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**Dance**

**Dance Me Back Home**

Louisvillians who departed for faraway stages return to open Moving Collective's new season

By Javacia N. Harris

Louisville knows many of her children will grow up and leave her. The artists take off for bigger scenes, especially the dancers, who set out for cutting-edge companies in big cities like Chicago and New York, or for more offbeat gigs.

Meanwhile, the River City stays proud of her sons and daughters, and welcomes them with open arms when they come home.

The theme of coming home is at the heart of "Returns," an evening of modern dance presented Saturday by Moving Collective.

"I called it 'Returns' because so many of these dancers have either worked in Louisville before or are originally from Louisville and have gone on to do other things" said Theresa Bautista, who founded Moving Collective.

Moving Collective is a Louisville-based organization that signs up dancers and choreographers from Kentucky and surrounding areas for performances meant to help keep contemporary dance alive in the Ohio Valley. "Returns" will kick off its 2007-08 season.

Accomplished dancer and choreographer Kimberly Nygren Cox will debut her piece "Rightways" in Saturday's show.

"It's about changing directions, looking forward, looking back," Cox said of her piece. Like most of Cox's work, "Rightways" shows her strong ballet background. Cox was once a soloist with the Louisville Ballet.

Sarah Comstock, who will perform in "Rightways," also danced with the Louisville Ballet.

"Louisville Ballet was such a home for me," Comstock said. But four years ago she left to dance for groups in Lexington, Chicago and even Cornwall, England.

Comstock returned to Louisville last year with a rekindled love for contemporary dance. Though a ballerina most of her life, her first performance was at age 10 in a modern dance show.

Kara Price grew up in Evansville, Ind., but left her home in 1993. Her dance career has run the gamut. In Virginia, she's danced for a ballet company and at Busch Gardens. She's danced on a cruise ship and performed with companies in Chicago and New York. She's even danced in the Radio City Christmas Show.

"Being able to do so many different styles of dance, I think, has made me a more well-rounded dancer," Price said.

Eventually, Price grew weary of New York and wanted to be closer to home. She landed in Louisville.

Price's varied dance background will come in handy for her performances in "Returns" as she tackles pieces vastly different from one another. She'll dance in Alan Lomax's piece, "Solitary Path," which shares the tale of a woman caught in an abusive relationship, and Denise Gordon's "Just For Now," a fun, light-hearted piece about letting go. She's also a part of Bautista's "When My Mind Is Calm," which represents the twists and turns of Bautista's restless and creative mind.

Mary Jane Westbrook, who is also performing in "When My Mind Is Calm," returned to Louisville about a year ago after a stint as a German folk dancer at Busch Gardens. Her schedule was grueling, doing six to eight shows a day, and when she returned she wasn't even sure if she still wanted to dance. Then she saw the Moving Collective's January show and knew she had to be a part of the next one.

When asked why the style of modern dance was enough to make her hold on to her art, Westbrook's answer was simple.

"I just love how the choreography always tells a story," she said, "and I just feel free in my body to express whatever that story is."

**Get out**

What: Moving Collective presents "Returns"

When: 8 p.m. Saturday

Where: Comstock Concert Hall at the U of L School of Music (West Cardinal Boulevard and South First Street)

Cost: \$10 (cash or check only)



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From left, Elena Fillmore, Theresa Bautista, Katie Scott and Tamara Begley are part of Moving Collective. (Kevin J. Flores)



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