

Creative instincts explored by dancers in Emergency #9

By MIRIAM STUCKY
Special to The Examiner

Kate Story is not a **Dancer**. Curtis Driedger's not an **Organ Player**. These two artists are reticent about naming their practice, about pinning it down, with a bold capital letter.

Both Story and Driedger have honed their artistic practices through near constant exploration of new avenues, on their own, and increasingly in collaboration with other artists. Both are daring, expressive examiners of their creative instincts, who are highly regarded by audiences of their peers.

Together, Kate Story and Curtis Driedger have created **Open Season on Blood Organs**, one of the 13 pieces to be presented as part of the ninth annual **Emergency** festival of dance.

Emergency is an opportunity for regional artists to develop and present new movement-based works. **Emergency #9** runs March 22 to 24 at the Market Hall Theatre.

As Driedger says, "**Emergency** is looked forward to by the community. I've never missed one, and it's kind of a thrill to be in it."

Story and Driedger's piece, is an investigation about the heart, the repository of human emotions. It's about a being who is struggling,

striving for feeling, for heart, for soul. The being frequently fails, forgets, descending into self-importance or sleepiness. "From a movement perspective," says Story, "this is a constant cycle of striving and sinking away. I hope sometimes it will be painful to watch, and also quite comical."

Story is well known to audiences in Peterborough, Toronto and Newfoundland for her work as a performer, choreographer and writer. Last month Story took a short play, **Monologue for a Woman with No Hair** to Toronto's **Rhubarb Festival**.

Driedger is best known as a member of **The Conestokers**, **The Irenes** and **River Rocks**, and for his solo shtick, **Enrique 'Roy' Claveer**.

"The heart," says Driedger, "is everything from sorrow to the ultimate zest for life. It's all very noble and romantic but it's also a great bloody, burdensome mass that you can't really understand. It's so big and G-d awful, and there's no clear way of going about this process of having a healthy heart that's connected with the spiritual and with the body in a nice, balanced dose."

In staging **Emergency**, Peterborough New Dance offers artists a ready-made opportunity to present their work, with a build-in venue, promotion, and audience.

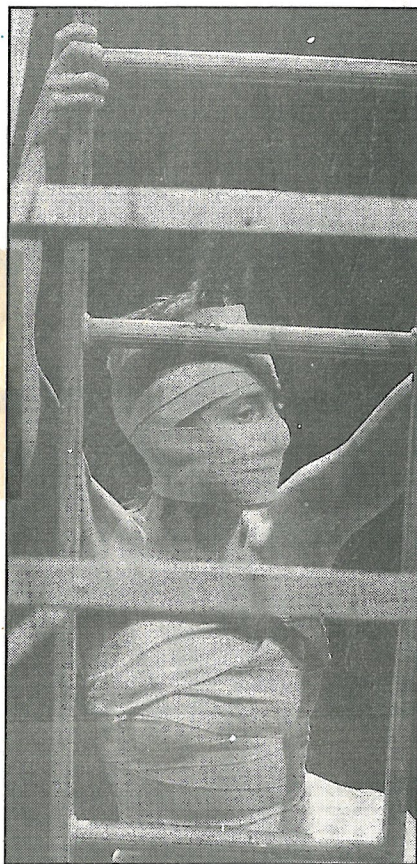
What **Emergency** offers audi-

ences is something like a cultural grab bag of performance. You can't know what's in it beforehand, and it's unlikely you'll appreciate everything inside, but there are bound to be a few gems, a rare trading card, or a shiny ring.

Emergency is unique on many fronts. The festival affords artists an opportunity to take real risks, and it rewards them for doing so. Unlike most local performing companies, which can't or don't pay performers for their work, Peterborough New Dance adopts a model whereby artists get a percentage of ticket sales. Though the rewards are not large, the standard of "sharing in the harvest" speaks of the value placed on the process of developing new creative work.

Emergency #9 runs from Thursday to Saturday at the Market Hall Theatre. There are three opportunities to see Programs A and B and two opportunities to see Program C. Tickets are \$7 for one program, \$10 for two programs or \$15 for all three. Pay what you can tickets are available at the door for Saturday's shows.

Miriam Stucky is a community arts reporter with the Peterborough Arts Umbrella and Celebrate Canada in the Kawarthas.



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Kate Story will be performing in an **Emergency #9** piece called **Open Season on Blood Organs**. Story is a well known local dancer, actor and writer.