

**Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble**

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**DR. SCHAFFER & MR. STERN PRESENT  
WRITING IN THE SKY  
AT MELLO CENTER, FEB. 27 & 28, 2004**

As co-directors of the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble, Karl Schaffer and Erik Stern make dance accessible and math fun – a feat the two dazzling dancer/choreographers will prove on Friday and Saturday, February 27-28, with a presentation of their unique show, Writing in the Sky, at the Mello Center in Watsonville.

In addition to their work as dancers and choreographers, Mr. Stern is an award-winning Professor of Dance at Weber State University in Utah, and Dr. Schaffer is one of five local artists holding the title of 2004 Artist in Residence at the Henry J. Mello Center for the Performing Arts.

Writing In The Sky, a celebration of 17 years of the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble, will feature Schaffer and Stern as well as special guest Gregg Lizenbery.

Since its creation in 1987, the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble has toured throughout the U.S. and Canada; Karl and Erik recently returned from a two-month North American tour, including performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia. Their 1990 show, "Two Guys Dancing About Math," has been performed over 500 times.

The entertaining duo now returns to where it all began – Santa Cruz County – for a retrospective concert at the Mello Center. Planned as a final home season concert before Mr. Stern takes a professional hiatus, the show celebrates 17 years of engaging and thought-provoking dance for all ages: a cornucopia of intelligent fun for adults and children alike.

Writing in the Sky gathers the best of the ensemble's imaginative, mathematically-inspired work into one evening. Works to be presented include:

- ~ The Flying Machine, a dance exploring Chinese legends about the origins of flight as told through the use of oversized Tangrams (a Chinese puzzle form).
- ~ Signs, in which Erik and Karl demonstrate the all-too-human habit of making symbols out of everything.
- ~ Faux Paws, a video dance for eight hands with luscious symmetries and surprises.
- ~ Lost Soles, a piece in the ensemble's tradition of tap dances for the thinking person.

Other dances include the imaginative Shadowed Flight; the magical humor of Stationary; and the lyrical duet, Wind Tunnel. Not to be missed is the ensemble's On the Problem of the Rotation of a Solid Body about a Fixed Point, which San José Mercury critic Judith Green called "a trio for two men and a basketball." The pieces are tied together by playful interludes involving audience interaction.

Schaffer notes, "Within this concert we have incorporated music and choreography from several important collaborators." He acknowledges Scott Kim, the puzzle-master columnist for Discover Magazine; Rick Walker, a founding architect of the world beat movement and past member of Tao Chemical and Worlds Collide; and musician Jack Spence, who died tragically in 2003.

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Karl Schaffer, Ph.D., teaches math at De Anza College in Cupertino, California as well as dancing and choreographing professionally. Erik Stern teaches dance at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah; he received the Weber State Endowed Scholar/ Artist award for 1999-2002 and has an MFA in dance from the California Institute for the Arts. He performed with Tandy Beal and Company for ten years. Gregg Lizenbery, co-choreographer of the dance Shadowed Flight, is an internationally acclaimed dancer who chairs the dance department at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu.

For more about the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Ensemble and their classroom activities for teaching math and the performing arts, visit their web sites: <http://www.schafferstern.org> and <http://www.mathdance.org>

Bring the family to Writing in the Sky and come early on February 27 and 28 to enjoy an interactive lobby display featuring math marvels and activities, puzzles and refreshments, from 6 PM to 7:30 each evening.

**WRITING IN THE SKY**  
**Friday & Saturday, February 27 & 28, 7:30 PM**

**Admission: \$15 Adults, \$12 Seniors/Students**

**\$10 Children 12 and under**

**Tickets: PVPAA (831) 763-4047**

**Seating: General Admission**

**More info and directions: [mellocenter.com](http://mellocenter.com)**

(The Mello Center is at the corner of East Beach and Lincoln Streets in Watsonville.)

Presented by the Pajaro Valley Performing Arts Associations's Artist in Residence Program

Writing in the Sky is funded in part by the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County. The Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble has received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. The Artist in Residence Program at the Mello Center is funded in part by grants from The Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County and Granite Construction.

**"...hilarious, top-notch entertainment that will make you  
pause to question both their genius and their sanity"**

**– Honolulu Advertiser**

**"...that delectable find – low tech, homespun performances  
built with intellectual rigor, glinting invention and offbeat  
wit" – Hayward Daily Review**