California State University, East Bay Theatre and Dance faculty, alumni, a student and staff have garnered praise in a ‘New York Times’ review for the debut of their multi-year project, “Mutt Chapters One and Two.” and will soon head back to the West Coast for additional performances.

Co-directed by Eric Kupers, assistant professor of theatre and dance, and Kimiko Guthrie, of the department’s dance faculty, the show includes performances by theatre and dance alumni Stacz Sandowski (1995 from Oakland) and Julie Brown (1992 from Hayward), student Keith Penney, a senior from Sacramento majoring in physics with a minor in theatre and dance; faculty member Anne-Lise Reusswig; and staff member Eric Andler.

The contemporary performance by Kupers’ Dandelion Dancetheater of San Francisco at New York’s Joyce SoHo, emphasizing diversity of ages, ethnicities, ability, body shape and size, drew notice from reviewer Claudia La Rocca in the July 18 “New York Times” saying, “It is easy to see why an exploration of being simultaneously defined and scrambled by what sets you apart would appeal to the company.”

She went on, “Outside of enclaves like New York and San Francisco, the world of contemporary dance is not nearly so accepting of difference as one might hope in 2009.” See review at http://www.joyce.org/calendar_soho.php

“Mutt” is a dance-play that uses new music, physicality and dreamlike story-telling to look at the issues faced by a mixed-race girl who had born in a World War II internment camp during the 49 days following her death.

The show wrapped up in New York Sunday and moves to the Wawona Village at Yosemite National Park Aug. 19 and to the ODC Dance Commons in San Francisco Sept. 18-20. www.dandeliondancetheater.org has information on the free Yosemite show and tickets for the San Francisco show are available at www.odctheater.org

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