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We are looking for **the next step in Alfred Desio's Tap-Tronics™**. Please contact us with proposals if you have a great idea on how to continue the dream.

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SPRING INTO SUMMER

LAC&D NEWSLETTER 2007

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THIS NEWSLETTER IS ONLINE IN FULL COLOR AT:
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Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers

Newsletter

SPRING INTO SUMMER 2007

Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers' mission is to create high quality, concert work opportunities for Los Angeles artists, to present works that communicate to a diverse audience by infusing dance with the cultural influences found in LA, and to enlarge an educated dance audience by reaching out to segments of the population that are typically underexposed to the arts. By directly involving audience members in concerts with participatory activities and indirectly involving them through the utilization of varied, cultural elements used to explore

humanistic themes, the organization aims to demystify dance while preserving the artistic integrity of the medium. In this way, **LA C&D** is committed to using dance as a unifying force that crosses cultural, generational, language, and socio-economic lines. Since its inception in 1979, **LA C&D**, a non-profit organization, has presented multiple educational programs and created many new works through its two professional dance companies **Louise Reichlin & Dancers** (modern) and **Zapped Taps™/Alfred Desio** (electronic & acoustic tap).

SINCE WE WROTE LAST... TO... LOOKING FORWARD

from Louise Reichlin, Director

Our last newsletter was 04-05. It seems so long ago. It was an incredibly busy year and we produced at both Barnsdall and the Ivy Substation as well as going to more than 40 schools. In the summer of '05 **Louise Reichlin & Dancers** performed *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* at the Levitt Pavilion. Dancing on concrete is tough, but the setting in Pasadena and their beautiful outdoor bowl plus 1,100 in the audience with blue balloons (no one was sure where they came from) was memorable. That September **Louise Reichlin & Dancers** (LR&D) toured to ARTCORE in Casper Wyoming where Carolyn Duel, the Director there wrote: "You touched the lives of 2,480 people from the Casper area with your excellence."

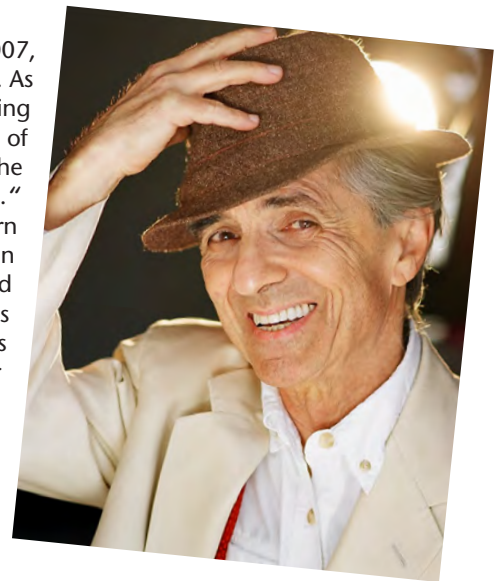
That fall **Alfred Desio** was creating much new work and did jazz concerts at the Jazz Bakery and the Largo with a wonderful pianist Larry Goldings and his group. **LR&D** performed at the Madrid Theatre and was also featured on Korean television here in LA. Just before I attended the National Performance Network (NPN) meeting in Miami around the same time, I was having my hair washed at a hair salon Shear Perfection and was subsequently inspired to do a piece about a shampoo—something that we usually don't consider much. I started working on it with dancers the following spring.



photo above: *The Shampoo* in performance...
photo below: Dancers Lindsay Dale, Kiyoko Ando,
Teya Wollington, Eva Wieland
photos by Erik Abbott-Main

IN MEMORY OF ALFRED DESIO, THE ELECTRONIC TAP DANCER, A FORMAL BIO

Alfred Desio passed away February 14, 2007, of complications from cancer. He was 74. As recently as May 2006, Desio was performing with his students at the Colburn School of Performing Arts and being taped for the summer show "America's Got Talent." His very last performance was a Colburn School Encounter at 49th St. School in June, and the symptoms already precluded his driving himself. Since the diagnosis in June, Desio was in and out of Cedars Sinai Medical Center six times with bladder cancer that moved to the meninges area of his brain. His fight with the disease ended in a peaceful exit at Olympia Medical Center with his wife of 39 years Louise Reichlin at his side.



