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# Journals in And

One company, two peo

Photos by

by **Beth Miklavcic**

1/8/93 11:30p.m.

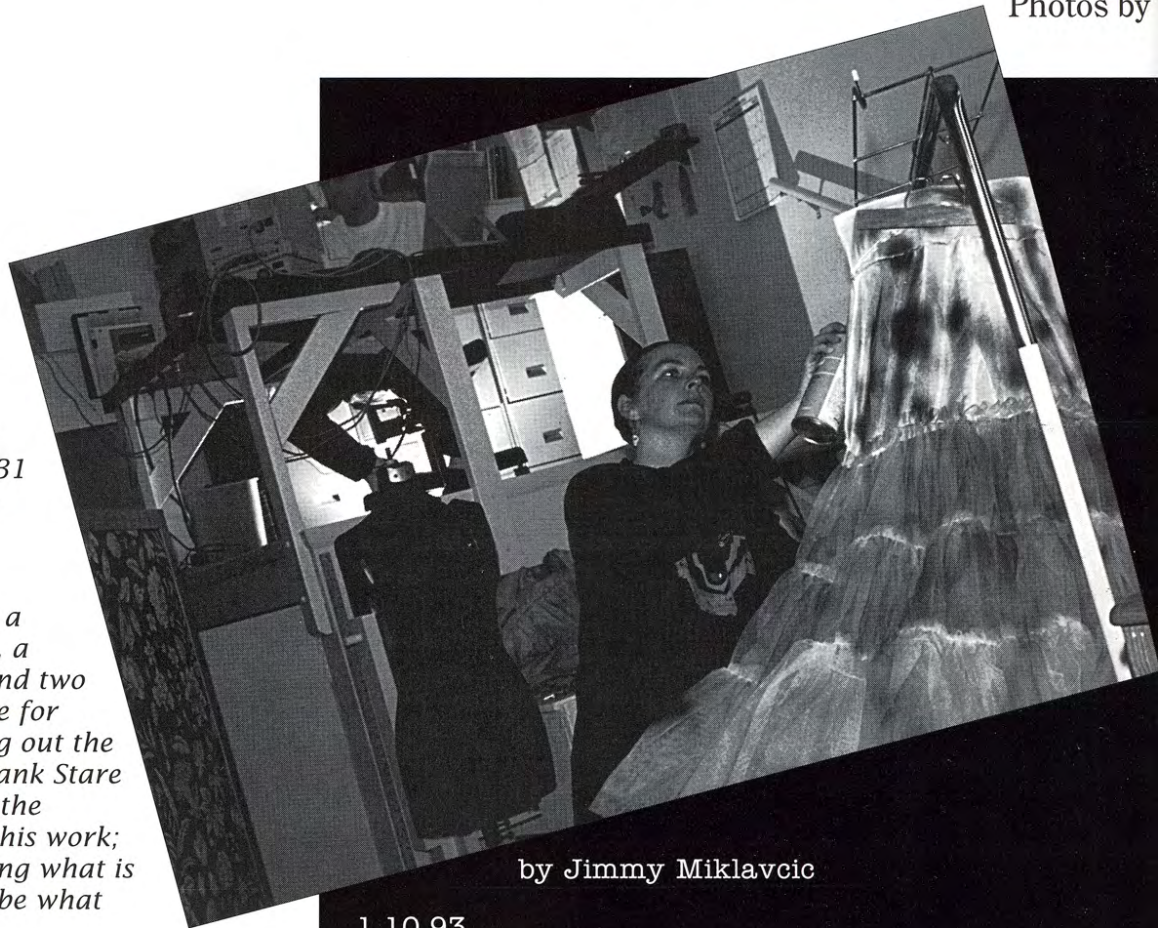
*What am I doing? I'm creating a 45 minute performance work in the middle of undergoing our first financial audit. My "in" box is so full I don't know where to begin. I have to get out the publicity for the Jan. 31 Artists' Exchange and for our March concert.*

*Over Christmas break I choreographed four sections: a quartet which is the overture, a duet on Jeannine and Jane, and two solo's—one for Jimmy and one for Jeannine. Talk about cranking out the work! This piece is titled "A Blank Stare and A Whisper." The same as the concert title. It is perfect for this work; it is about unveiling, presenting what is really there, versus trying to be what other people expect.*

1/9/93 10:39p.m.

