassie Soldierwolf, Elvira Spencer, Sheila Tousey

Sparrow Dance

Dancers Cassie Soldierwolf, Elvira Spencer,
Morgan Tosee, Lloyd Yellowbird

Songs

Spencer McCarty with Eric Sampson

Memory Dance

Soloist George Shields
Shaman Marty Pinnecoose
Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

The dancer pays homage to the drum and remembers his ancestors.

Gourd Dance

Dancers The Company
Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

Eagle Dance

Dancers Fred Bushyhead, Fabian Fontenelle, Ernest Thomas Grant,
Marty Pinnecoose, George Shields, Eddie Swimmer,
Dwight Whitebuffalo
Drum Chester Mahooty

The eagle is a sacred bird to all tribes and a symbol of great wisdom and power. It is believed that eagles are messengers between man and the Creator. The dance varies from region to region. The company presents two versions, one from the Northern Plains and one from the Zuni Pueblo.

Appreciation Song

Singers Joe Bellanger, Chester Mahooty, Kenny Merrick, Jr.,
Eric Sampson, Lloyd Yellowbird

A Warrior Society song from ancient times recalling 800 years of history, it is still sung today.

Apache Crown Dance

Dancers Fabian Fontenelle, Kevin Haywahe, Eddie Swimmer
Drum Norwyn Wesley
Clown Morgan Tosee

The Mountain Spirits descend at certain times to bless the people and heal the sick. Apache medicine men perform this ceremony, which became the Mountain Spirit Dance or Crown Dance. The clown mimics and exaggerates the movements to aid in teaching.

Fancy Dance Suite

Soloists Fred Bushyhead, Ernest Thomas Grant,
Marty Pinnecoose, Dwight Whitebuffalo
Drum Joe Bellanger, Kenny Merrick, Jr., Eric Sampson

Based on traditional and Warrior Society dances, this dance has become a competitive dance for modern warriors; a moment in today's pow wow for the dancer to express himself with intricate footwork, spins, and brilliant plummage.

The dance circle continues.

American Indian Dance Theatre

The dancers and musicians of the American Indian Dance Theatre come from the Dakotas, the Southwest, Canada, and the Great Plains. They are Apache, Arapahoe, Assiniboine, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Cree, Chippewa, Comanche, Makah, Menominee, Navajo, Otoe, Pawnee, Sioux, Southern Ute, Stockbridge Munsee, Confederate Tribes of Warm Springs, Yakima, and Zuni, all joining together to share the rich heritage of their people.

The dances and music are traditional and authentic and have been given a new focus by placing them in a theatrical setting. There are ceremonial and seasonal dances, dances that are spiritual, social dances, and dances offering great individual expression.

Company members are selected by producer/founder Barbara Schwei and director Hanay Geiogamah from the most important festivals, ceremonials, and pow wow competitions throughout the United States and Canada. Since its beginning in May 1987, the group has toured throughout the United States and made appearances abroad in France, Italy, Tokyo, the Persian Gulf states, North Africa, and Edinburgh.





In February 1990, the American Indian Dance Theatre was featured on public television's "Great Performances: Dance in America," marking the first time that an all-Native American dance company was featured in a nationally televised special. The company also received a Grammy Award nomination that same year.

The company is directed by Hanay Geiogamah, a member of the Kiowa/Delaware tribes. A playwright and director, he is artistic director of the Native American Theatre Ensemble in Los Angeles and a member of the Department of Indian Studies and Theatre Arts at the University of California-Los Angeles.

The tribal memberships of the dancers and musicians are as follows:

Joe Bellanger, Chippewa
(Minnesota)

Antoinette Benton-Banai, Ojibway
(Ontario)

Fred Bushyhead, Cheyenne
(Oklahoma)

Fabian Fontenelle, Zuni
(New Mexico)

Darrell Goodwill, Sioux
(Saskatchewan)

Ernest Thomas Grant, Cherokee/Navajo
(North Carolina)

Kevin Haywahe, Assiniboine
(Saskatchewan)

Chester Mahooty, Zuni
(New Mexico)

Spencer McCarty, Makah
(Washington)

Kenny Merrick, Jr., Sioux
(North Dakota)