Alfred Desio, Director of **Zapped Taps™/Alfred Desio**, Choreographer, and Composer, is the inventor of electronic tap, Tap-Tronics™ - a system that allows tap dancers to play electronic instruments using the sound of the taps as a source. A veteran of the original Broadway productions of *West Side Story*, *Fiddler On the Roof*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Zorba*, *Kean*, *She Loves Me*, and *Donny Brook*, he had the distinction of being Katharine Hepburn's personal photographer for *Life Magazine* while a member of the cast of *Coco*. Early dance training and performance was with Jerome Robbins, Jack Cole, Peter Gennaro, Donald McKayle, and Michael Bennett; he also was assistant to Joseph Pilates, Pilates Technique. Dancing with Donald McKayle, he created the boy in the original *Rainbow Round My Shoulder*. His innovative use of Tap and Electronics was featured in the Tri-Star film *Tap* starring Gregory Hines and Sammy Davis Jr. Alfred was invited by the Smithsonian Institute to perform his **Zapped Taps** at the opening of their new Experimental

photo above:
Alfred Desio in June 2005.
photo by Russell Baer

SINCE WE WROTE LAST...
continues on p.4

IN MEMORY OF ALFRED DESIO
...continues on p.2



Photos:

above: Alfred Desio holding electronic taps with Tap-Tronic™ synthesizer equipment behind. LA C&D Director Louise Reichlin holding a racket from her signature piece *The Tennis Dances* on right

Right: Closeup of Alfred's **Zapped Taps™**
(both photos Los Angeles Times 1984)

Below: Alfred Desio performing 1982 (photo Kenneth Johansson)

After receiving a choreography fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts in 1986 Alfred had his East Coast debut of **Zapped Taps™/Alfred Desio** at Dance Theater Workshop (New York) to critical acclaim. The next year, he returned to the Big Apple for Lincoln Center Out of Doors, where an audience of 6,000 attended the show.

Reviewed in **Variety** as “probably the most inventive tapper in the business,” Alfred Desio also used traditional jazz and acapello selections to create a program that had Lewis Segal at the **Los Angeles Times** writing “jazzy, complex unaccompanied routine that defined tap musicality...brilliant...absolutely dazzling.” Dan Sullivan of the same paper described him as “The thinking man’s tap dancer.” **The New York Times** (Jennifer Dunning) said, “The delighted fascination that seems to drive the Los Angeles-based Mr. Desio to explore these high-tech extensions of traditional tap also informs his... dancing. His intricate, deft footwork and his ease are compelling. But in the end it is the cagey exuberance of this leprechaun tapster that makes the work so enjoyable.”

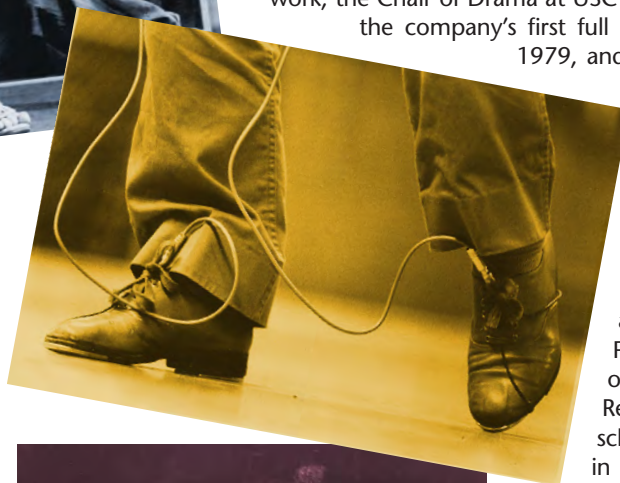
Alfred has been the subject of major television and radio programs concerned with his innovative work with tap and electronics, including *The Today Show*, *2 On the Town*, *NBC News/National*, *Morning Edition*/ and *Performance Today/NPR*, and *Tappin’*, a documentary of the making of the film *Tap*. He performed and was featured in a film produced by Rusty Frank and Arthur Dong about the history and future of tap as well as being featured on Canada’s *High Tech Culture*. Alfred worked as teacher/choreographer with Korean media star So Rhee Oak and was featured in a documentary on American Tap for the Korean Broadcasting System. As a

member of the WESTAF touring roster, performances included many western states. Selected for the International Programming Network, Desio also performed in Barcelona at the international festival Dies de Dansa. He also created one of the title roles in the German art movie *Zwei im Frack* (*Two In Tails*). The award-winning short was seen in numerous film festivals all over the world.

Associate Director of **LOS ANGELES CHOREOGRAPHERS & DANCERS (LA C&D)**, the non-profit base of **Zapped Taps™/Alfred Desio**, Alfred was also a 30-year faculty member of the Colburn School of Performing Arts. In fact, his first formal teaching job was there in 1977 when it was called the Community School on the campus of USC. Although he never applied for teaching work, the Chair of Drama at USC where his wife was teaching, saw the company’s first full concert at Bing Theatre USC, in 1979, and was blown away by his creative

approach – tapping to a video of himself in duet, and various performing innovations. The department chair asked Alfred to teach his graduate students at USC, where Alfred then taught for many years. While at USC, Alfred was the recipient of a Faculty Research and Innovation Fund (FRIF) grant for a collaborative project with his wife, Louise Reichlin. He has taught at other schools and was a Choreographer in Residence at Loyola Marymount University. Alfred also introduced his Tap-Tronics as an enrichment lecturer on the Royal Viking Sea on a Hawaiian cruise.