*I had employee taxes to do as well as put together more information for our audit. Jane Gregory Payne called. Her foot is injured. She will go to the doctor Monday. I certainly hope its not serious. Jane is very important to the company and "A Blank Stare and A Whisper." She's also performing for The Artists' Exchange at the end of the month. I'm not going to panic.*

*We worked at the studio until 8:30p.m. I still have to plan for rehearsal with Michael. I wanted more time to think about the material. Now, I'll have to get up early in the morning, probably around 6:00a.m. to plan the movement. I just couldn't face it tonight. Any artist considering taking on a leadership position in a company has to take into consideration the administrative duties required. The conflict of time between administrative work versus having time to pursue the art form is very real and very frustrating. I certainly wasn't prepared for all that I am currently required to do. Graduate school was a piece of cake compared to what I do now.*



by **Jimmy Miklavcic**

1.10.93

One of the most difficult things to cope with is waking up at 8:30 am on a Sunday and heading for the studio. Sundays are our most intensive rehearsal days. Some or all of the company will work or rehearse for more than 5 hours.

Today I have to attempt to remember the solo that Beth has choreographed for me. I wonder why I do these things. I, a visual artist, with very little (closer to none) training in dance, involved in a work that sometimes is beyond physical comprehension. What do I look like when I perform?

1.23.93

I wonder about the physical process of turning an internal ethereal dream into a hard felt reality. If I boil out all the intricate gestures, the phenomenal amount of work, the persistence and tenacity of driving towards a certain goal from this process, the main ingredient remains. The underlying structure of this process is "to get as many people

# Other Language

ple, endless problems.

had Johnson

1/11/93 12:22 a.m.

*No breakfast this morning, which is now yesterday. I worked until it was time to leave for rehearsal with Michael. His socks and vest were drying over the heater when I walked into the studio. Talk about dedication.*

*I spent (this week) six hours of preparation to create two minutes of choreography. Add another two hours of rehearsal with Michael to that, and three hours of class (also, working on the material). That makes eleven hours of work to create two minutes of choreography. Take into account the many hours Michael will put in practicing on his own, plus more rehearsal, cleaning, and perfecting the choreography. Most people have no idea the amount of time it takes to create a movement/performance work.*

1/12/93 10:49p.m.

*Jimmy and I had another discussion about money. January is usually a difficult month. So many things are due: P.O. Box Rental, WAAA Membership, Consumer Protection Registration, plus the regular operating expenses. We are always on the edge. Lots of people want us to donate our time to perform. We would do a lot more if we had more support. It's very frustrating. I can only squeeze blood out of pennies for so long.*

1/14/93 10:37p.m.

*Michael is rehearsing for a show. Jane has a stress fracture in her foot. Jeannine has a strained hamstring muscle. I canceled class tonight. Dancers push too hard. They ask close to the impossible of their bodies and when they do get injured they expect to heal overnight. If a painter breaks a brush the painter buys a new brush. If a dancer breaks or sprains an ankle the dancer is out of commission for at least six months. I've been lucky*

