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They Are Women, Hear Them Roar Dance Magazine, April 2008

Too often choreography is thought of as a man's job. While that assumption may be more true of ballet than modern dance, more and more women in both categories are choreographing these days—and their ranks are overflowing. To set the record straight, Dance Magazine is focusing this year's Choreography Issue exclusively on women. We talked to 10 top female choreographers and asked them these questions: How do you choose dancers? What does it mean to you to be a woman choreographer? And, What is your latest project?

KT Niehoff

Artistic director, Lingo Dancetheater, Seattle

Interviewed by Cynthia Hedstrom

On dancers I look for dancers that I'll be able to live in the studio with—a friend, a peer, yet somebody who can morph into what I need. I feel quite vulnerable in the studio, and I require someone who will not freak out when I go off-kilter. Somebody who understands my aesthetic and can cultivate their point of view side-by-side.

As a woman choreographer Part of my process is being able to say, "I don't know." Generally what comes back is a conversation that leads to an investigation that leads to the answer. Is that female? I don't know. I think artists are used to challenging themselves like that regardless of gender. But I am frustrated when I see the disproportionate amount of visible male to female choreographers. I wonder about those 25 incredible female choreographers I've known and why the rest of the world doesn't know them. That frustrates me in such a grand paralyzing way that I turn away and head back to the work.

Latest work Inhabit, which originally stemmed from a desire for intimacy—in the studio, even with the audience. Collaboratively we looked at how we inhabit our bodies, our art, our lives. The outcropping is part party, part dance, part ritual. For me, what I want is connection. Inhabit can be seen on tour this month at Kenyon College in Ohio, April 11 and 12.

Other featured women artists: Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, Kathleen Marshall, Melissa Barak, KT Nelson, Marie Chouinard, Liz Lerman, Jennifer Muller, Siobhan Davies and Lula Washington.