Besides being an accomplished teacher, Alfred Desio created and directed a special performance project in the 80’s called **Kids Tap/L.A.** Under his umbrella, **LA C&D**, he received a Brody Arts Award from the CA Community Foundation to have tap legend Fayard Nicholas, of the Nicholas Brothers, coach the young dancers. The group was renamed **Colburn Kids Tap/L.A.** through a joint project partnership with the Colburn School in 1994. Alfred and the “Kids” performances have included Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Dance Kaleidoscope at the Ford, the LA Children’s Museum, Dance Roots at LA Theatre Center, the Greek Theatre and their home theatre Zipper Hall.



Photos right and on following page:
Rehearsing at the Ford Amphitheatre for concert with Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra 2004.



Always concerned with his community, Alfred Desio was awarded a commendation from the Los Angeles City Council in January 1998. Councilman Ridley-Thomas opened the ceremony at City Hall by "this is a resolution adopted today to commend Alfred Desio on an outstanding career as a dancer, a director, a choreographer, and a composer."



Photo above: State Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas talking with Louise Reichlin at Alfred's "Celebration" in March 2007. His sons, also in photo, studied with Alfred. Susan Reichlin, Louise's sister-in-law is on left. (Photo Peter Reichlin)
photo right: Sam Weber and Alfred Desio as Two In Tails filmed in 2000]

Alfred Desio has worked often with jazz bands and symphony orchestras. In 2004 he performed with the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra at the Anson Ford Amphitheatre, as well as directing **Colburn Kids Tap/L.A. & Friends** for the finale of the production, receiving a standing ovation. In 2003 he performed a new jazz arrangement to Bach with the Pasadena Pops Orchestra at Descanso Gardens for their program *Kick Up Your Heels*, and several years earlier co-choreographed (with Louise Reichlin) and performed a Gershwin Suite with the same orchestra. In 2000 he premiered a trio tap version to Morton Gould's *Tap Dance Concerto* with the San Diego Symphony at Copley Hall conducted by Jung Ho Pak, receiving a standing ovation. He performed more recently in the fall of 2005 with jazz pianist Larry Goldings at the Jazz Bakery and Largo.

Unusual commissions include a collaboration with Pacific Symphony Orchestra in 1990 to premier *Variations for Zapped Taps™ and Orchestra*, which he performed with the orchestra at the Orange County Performing Arts Center on two occasions. In 1999 he directed and choreographed the original show *Caution: Men At Work TAP* for Theatrical Arts International, which toured nationally in 2000 and 2001.

Alfred Desio was honored on May 6 by the Dance Resource Center "Excellence in Teaching" award at the Alex Theatre in



Glendale. There was a DVD presentation of himself dancing which he had wanted to be presented, and an amazing improvisation tribute by one of his former students Channing Cook Holmes, that included not only tap dancing, but almost a channeling of Alfred singing and dancing *Cute* by Neil Hefti, a piece he loved doing, and some wonderful sounds representing his electronic out-put. At the presentation, Louise Reichlin, who accepted the award for him talked about how strongly he affected many people - not just students, but also by his quest for seeking the best from each person, no matter their age or level. He did not turn out cookie cutter Alfred tappers.

Christian Mueller-Stahl, who directed the German short *Two In Tails*, sent Reichlin a quote that very much echoed many of the hundreds of letters received from his former students. The complete letter, which is like a script, is on the LA C&D web site. - "Alfred



was a great gift not only for the film and the people he worked with, but to me personally. Foremost, Alfred gave me direction, self-confidence, hope. When I needed it the most, he was there. And I'm not sure if he ever was aware of this because it came so naturally and effortless to him. He could dance in his sleep." Toby Mayman, former President of the Colburn School spoke at Alfred's funeral celebration and expressed "The Colburn School has lost its pied piper and it won't ever be the same."