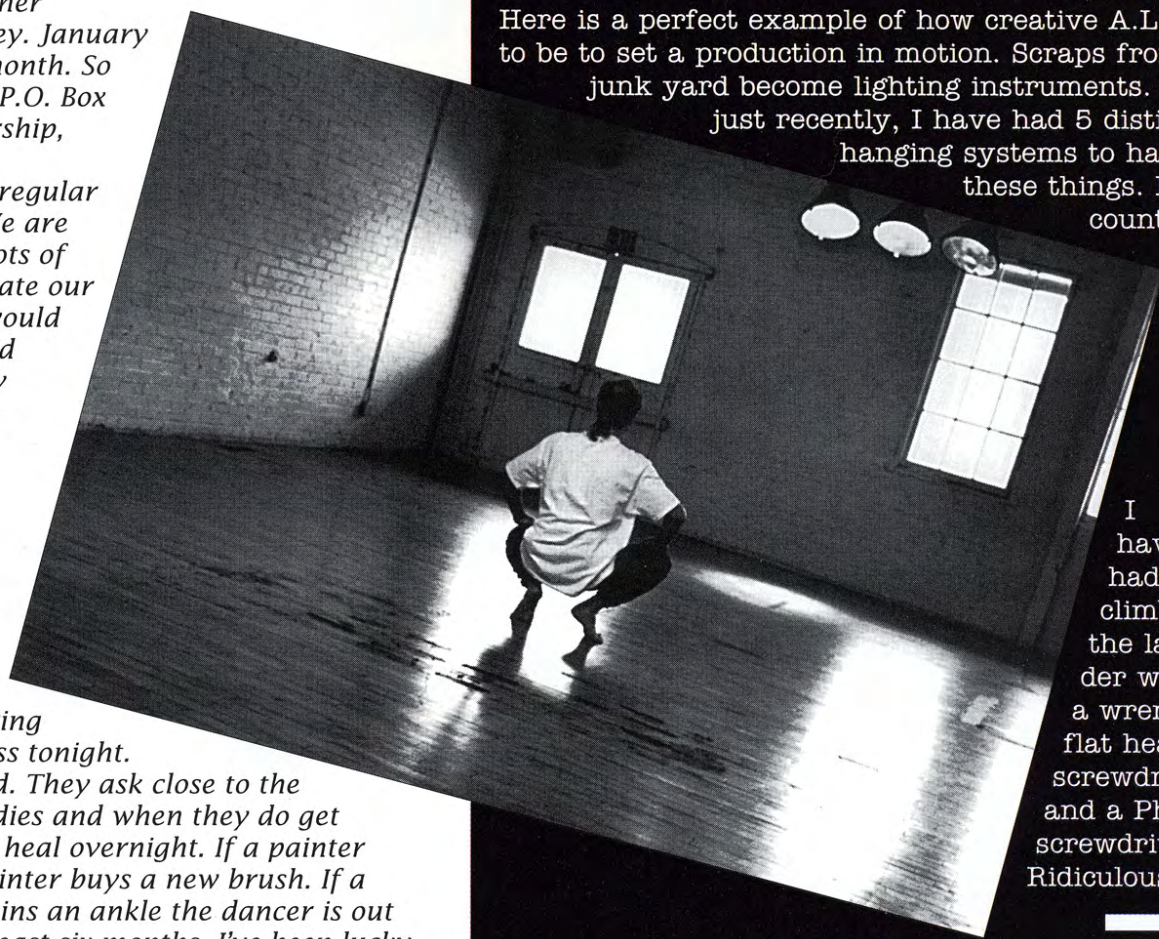
to see the same thing, and experience the same dream as I do." I can now see how religions are born.

If I do anything while I'm here in this strange city in the desert, it has to be this attempt at creating an entity that not only serves Beth's and my needs, but also serves other artists and people.

2.6.93

Lights! Lights! I need more lights!! Michael Larkin, Jeaninne Chan and I spent the day transforming old recessed lighting fixtures into stage lights. Each instrument cost approximately \$8.00. This will add another 9 instruments to my current inventory of 26. This gives me a few more possibilities to work with and makes the studio a little more appealing to future renters.

Here is a perfect example of how creative A.L. has to be to set a production in motion. Scraps from a junk yard become lighting instruments. Until just recently, I have had 5 distinct hanging systems to hang these things. FIVE, count 'em!