Marty Pinnecoose, Southern Ute
(Colorado)

Ramona Roach, Navajo
(New Mexico)

Eric Sampson, Yakima
(Washington)

George Shields, Pawnee/Otoe
(Oklahoma)

Cassie Soldierwolf, Northern Arapahoe
(Wyoming)

Elvira Spencer, Navajo
(Colorado)

Eddie Swimmer, Cherokee
(North Carolina)

Morgan Tosee, Comanche
(Oklahoma)

Sheila Tousey, Menominee/Stockbridge
Munsee (Wisconsin)

Norwyn Wesley, Apache
(Arizona)

Dwight Whitebuffalo, Cheyenne
(Oklahoma)

Lloyd Yellowbird, Cree
(Alberta)



Origins and Background

“A man who has a vision is not able to use the power of it until after he has performed the vision on earth for people to see.”

— Black Elk

American Indians have always regarded music and dance with special reverence. The dance not only fulfills a social purpose, it also is seen as a way to communicate with the forces of nature and the spirit. The dance is central to almost every major occasion celebrating or validating life's passage. It also is used to entertain, to teach, to tell stories, and even to drive away forces that bring on sickness and death.

As the visionary Black Elk proclaimed, dance is the medium through which visions must be shared.

The drum is used to accompany most dances. It is the focal point of the dance. According to legend, drums were once living creatures who sacrificed themselves for man to use. Drums, therefore, are made of life forces—animal hides, wood, clay. Each drum contains spirits inside, and the drummer moves them to come out for the dancers.

The music featured in this production includes old songs — some of which can be traced back for 600 years — as well as contemporary songs. Native American songs, both the new and the old, remind the people of their ancestors and their traditions. None of the songs are written down; instead, they are passed on from generation to generation through their performances at celebrations and tribal gatherings such as pow wows.

American Indians always danced within “the circle.” In a recent book about Native American dance, John Tootoosis relates the meaning of the circle as described to him by his elders:

“In the days when the circle was complete, the two-legged people would dance for any reason at all, but always to celebrate life. They would wear the gifts of the four-legged and the winged ones, and in that way would draw their brothers and sisters into the circle. The circle of the dance is the circle of life — the Great Wheel of the Universe — the Medicine Wheel of all existence. So go to the drum in humility. What the Grandfather has ordained you must do; and as long as we do this, we will live, and the universe will

live, and the circle will be complete and strong.”

Many modern dancers and choreographers have been strongly influenced by Native American dances and music. Martha Graham has said, “Indian dance is for awareness of life, complete relationship with that world in which he finds himself; it is dance for power, a rhythm of integration.”

Jose Limon, another admirer of Native American dance, remarked: “What God worthy of the name can for long remain deaf or insensitive to the power and beauty and the aggregate will of an entire tribe, expressed in formidable dance?” And Maria Tallchief, the Native American ballerina, has said: “The almost mystical reverence for nature is conducive to the making of a person who moves beautifully, a Dancer.”



**Gewandhaus Orchestra
of Leipzig**

Kurt Masur, conductor

May 1-4, 1991

8:00 p.m. Hill Auditorium

Midori, violinist
Christian Funke, violinist
Jürnjakob Timm, cellist
Elisabeth Leonskaja, pianist
Claudine Carlson, mezzo-soprano

The Festival Chorus
Thomas Hilbish, director



Programs

Wednesday, May 1

Sibelius: Violin Concerto in D minor (Midori)
Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3, "Scottish"

Thursday, May 2

Brahms: "Double" Concerto in A minor for Violin,
Cello, and Orchestra (Funke/Timm)
Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D major

Friday, May 3

Prokofiev: Excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet*
Henze: *Seven Love Songs* for Cello and Orchestra
(Timm)
Strauss: *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*

Saturday, May 4

Glinka: *Ruslan and Ludmila* Overture
Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 2 in G major
(Leonskaja)
Prokofiev: *Alexander Nevsky*, cantata for
Mezzo-soprano, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra
(Carlson)

programs subject to change



Music Happens Here

313.764.2538

Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

University Musical Society

of The University of Michigan

Burton Memorial Tower

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1270

ma y festival