Memorial contributions may be sent to the non-profit **Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers** of which he was Associate Director. For those who donate \$100 or more and request the Desio Memorial DVD, a DVD is being made including the slide show and videos shown at his "Celebration" at Zipper Hall in March, the DVD video presentation Reichlin made for the Horton Awards, plus additional materials. If you have already donated please contact us to receive this special thank you gift. 🍷

LINKS TO ALFRED DESIO

(type in website addresses with no spaces once you start- or go to our newsletter online and copy/paste into address bar or go to Alfred's website, and follow the links with a click until you reach the end)

www.LAChoreographersAndDancers.org/p3_more.html#ZT

- **Website Alfred Desio**

www.LAChoreographersAndDancers.org/p3a_obit.html

- **Celebration of Alfred's life**

www.latimes.com/news/obituaries/la-medesio17feb17,1,6567550.story?coll=la-news-obituaries

- **Alfred's Los Angeles Times obituary by Lewis Segal**

www.calendarlive.com/stage/cl-et-desio7mar07,0,5525434.story?coll=cl-stage-features

- **An appreciation of Alfred Desio, Los Angeles Times by Howard Blume**

www.LAChoreographersAndDancers.org/p3b_obit.html

- **Re: Alfred Desio, Tap Dancer and innovator, has passed away, email from Christian Mueller-Stahl, Director of Two In Tails**



Photos: *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* dancers perform at the Brand Library and Arts Center in Glendale, March 2007. Left to right are Steven Nielsen as *The Wizard*, Teya Wolington as *Dorothy* and Lindsay Dale as *the Patchwork Girl*, Steven Nielsen as *the Joking Horner*, Sung-Yun Park as *Ojo*, photos by Brittany Rogge

We continued working with many schools (the three central pages of Education Notes describe this in detail) and that work segued into showcasing excerpts from *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* at the booking conference for the Western Arts Alliance. We will be adding *The Shampoo* to our showcase this August at the conference, which will be held here in LA. Four dancers from my company drove to Santa Barbara last fall right after that where LR&D is on the roster of the Children's Creative Project. Alfred Desio, in between hospital bouts, went along and really enjoyed the drive and performances.

Just last month, in March 2007, we finally performed *The Shampoo* at the Brand Library and Arts Center. The capacity audience loved the piece as well as excerpts from *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*.

THE REALITY SERIES

Activities continued this season, and finally my new work "*The Reality Series*" is underway with the first look shown at the Brand Dance Series just March 18, 2007. The piece begins with me introducing the owner of "Shear Perfection" then asking for a volunteer from the audience to have their hair washed. My hairdresser Lynn Campbell stands by in her black smock near a sink basin on-stage, ready to simulate a shampoo. Dancers explore with movements that echo the experience; they become the hair, the bubbles and the water. Live dance is particularly suited to exploring an action as tactile as shampooing and brings to consciousness the latent feelings of sensuality, freedom and comfort present in a simple salon shampoo.

In "*The Reality Series*" we will examine everyday events and actions that we don't give too much thought to, such as a shampoo. Besides the dance and music by Afro Celt Sound System, the piece includes audience involvement that helps shape each performance.

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL GRANT

Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers has just received a coveted grant from the California Arts Council (CAC) to develop "*The Reality Series*." The grant seemed to me a natural for LA C&D the moment I read the application description. It is called "Creating Public Value" and the CAC describes it as:

- *Building strong community relationships in order to build greater support of the organization's arts programs and services*
- *Defining ways in which the organization's relevance to its community can be identified and expanded to increase public participation*
- *Articulating the reinforcing the organization's return on investment for civic and political leaders, community supporters, audiences, and participants*

As we develop "*The Reality Series*" in different areas of the city we will be working with each community and the coordinators of on-site locations, thus continuing to serve high quality artistic work in underserved communities and encouraging people to think creatively. An important note for all of you readers is that we will be expanding our email list, and transitioning our newsletters into email format, **We kindly request that you email us at louisehr@LACHoreographersAndDancers.org with your name and email address so we can continue to reach you with news and updates. Please also include your street address so we can cross-index.**

Research is showing that learning to think 'out of the box' and expressing ourselves creatively (for both kids and grown-ups) may turn out to be one of the biggest pluses the arts can supply to our culture. Los Angeles is an underserved community, strange as it sounds, and with the lowest per capita investment in the arts of all the states, California and its Arts Council has been almost unable to function in the last three years. This grant is funded by special **Arts License Plate** sales as our state government has stayed at the 1 million dollar level since that drastic cut and is able only to pay its staff on that budget. So if you don't have a CA Arts License Plate, please consider it to help fund arts in California.

LOOKING FORWARD

Other projected themes of "*The Reality Series*" –

Los(t) Angeles: Although it's seemingly one city, LA's diverse cultures spawn innumerable different perceptions and realities, often dividing the city along multiple lines, as with the recent protests over proposed new immigration laws. This dance would use montages of modern hip-hop and traditional ethnic dance forms during which audience members will be recruited to join in. In this way the disconnectedness between the city, the cast, the audience members participating and those watching will mirror many of the realities of one of the most diverse cities on Earth.