I have had to climb the ladder with a wrench, flat head screwdriver and a Philips screwdriver. Ridiculous!



so far, I've danced since I was four years old. So far, I've only injured my right patella tendon, a joint on my big toe, the left teres minor muscle in my scapula, and my ankle.

Thursday 1/21/93 11:15p.m.

Why I am doing this. I'm wearing so many hats that my head is bowed. Choreographer, teacher, director, administrator, publicist, accountant, booking manager. I had a huge pile of work to do today, then our accountant called with more work to do for our audit. When I hung up I had tears in my eyes. I've got too much to do, and I've worked for three weeks without a day off.

Sunday 1/24/93 6:45p.m.

Sunday rehearsal. The morning started out fine. We began by continuing work on the men's duet. They have to do a lot of floor work, so after an hour and a half, both Michael and Jimmy were getting bruised. But, we knocked it out and the basic structure is done. Michael was very tired, and really not present during rehearsal the whole morning. He was unable to concentrate and focus.

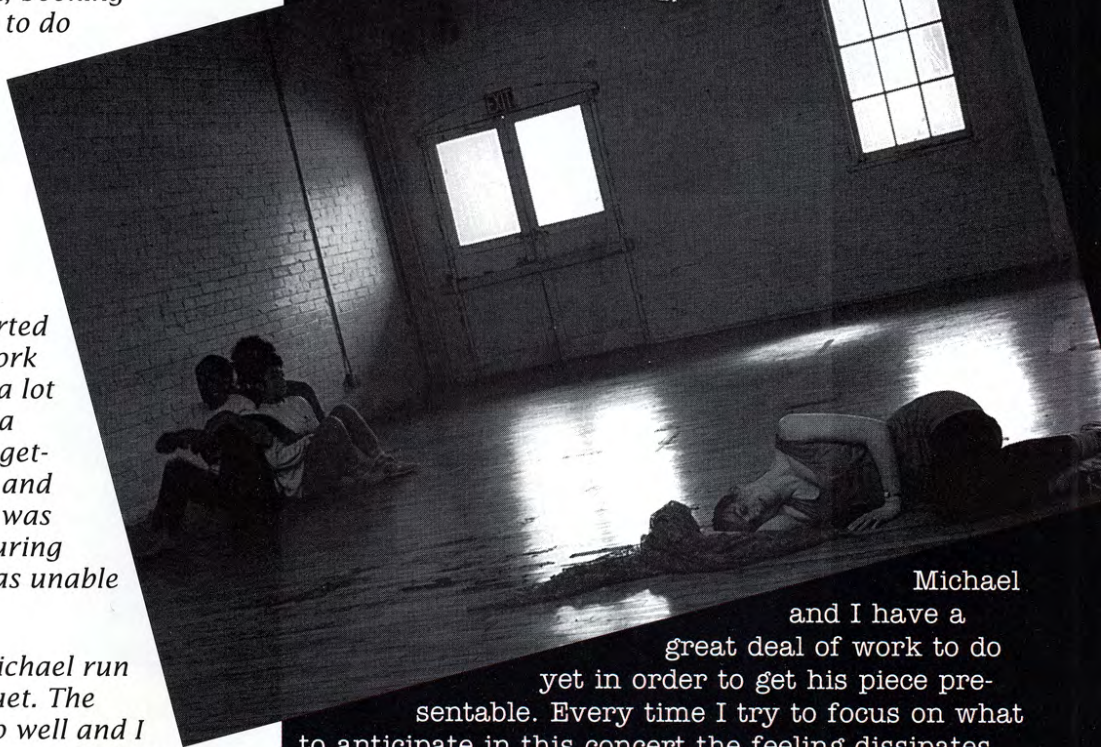
I had Jimmy and Michael run the men's duet. The run didn't go well and I pressed the wrong button on the camera. They began it again. During the run Michael got his big toe caught in one of the cracks on the floor. Then Michael and Jimmy got too close in a part where they do a lift and Michael accidentally punched Jimmy

in the nose. Admirably, they made it through the piece. Michael was bleeding with his toe nail ripped off looking very ugly, and Jimmy was moving his swollen nose around to see if it was broken. Oh God!! Disaster!!! If I'd only pressed the right button in the first place none of this would have happened.

