

November 12 - 18, 2003

## Choreographer brings original

## style to The Kitchen

### V DANCE

#### ROSEANNE SPRADLIN DANCE

"Rearrangement" and "under/world"

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St

Nov. 6-8 and 13-15

Thurs-Sat at 8

212 255-5793 x11

#### BY DAVIDA SINGER

For choreographer RoseAnne Spradlin, remounting her risqué, Bessie winning "under/world" together with the premiere of "Rearrangement" at The Kitchen this month is another exploration of her favorite themes.

"My interest has always been in why people move the way they move," she says, "and I've always been attracted to duets-male and female-though sometimes it's more kooky than others. Is it dance/theater? Yes, in a way. There's no narrative, but fragments of stories or images like a painting, and the movement of energy available. To me, the stories are unconscious."

Spradlin has been imprinting her original style on the downtown New York dance scene since she first arrived from Oklahoma twenty years ago. In 1994, she co-founded SQUID, a performance space and base for her current company, and recent shows exude a raw nakedness that goes beyond externals.

"The sense of sexuality in my work came out more strongly in the 1990's,"

explains Spradlin. "I was inspired by the general type of dance I saw. There was a lot of eroticism and gay rights, and although straight, I was impressed by the amount of risk people took. Bill T. Jones, Mark Morris and others not so well known used all kinds of body types. For me, there was an undercurrent of wanting to free dance from constraints and the priestess image, and it was personally freeing as well. I use improvisation and ask dancers to tell me stories about themselves for potency."

This was the case for "under/world", a trio conceived after Spradlin saw a friend's photos of fetish clubs around the City, and was taken by "so much electric energy and color." But she was also repelled.

"Often when I'm struggling with something, I look into it more to see why it's pushed my buttons," she says. "The dancers (Walter Dundervill, Athena Malloy, Tasha Taylor) and I went through a long process creating this, and we all found some freedom. They're very naked through most of it, wearing only bottom parts of underwear. The unadorned images are of typical fetish situations, like a person wearing a leash. They approach it with unusual directness-no attempt to hide anything or make bodies look gorgeous. They also play with power and fear, and looking at another way to get control through yielding. This production is even more gritty-lots of black and the dancers going all out."

Just as they do in "Rearrangement", an intense, 25-minute duet that moves from strictly measured steps to sheer intensity. Begun as a response to the death of friend and choreographer, Amy Rosen, last year, the piece is a bit of a departure for Spradlin, with an "almost mathematical structure",

and more formal, phrase material and abstract movement than she's used to.

"I was trying to figure out how to make myself feel better after she died," Spradlin reflects, "so it was a meditation to accept change. It has a very personal layer, and I think there's a metaphysical, Eastern flavor here. I'm currently studying acupuncture, and there's improvisation on biological themes related to DNA and the body-building up and breaking down. There's also a live electronic score by Kenneth Atchley."

How does she perceive the evening as a whole?

"Because 'Rearrangement' is new, I'm still quite close to it, and not at all sure how it will be. For 'under/world' it's easier to imagine. I was shocked that people responded to it so favorably, but I feel very clear about it now. I think if people don't turn off to it, they can take a real journey about themselves, body and emotion. The dancers have been stripped to the basics for this evening. For me, it's really special when I go to a show and see an illuminated aspect of myself. That's what I hope will happen here."