Identity: Inspired by some of the creative appeals identity thieves perpetuate by email and the fantasy-like atmosphere of Alternate Reality Gaming (ARG), this work is both a dance and an interactive mystery for the audience to solve. For example: each dancer in the piece would begin with movement themes creating the character described in one of the spam (or scam) emails – (perhaps behind a scrim so only their shadows would be seen) and through ARG events members of the audience would discover clues that would entitle them to shift parts of the identities to other dancers, thus working together to strip away identities and layers of realities.

There is more to come – so please join our travels this season and journey into an exploration of looking deeper into today's reality, stranger than any fiction imaginable a short time ago. 🐼

AUDITIONS - LOUISE REICHLIN & DANCERS

A description of what we look for in our dancers - Experienced Male and Female Dancers, modern, strong ballet and jazz background, for paid performances with Louise Reichlin & Dancers for the 07-08 season. Our company has performance and teaching activities every week once we start performing at the end of August. Rehearsal honorarium. Dancers should have strong stage presence, expressiveness, musicality, and technique. Floor work important. All ethnic types. Under development is a new work called "*The Reality Series*". Louise Reichlin & Dancers also works in partnership with many schools in the Los Angeles area providing performances, staff development training for teachers and residency workshops with children. The company, a performing unit of Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers, was founded by Reichlin in 1979. For information and appointment call 213-385-1171 or e-mail louisehr@lachoreographersanddancers.org <http://www.LACHoreographersAndDancers.org>

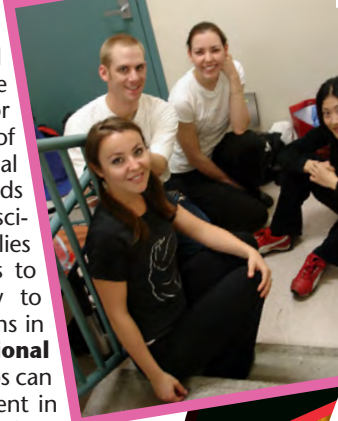
EDUCATION NOTES

Education is one of those words with wide definitions that usually include "the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at a school or similar institution" and sometimes "an informative experience". It is in the arts, however, that a very special education happens-, whether at age 5 or 15 or 55, education does its work through multiple parts of our beings and not just our brains. It has to do with "culture." For our programming in schools, we meet student needs **by providing standards based educational programs**, dancers who are both trained educators and working professional artists, and an arts experience that is engaging and inspiring. We understand that the arts offer students an anchor for personal expression, a source of motivation, and a model to deal with life. We meet students' needs with multicultural and multi-disciplinary workshops and assemblies that create a forum for students to develop creative ideas on how to approach work and solve problems in all subject areas. Our basic **Professional Training Development** workshops can empower teachers to feel confident in handling dance and movement. On a much broader level, through our concert pieces we try to enlarge the context of each person of their personal immediate world, both "real" and from imagination. In this Education section, we will focus on some of the work we do with the students during their curriculum time, in some of our after school programs, as well as our work with some of the students who become part of our bigger productions as the characters of the Hoppers and Horners in "The Patchwork Girl of Oz." We will also include a few "evaluation" comments from our teachers' program.

Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers is a 2006-2007 member of the Los Angeles Unified School District's **Arts Community Partnership Network (ACPN)**. This designation through the Arts Education Branch of LAUSD affirms that LA C&D is a "qualified" provider who meets the criteria of the master services agreement. We have 10 vetted programs on LA County's **www.LAArtsEd.org** and we are a member of the touring roster for the **Children's Creative Project** in Santa Barbara.



Schools we have worked with since our last big newsletter include: Alexandria, Arlington Hgts, Arco Iris PC, Ascot, Bakewell PC, Blythe, Bonita, Broad Av, Broadous, Canyon Charter, Castelar, Children's Community School, Chase, Cienega, Coldwater Canyon, Corona, Dayton Hgts, Elizabeth LC, Erwin, 59th, Fries Av, Gardena, Gates, Germaine, Grant, Griffin, Haddon Av, Hamasaki, Kittridge, Laurel, Leland, Leo Politi, Liberty, Linwood Howe, Lockhurst, Los Feliz, Loyola Village, Madison Middle School, Manchester, Manhattan Pl, Marvin, Maywood New, Melrose Av, Micheltorina, Miller, Mt. Washington, 99th St., Norwood, 107th, 109th Park Av, Pomelo, Ranchito, Rosemont, San Antonio, San Fernando, 75th, 6th Av, 66th, South Park, South Shores, Stoner, Sunland, Toluca Lake, Topanga, 232nd Pl, Union Ave, Valerio New PC, Van Nuys, Vernon City, Vine, Welby Way, W. Hollywood, Wonderland, and Woodlawn Ave.