I put in a twelve hour day today. I wrapped up the Artists' Exchange thank you's and accounting; made a few phone calls, and talked with Hilary Carrier. She will be our Artist In Residence during the Fall of '93. Later in the evening I thought through costumes for "A Blank Stare and A Whisper." I spray painted Jane's wedding dress. It looks great! I think I've been able to put the costumes for the various sections together without spending any money!! Yea! The important thing is to finish the "An In" section this Sunday. Then I have two more rehearsals to finish the last section, clean up the whole piece, and work out the transitions. Yea right.

2.7.93

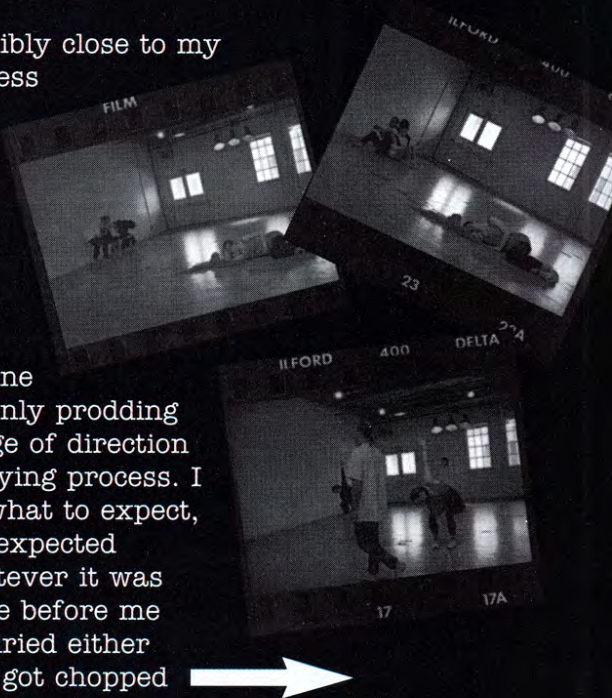
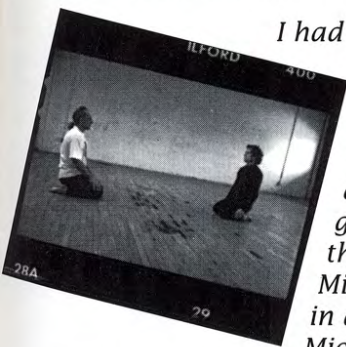
Another Sunday. Another day of rehearsals. The concert process is moving with increased momentum. Beth is nearly finished with her 40 minute work.



Michael

and I have a great deal of work to do yet in order to get his piece presentable. Every time I try to focus on what to anticipate in this concert the feeling dissipates through the fingers of my mind. Choosing the title to be "A Blank Stare and a Whisper" seems very appropriate at this point in the process. Every work is distinctively different in every aspect. It makes it difficult to comprehend the direction the concert may take.

This is incredibly close to my painting process many years ago. I'd spend hours and days pouring paint on large surfaces and watching the paintings define themselves, only prodding a small change of direction during the drying process. I never knew what to expect, and at times expected nothing. Whatever it was that laid there before me when it had dried either moved me or got chopped





*We still need to get together the posters, program and newsletter. Michael and Jeannine are coming over Saturday to help build eight more lamps for our lighting system. After 3 1/2 years we may finally have enough lights to make the stage space look good.*

*Sunday 2/7/93 8:14p.m.*

*I think its going to happen! After today's rehearsal I feel as though "A Blank Stare and A Whisper" may work. I have never pushed out this much choreography in such a short amount of time before.*

