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## **Dancers Migrate To Goose Route Festival**

*By Lisa Traiger*

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CHOREOGRAPHER and dancer Kitty Clark found the fixed migratory pattern of Canada geese gracefully flying in their V-shaped formation over West Virginia an apt image for the modern dance festival she and her composer husband, Cam Millar, founded three years ago in Shepherdstown, W.Va. The Goose Route Dance Festival features artists from along the geese's migratory path -- from New York, Washington and North Carolina -- who meet to perform and teach in the quaint town.

Three years ago, Clark didn't know what to expect when she introduced big-city modern and postmodern dance to a small-town audience. "We didn't have any idea if people would come," she says. But come they did. "Shepherdstown is a small town full of very intellectual, educated people, but I don't think they know enough about dance." Clark, who has lived and taught in the area for three years, is willing to teach them. This year, Goose Route will present four different concerts on subsequent weekends, bringing in out-of-town choreographers with new ideas and new techniques. Clark has even programmed her concerts to fit around the city's more-established Contemporary American Theater Festival, July 11 through Aug. 3 at Shepherd College, starting her events at 6 so they let out in time for patrons to join the theater crowd.

The dancer migration from the north includes downtown New York choreographer Tiffany Mills's company, performing July 11-13. Mills brings five dancers in two recent works, "Goetia" and "Elegy," both set to original musical compositions by hot New York composer John Zorn. Mills favors a boldly physical vocabulary, and her dancers fill the space with a fearless sense of freedom and exhilaration. That first weekend also features Greek-born choreographer Katerina Antoniadou's "Body Watch," a sometimes funny, sometimes biting group work exploring the issue of body image in contemporary Western society. Shepherdstown-based dancer Cynthia McLaughlin premieres a duet, "Curio," with Washington dancer Boris Willis.

The following weekend, Incidents Physical Theater of New York brings a unique combination of cross-disciplinary pieces, including "Flipped," a solo performance in which a dancer is harnessed to a free-standing frame that allows him or her to investigate the topsy-turvy world of split personalities. Marvin Webb, a member of the Takoma Park-based Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, will perform several solo shows, while Washington's Mare Hieronimus and Jane Jerardi will bring "Close," their duet about an evolving relationship. Excerpts from Clark's expansive "Fields and Fences: The Farm Dance" will move indoors after a foray performing on neighboring farms this past month. With a score by Millar that incorporates voices and stories of West Virginia farmers, this piece explores the gritty reality of rural life in a society that devalues land and the people who cultivate it.

"I get a lot of questions about modern dance: 'What does it mean?,' " Clark says. "This year we're starting an artists talk so anyone can ask questions." She adds that the festival is not just for Shepherdstown locals. At 90 minutes and 60 miles from Washington, Clark says it's the perfect summer getaway.

**GOOSE ROUTE DANCE FESTIVAL** -- *July 11-13 and 18-20 at 6 at the War Memorial Building, 102 E. German St., Shepherdstown, W.Va. Tickets are \$8-\$12, with special pay-what-you-can family shows July 11 and 18 at 4. Modern dance and yoga classes will be offered Saturday and Sunday mornings both weekends. Call 301-824-2210 or visit [www.home.earthlink.net/~gooseroute](http://www.home.earthlink.net/~gooseroute).*

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