Top photo- LA C&D dancer Teya Wolington rehearses with the "Joking Horners" for their school performance.

Other company dancers include Erik Abbott-Main, Lindsay Dale, Kiyoko Ando, and Anaja Holloway. Students pictured from Park Ave, Cienega, Miller, and W. Hollywood ES's. (photos: Louise Reichlin)

EDUCATION ON TOUR OR WITH CONCERT PERFORMANCES

When we did a residency at ARTCORE in Wyoming last season, we worked with students who learned the Hoppers and Horners from our dance/multimedia work **"The Patchwork Girl of Oz"**. The presenter there wrote, "You touched the lives of 2,480 people from the Casper area with your excellence." At the Madrid last season, our young guests were from Welby Way ES in the Valley; for the performance at the Ivy Substation we provided after school programs at Linwood Howe in Culver City. In addition, we donated our services to Manchester ES-, a Title I school in Central LA, a school whose students we had been particularly impressed with during a curriculum ACPN residency with many at-risk students. These 3rd graders showed great enthusiasm and potential when we initially worked with them. Thanks to a dedicated teacher who secured bus transportation along with some older student volunteers who provided additional supervision, they were also able to perform with us at the Ivy Substation. It was equally gratifying to see the positive effects of this experience on these volunteers, who were also at-risk students.

These performances are different than the other educational activities because the productions have an additional element – **theatricality** from high production values and more demand for perfection from a "paying" audience. It brings a different side to the process – the precision and ability to repeat something with clarity is certainly not the only thing in life, but striving for excellence is another side that the quest for seeking perfection in a dance can teach. Sometimes we just use volunteers from the audience to be in our bigger concert pieces, and this doesn't fall so much into education as under memorable enriching experiences. We did this at the Levitt Pavilion where 1,100 saw "The Patchwork Girl of Oz" in their beautiful outdoors bowl and at the Brand Art Gallery concert just last month.



Photos: Above: Our dancers in a school assembly performance.
Upper right: Administrator Amy Cureton who will tape the students' performance so they will be able to see themselves in our follow-up workshop.
(photos: Louise Reichlin)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

Our interactive training sessions for teachers offer substantial practical **techniques in developing creative intelligence** within their students including physical dance study, cultural, aesthetic, and historic appreciation, and subsequent integration into the rest of the curriculum using a model that depends on participatory education. The topics range from "Creating a Dance" with practical examples to others that are more concerned with the integration of dance into other curriculum areas. "Creating a Dance" allows teachers to put together a full dance in that same session, while the latter can include Open Court. They incorporate techniques on how to use the elements of dance – space, time, and energy, within their own dance phrases. Other PD sessions also teach some of our choreography that teachers take away and use with their students.

Some of their evaluation comments tell the story:

- "Enjoyable – I am able to see how this can be done in my room."
- "Can be used across other content areas such as math. Lesson was practical for student use."
- "Great discipline and use of discipline"
- "Fun, kinesthetic, hands on, kept us active and engaged"
- "I enjoyed it – can you come here every week?"

(all from Cienega Elementary School)

- "Great- it reminds teachers of the importance of adding kinesthetic activities during the day. It also motivates students to move."
- "Awesome!" "Eye-opener."

(all from Broadous Elementary School)

- "I got many ideas of movement that I can use during my class. I can do movement during reading or math so my students can learn easier."

(Park Ave. Elementary School)

- "Engaging and provided confidence to try choreography with my students."



- "Empowering!"
- "Very useful and full of important ideas."

(all from San Fernando Elementary School)

On our residencies including Assemblies, Teaching Workshops for students, and Professional Development:

- "Students were enthusiastic and engaged in the performance. Students also learned about other cultures. Overall: great work!"

- "Fantastic! Please come back."

(Cienega Elementary School)

- "The group of choreographers and dancers who came to our school did an excellent job working with our students. We look forward to having them again next year."

(Park Ave. ES)

- "I was very pleased with the LA Choreographers & Dancers program. It really taught the students to be open and more outgoing. The students really appreciated the program. Louise Reichlin & Dancers were great!"

(Fries Ave ES)

- "All the teachers and students really enjoyed the dance because it included them into the program."

(Griffin Ave ES)

- "I can't wait for Louise and LA Choreographers to come back and work with our students! What a treat! Class A Act!"

(Grant Elementary School)

- "My students loved it. They left the auditorium dancing."