*I expect a lot from my dancers. I can't dance for them. There comes a point where they take the material and own it. There is an amazing moment in "An In," where Jimmy is on Michael's back—Michael backs into the wall, Jimmy flips over Michael, then Michael does a dive roll as Jimmy does a backward somersault. It's very risky. Each time they do it I worry whether they will hurt themselves. But I trust them. They have worked together for three years. To dance together well, you have to trust each other.*

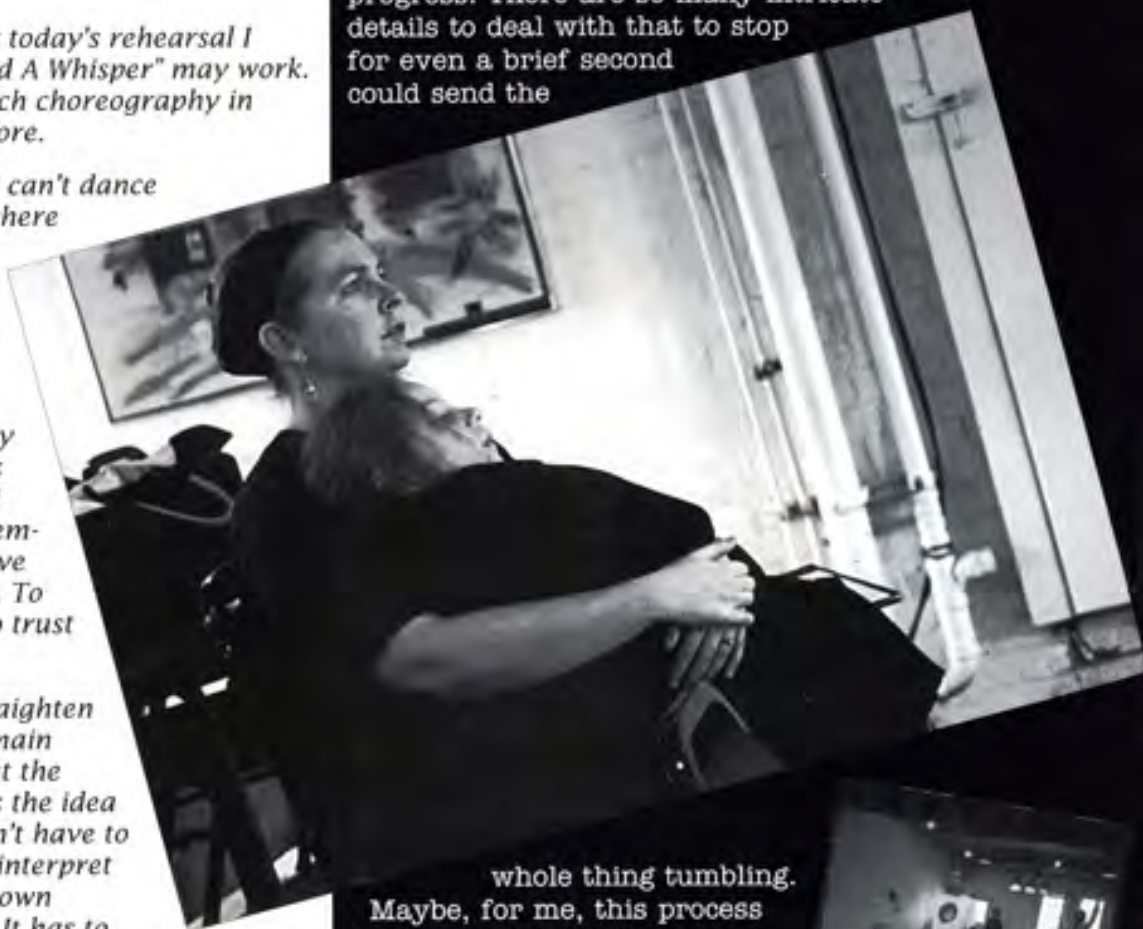
*There are so many details to straighten out, but it is getting there. The main thing I'm concerned about is that the work, as a whole, communicates the idea of unveiling. The audience doesn't have to get my idea. What they see and interpret from the work is based on their own experiences, but I need to see it. It has to convince me, then I feel as though it can be shown to the public.*

