

**Responses to *Mosaic*, a dance concert about peace, justice, culture, and conflict in the Middle East,
by Karl Schaffer, performed June 21, 22, 2013 in Santa Cruz at Motion Pacific.**

"After nearly 40 years working actively on Israel/Palestine, I must say the performance was the most powerful on target creative effort I have ever witnessed on the issue." - [Stephen Zunes](#), **Prof. of Politics and Chair of Middle Eastern Studies at the Univ. of San Francisco, on the 2011 preview production of Mosaic.**

"MOSAIC moved me, inspired me, even saddened me in unexpected ways. Rarely have I seen a performance so human, so provocative and so relevant to our times. Not only were individual performances compelling, but the whole of it spoke to the struggle, the hard and demanding struggle, of Palestinians and Israelis for lasting peace. I'm reminded all over again how essential the arts are—evoking, imagining human engagement; touching something real inside us; inviting new visions and new risks taken for peace, for justice, for our shared humanity. I was blown away by the courage it must have taken to put this together, to imagine it, and to call it out of a gifted group of musicians and dancers. Thank you!!!"

- **Dave Grishaw-Jones, Senior Pastor, First Congregational Church, Santa Cruz, CA**

"I saw Mosaic over a week ago, and I am still resonating with the feeling, the beauty, and finding meaning in this powerful work. Using Video, sculptural form, impeccable dancers, singers and musicians, Mosaic is a two hour dance piece, conceived, choreographed and directed by Karl Schaffer. In my opinion, it is unique, breakthrough piece in Modern Dance making a strong timely political statement. As an artistic work, it has everything: drama, message, beauty and impeccable strength of great dancers and choreography. I highly recommend this concert be filmed and shown to a wider audience."

- **Roberta Bristol, Emeritus Dance Department Chairperson, Cabrillo College, Aptos, CA**

Letter to Editor in Santa Cruz Sentinel, Monday, July 8, 2013

Dance concert rich, informative

Thank you and Wallace Baine for Thursday's cover story in the "Guide." Karl Schaffer's dance concert, "Mosaic," was not only visually rich but very informative. Like an increasing number of other Jewish-Americans, he condemns the ongoing Israeli Occupation and the brutal treatment of Palestinians. Of particular interest was Mr. Schaffer's dance-monologue, in which he compares Israel's treatment of Palestinians to that of African-Americans in the U.S. as he was coming of age in Birmingham, Ala. He refuses to march in lockstep with the apologists for official Israeli policy, which enforces the Occupation through extreme, widespread violence and oppression. His courage in the pursuit of objectivity -- regardless of the personal consequences -- is laudable.

Sincerely,

Robert deFreitas, Santa Cruz

"I loved the show. The dancing was pow, pow, powerful, for example, the tap dance Karl et al did that sounded like explosions of bombs. The performance elicited in me such a range of feelings, from intensely painful, to inspiring, to pure joy. Great dancing, fantastic music. Kevin Lee's computer program that used dancers' movements to make kaleidoscopic mosaic visuals on the back of the stage, with all the multiplicity of geometry of Islamic architecture and tiles, was incredible & amazing; it blew me away with its brilliance. I love Fattah's music and his infectiously joyous spirit; he has such a wonderful smile and a huge heart and soul. And I love the choir." - **Willow Katz, member of Santa Cruz congregation Temple Beth-El**

"I am so amazed and touched by this performance. The music was incredible, the singers leave me breathless, the dancing was terrific, but I especially liked the commentaries, I especially like Karl's soliloquy about his upbringing and family differences and how many families are torn apart by this issue of Israel and Palestine, and it was very touching and honest and warm, and I loved that. I loved the jokes - we need to be more careful about what we say. So he brought not only beauty, but a lot of information and content that people need to think about. So please, please, please bring them back, they were amazing, the whole production was amazing."

- **Mishka Chudilowsky, retired math professor, De Anza College, video response**

"The mosaic pattern on the back screen, the kaleidoscope pattern, morphing in and out of religious symbols into humans, and back into symbols, could be its own art installation in an art museum, with some video of dancers of course in there. Because it just shows how we make symbols, but we are the symbols. There were so many things to think about, that was just a moment that hit me really strongly. And I really loved it.

- **Yet unidentified audience member, video response**

I was lucky enough to see Mosaic II three times. The first time was at a rehearsal that convinced me to encourage all my friends to attend. Each of those who did told me that they absolutely loved this concert. In my long and extensive experience of viewing dance on both coasts, I've found it rare to see a dance concert that brings all the pieces together as successfully as this one did: a timely,

controversial and important topic, powerful choreography, and top notch dancers and musicians. The diversity and cleverness of Karl's use of media and various art forms incorporated into a whole provided additional surprises and enjoyment. I was moved by the sensitivity, beauty and authenticity of Karl's work. I do hope that this concert, which has developed in depth and impact over the two years since the performances of Mosaic I, will go on to surprise, challenge, and delight many others.

- Marcia Heath, retired dancer and Professor of Dance at University of Connecticut, Temple University, and Eastern Connecticut State University

More notes by Roberta Bristol:

"The first half speaks of the tragedy of conflict and war in the Israeli-Palstinian conflict; the second, takes us back into the roots and heritage of the Middle East. The video introduction reminds us graphically of the suffering and destruction of people and towns, followed by a Solo dancer showing the tragedy of a mother losing her baby; and a group duet balancing the outer and inner struggle. Jane Real's prisoner dance restricted by the force of the battling group of dancers is another dramatic highpoint.

"In the Second half, Karl's Talking Dance gives us his biographical experience growing up with a liberal Jewish family in Birmingham, Alabama at the time of the Martin Luther King, and Ku Klux Klan riots. The humor and ethnic jokes of the Jewish comedians follow with a male-female duet delightfully changing the mood. The melodic harmonies of a group of singers then reminds us that these cultures have lived harmoniously together for 1000's of years and given the chance, could do so again. Middle Eastern roots in concert with musicians are joined later by dancers. The Kaleidoscope images bring a magic and color to the screen as dance movement become mandalas and visual meditation."