(109th ST Elementary School)

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Since our last newsletter we have completed four more after school programs through grants from Youth Arts & Education, Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Dept (CAD). Another five were done through the Hollywood Arts Council, and this year through a grant from Target we were able to create a series at West Hollywood Elementary School. The Milken Family Foundation also funds our educational activities. The longer series at West Hollywood, Rosemont, and Los Feliz ES involved the students creating their own costumes. West Hollywood was more similar to our curriculum programs where students have five sessions that include learning already set dances, creating costumes, and then performing with our professional

company for their peers at school. Although all are California Standards based, the CAD funded ones were much more experiential for each student and included writing and creating visual artwork to integrate their dance into other aspects of their lives. Rather than working on a final program, their culminations were called "Show & Share" which included a demonstration class for their families and peers, and a part where they created their own pieces. These two types of arts education are really different – yet both valid. Often the students are asked to fill out questionnaires on the first day, and then write a reaction piece after each class. The following are from 7 and 8 year olds at Los Feliz ES:

"When I started class it felt happy!"

"we make shapes when we had to take off our shoes."

"I felt excited. I Love Dancing!"

"I felt shy, excited and scared because it was my first day in class."

"i Love you guys so much. Thanks for showing us so much. i am very jolly. i was very shy when it was the first day of dance. i hope you guys keep on teaching others."

"When i first came to dance class i was scared because i thought i was not going to make it. On the first day i was nervous. One the second day i was happy but i was afraid when Miss Louise told us that we were going to have a competition to see who was going to make the class because we had too many people. On the third day i was happy because i knew i was in the dance class already."

"It was fun! I was happy! I like it a lot too! I like you a lot!"

"I was shy when I had come. I like the part when I pretend I was a cat."

"I was so excited when I came in first I liked the things we did and my favorite was the across the floor. I like all the teachers in dance class."



"I learned a lot of things it was fun and cool."



Photos:

Above: Company director Louise Reichlin and student translators - plus some dancing- for a Show & Share for families at Los Feliz ES.

Left: 4th/5th grade students at Rosemont ES design invitations for Rosemont ES Show & Share.

Right: Some student designed tee shirts from Los Feliz Elementary. (photos: Alfred Desio / Louise Reichlin)

A VERY PERSONAL NOTE ON THE DEATH OF ALFRED DESIO

from Louise Reichlin, Director

Although Alfred and I were married for 39 years, the experience of being with him when he was diagnosed with bladder cancer, and then on the 9 month journey of his efforts to return to his life as a tap dancer, proved to be an unknown journey for both of us. I loved Alfred for his great talent, and also because he was a wonderfully loving husband who was thoughtful and supportive of my own work. I was supportive of his, and as artists and teachers we both had very full individual creative lives. Although it may sound strange, some of the months after his first operations before the cancer spread to the meninges area of his brain contained some of our most quality time where we could just focus on the present and on being together. He was a voracious reader, and throughout his illness he continued to read a tremendous amount- about herbs, electronics, food cures, jazz and biographies of Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein, both of whom he had worked with years earlier in the original *West Side Story*.

The reality of his no longer being here is overwhelming at times, and our house is filled with all the material objects- from his records and cameras and photographs to his flutes, electronic instruments and teas and honeys to his clock collections and his cars. So far I haven't wanted to express my loss in dance, but I have learned to edit to DVD's and make slide shows with my iPhoto because I needed to show his work through these mediums. We showed some of these at the wonderful 'Celebration' of his life at Zipper Hall in early March, that the Colburn School kindly donated for this event. Alfred had taught there for 30 years. Many of his students, their family members and company members danced, played instruments, and spoke in tribute about Alfred's influence on their lives, which kept his spirit very much alive. In May Alfred was awarded a Horton award for excellence in teaching at the Alex Theater, and this too was an event very much in the present.

In looking through video footage of our joint concerts to use in the DVD presentation, I came across a short excerpt from an early 80's work of mine called *Woman Sleeping*. There was an emotional wailing and mourning section about death to music by Toshio Mayuzumi that perfectly expressed then what I am feeling now. As a choreographer I am so aware of my non-linear thought and creative patterns – and I am becoming now more aware of the non-linear nature of my life and Alfred's. In the 70's when I was first teaching Movement For Actors And Musicians at USC, a Japanese gentleman and a companion (neither of which spoke too much English as I recall) came to watch a class. Afterward, the man offered me a choice of two records he had with him. They were both the music of Mayuzumi

(and I think that he was that composer) and I took them home to listen to. Alfred was there, as he was playing an African drum for my classes at the time. It was before he was teaching. The music had a sound I had never heard – Japanese instruments mixed with European, and a raw emotional drive. I used one section in part of my first work for the company in *The Tennis Dances* (1979) that we nicknamed 'the violent duet' and another section in *Woman Sleeping* (1981-82). I know that when I created the movement, I had never experienced the feelings I have now, but that I understood from the music and was able to convey it in the piece. I think I expressed many of the feelings and created a critically well-reviewed work with elements that I didn't experience and relate to until 25 years later.