*Wednesday 2/10/93 8:09 a.m.*

*I still need to get our newsletter out and the program together. Jimmy still needs to design and print the poster. Robert Pryor will find volunteers to watch the door and manage the house. Jimmy Hamamoto is working on publicity. Costumes still need to be built, music edited. We need to find a sitter for the performance nights. Once all that is done, we should*

*up into business-card-size pieces. Obviously I can't cut up the concert into business-card-size pieces.*

*I guess what I'm experiencing is the inability to stop for a moment to check on the state of the progress. There are so many intricate details to deal with that to stop for even a brief second could send the*



*whole thing tumbling. Maybe, for me, this process survives solely on its own momentum, making it more of a self-consumptive existence.*

*2.13.93*

*Process. How often I use that word to describe the art experience; the art experience is defined by its process. It shapes the final reaction the artist will experience when the process turns into "product."*

*be close to being ready to open. I'm up for this concert. The work is of quality and should be seen.*

Thursday 2/11/93 7:53 a.m.

*Why perform? When I step onto the stage the air has a vibrancy that I only sense during the performance moment. There is nothing like performance to focus one into the present. As a dancer, you are directing energy, conducting energy, carving the space with your presence. It's something more than just you on stage.*



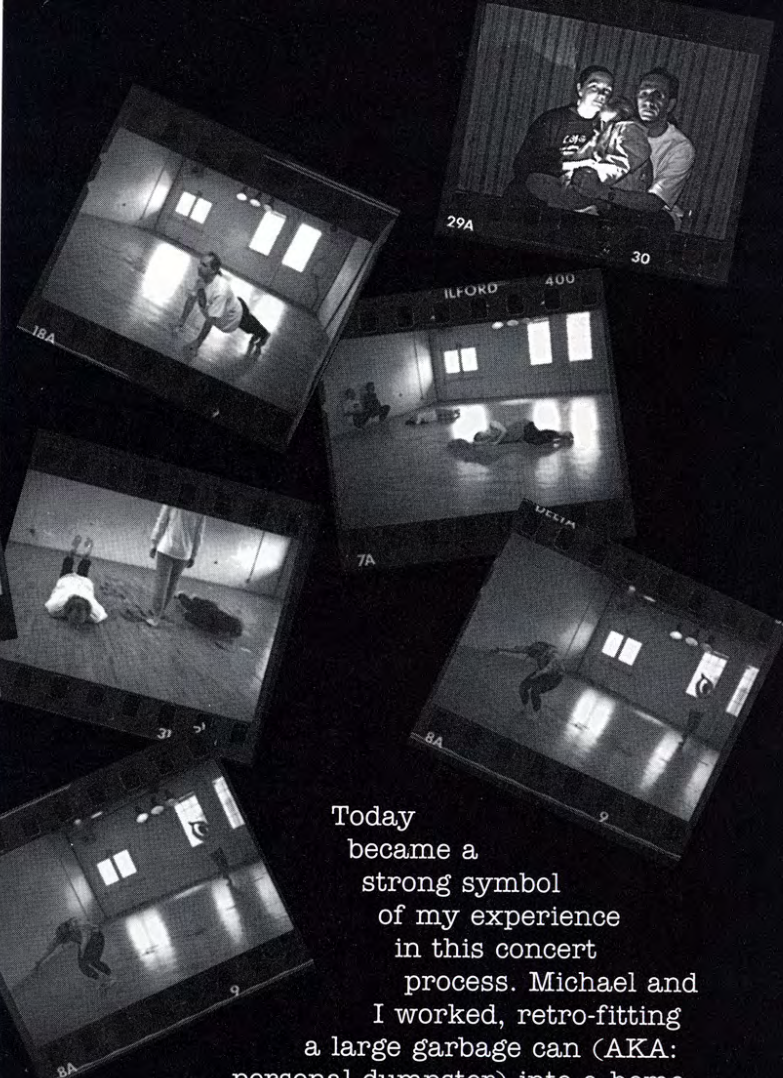
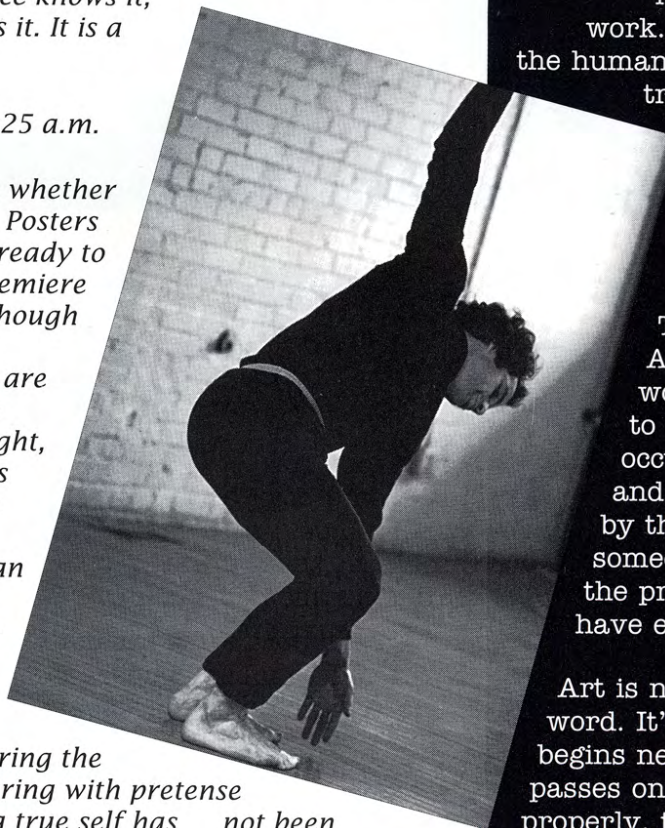
*That moment of absolute presence is rare. Usually, in our normal everyday lives we are thinking of a million things. Past, present, and future. There's the phone, the T.V., the radio, sometimes all three things going at once. You have to think about what to get together for dinner. What meetings are going on that day. Picking your child up from school. Hoping everything is okay.*

