

AU dancing alumni on seven-week cross-country tour

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A dancer almost her whole life, Emily Smith'12 of Pine Island, says she showed an interest in art when she came to Alfred University. "It's something you can create and share," she says to explain what both mediums mean to her. Smith is one of a seven-member dance performance troupe, Seven and Four Articulations, on a seven-week performance tour around the country this summer. The group of Alfred University's School of Art & Design alumni shares a background in the visual arts, whether it be print, painting, video art, or sculpture. Their movement, derived from modern gymnastics, ballet, and break dancing, can be classified as alternative and straddles the line between performance art and contemporary, postmodern dancing. The performances employ costumes, props, and theater to create engaging works in a series of solos, duets, and troupe presentations. The group says the performances focus on movement in dance, emotional expression, and social commentary on news, education, and today's culture. Laura Smith'12, Emily's twin, also of Pine Island, says she feels that art and dance produce unique feelings. "I look at art as a kind of energy you expel and using that energy make something a product," says Smith. She says the performances promote collaboration. "It's about using all these creative people," says Smith. Krystal Redding'12 says she came to Alfred from Maryland as a criminal justice major with a minor in dance. "Little did I know I would learn and grow so much in the performing arts division," says Redding. "I ended up changing my major to theater in hopes to perform professionally." Jenny Hillenbrand '11 took up an interest in visual arts observing her grandmother, an art teacher, making collages with magazine pictures. Hillenbrand, a Dryden native, says she never had reservations about joining the tour. "How could you not be involved in a long travel experience where you get to be very creative?" says Hillenbrand. William Head '11, '12 joined the tour in March. He praises the other members of the group. "I respect them all so much as people," says Head of Henrietta. Head says he wants audiences to understand the process of assembling the tour. "I hope they see all hard work we've put into this," says Head. Avery Syrig'10 says traveling in a seven-seater van will be a new experience for everyone. "We're focused on listening to each other about personal space," says Syrig of Cortlandt Manor, NY. Syrig hopes audiences make their own conclusions. "I don't think they necessarily have to come way with my exact ideas or concepts," says Syrig. "I think if they come away with anything that impacts their lives, that's my ultimate goal." Brett Alex Thomas, the seventh member of the group, works at the Mural Arts Project of Philadelphia. "I hope that the audience gets so infatuated with everything they can't resist their own inner desire to do something creative," says Hillenbrand. "This experience will hopefully help us all grow as people, friends and performers," says Redding. The tour began in Alfred on June 2. The remaining schedule includes: Friday, June 8, 2012-Salem Art Works, Salem Sunday, June 10, 2012-National Dance Museum, Saratoga Springs Friday, June 15, 2012-Studio 34, Philadelphia, PA Saturday, June 16, 2012-Hamilton Arts Collective, Baltimore, MD Sunday, June 17, 2012-City Art Space, Baltimore, MD Thursday, June 21, 2012-Venue TBA, Baton Rouge, LA Saturday, June 23, 2012-Freneticore Theatre, Houston, TX Monday, June 25, 2012-Site Specific Collaboration, Houston, TX Minneapolis, MN Date and Venue TBA Thursday, July 5, 2012-High Concept Laboratories, Chicago, IL Sunday, July 8, 2012-Defibrillator, Chicago, IL Wednesday, July 11, 2012-Division Avenue Arts Collective, Grand Rapids, MI Friday, July 13, 2012-Art EFFECT Gallery, Detroit, MI Saturday, July 14, 2012-Venue

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