I remember saying at Alfred's 'Celebration' in March that I used very few personal photos in the slide show I had created. Although we had a whole scrapbook of early photos of us in New York and visiting my family on their boat, I had no idea where the book was as we never looked back at photos (or videos) unless one of us was trying to recreate a dance work or needed a work photo for publicity. We both lived very much in the present and looked forward – not back. And when I look at the mosaic of our lives together and our company, I think it is also here in the present and always. It is in that way that I can proceed to create new work and live. 🌱



photo: Louise Reichlin & Dancers perform 'Woman Sleeping' in 1982, photo by Kenneth Johansson

Photo: "Celebration for Alfred Desio in March, Zipper Hall, ended with a Tap Jam by a group of his former students"



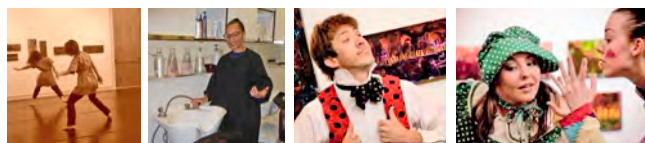
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We are pleased to announce our grants next season from the government sources listed below – and they are all MATCHING grants, which means we need your help. It is our biggest funding challenge EVER, and we need to raise \$20,000 from you to be able to collect these funds. Our projects include the development of our new work "The Reality Series"; our customary work on a daily basis traveling to underserved schools in every area of the city and county, expanding our work on a national level, and the continuation of Desio's Tap-Tronics.

We have some new premiums as incentives for your contribution. For those who donate \$100 or more and request the Desio Memorial DVD, a premium will be sent that includes the photo slide show and videos shown at his 'Celebration' at Zipper Hall in March; the DVD video presentation Reichlin made for the Horton Awards; plus additional materials. There are more than 100 photos of Alfred Desio, including many with students and with his electronics. Some of these performance and personal photos have never been previously published.

If you have already donated this amount to the Alfred Desio Memorial Fund, please contact us for the DVD. You may also add to a recent contribution to receive the gift. We also have a CD-ROM (for Mac or PC computers) of Louise Reichlin's family programming that includes 35 minutes of video, photos, and press materials for a donation of \$50 or more. Although our previous t-shirt supply is fairly depleted, we do have a very special offer for those who give at least \$25. You can receive, for FREE, our remaining Colburn Kids Tap/L.A. t-shirts with \$3 each for mailing/handling! Please make checks out to **Los Angeles Choreographers & Dancers** and mail to: 351 S. Virgil Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90020. All donations are tax deductible and our 501C3 number is 95-3509028.



A special thanks to those who sent a donation in lieu of flowers when Alfred died. These include Amy Yukawa, Joanne DiVito, Karen Weaver, Vanessa Vandergriff, Salina Shah, Marlys Lipari, Joan Roberts, Christine Kim & Larry Goldings, Joanne Mogannan & David/Rachel Rosenbaum, Consuelo Sandoval & Frank Lupo, Linda Borough, and Mike & Aliza Lesser. Louise received hundreds of cards and emails from friends and former students of Alfred's, and they are much read and appreciated. The notice of Alfred's death was picked up by Associated Press, and papers from all over the world printed his obituary.

Our e-mail is louisehr@LAChoreographersAndDancers.org. Please send us yours so we can add you to our email database. Our phone number is 213-385-1171.

We would love to hear from you!

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We would like to thank the following for their support last season and this, including government, foundations, businesses and individuals. We are pleased to have you as friends, and we hope you will continue to support our

performances and outreach programs. Our activities are funded in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The events of this season are supported, in part, by the Los

Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and Target. The activities of next season are also made possible in part by a grant from the City of Los Angeles, Department of Cultural Affairs.

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The web has expanded greatly since Louise Reichlin began the Dance Directory in 1995! At that point very few of the companies had email or web sites. Well, you know the story – and we would love your help in updating the Directory, which has always been (and still is) a free service. Please check your company's entry, and let us know if it needs updating. If you are a professional dance company or organization based in Southern CA, and are not yet part of our listing, please email us the details and we will add you to our website. To get there, go to <http://www.lachoreographersanddancers.org/socdancedirectory.html> and click on Southern CA Dance Directory. There are currently 461 entries included.