*In the performance moment, everything drops away, everything connects. All life experiences up to that moment come together. And it is solely up to you. It is an acknowledgment of the silent tornado inside.*

*When all of this connects, it is as if the body is porous. There is no outside, no inside; it's all energy. When this happens, the audience knows it, the performer knows it. It is a moment of magic.*

Saturday 2/13/93 8:25 a.m.

*It is going to happen whether we are ready or not. Posters and newsletters are ready to go to Kinko's. The premiere works are exciting, though still in need of more rehearsal. Costumes are being built. The time schedule is always tight, opening night always comes too soon. I am excited about this concert. It has been an incredible challenge for me personally, to come up with a body of work that is 45 minutes long in ten rehearsals. Exploring the idea of revealing, staring with pretense and moving toward a true self has not been an easy statement to make. 🐾*



Today became a strong symbol of my experience in this concert process. Michael and I worked, retro-fitting a large garbage can (AKA: personal dumpster) into a home for the main character in his new work. Think about it, two grown males of the humanoid species crawling in and out of the trash can, hanging Christmas lights on it, rigging a jack-in-the-box kind of device inside it, and wiring it for sound. Just picture it.

2.15.93

There is no ending. I can't stop. Although today is a "deadline" (strange word, don't you think?), there is no way to draw to a close. The concert will have occurred, the lights faded, the floor swept, and I may have had rested a day or two by the time these words are consumed by someone's eyes (or fingers to be fair), yet the preparation for the "concert" will not have ended. Nor could it ever end.

Art is not a noun. It's a verb, an "action" word. It's a long slow deep breath that one begins near birth and expends when one passes on. And if artists are doing their "job" properly, that breath is expended into the mouth of a new generation. 🐾