

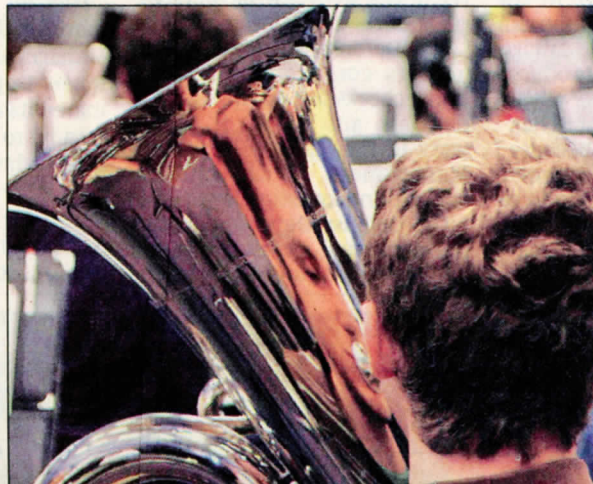
# HOWARD LIVE

## Band in a 'sweat'



Band Director Mike Blackman gives an OK to band members during a rehearsal at River e nonprofit band was founded in 1983 and plays three formal concerts a year.

ADDOCK TAYLOR [SUN PHOTOGRAPHER]



### PREVIEW

## HCC students to showcase their dances

BY LAUREN SCOTT  
[SUN REPORTER]

When Debbie Meyers was asked to rewrite the dance performance curriculum at Howard Community College last year, she knew it was her chance to raise the bar.

Meyers, who taught dance for 10 years at Towson University, joined HCC's dance faculty in 2002 as a teacher and became director in 2004. Using her experience at Towson, Meyers looked to elevate HCC's dance program by comparing it to those at four-year schools.

"I developed our [program] so that our students could transfer their courses, and in essence their first two years at Howard would closely resemble their first two years at a four-year school," Meyers said.

As part of the new curriculum, Meyers added dance composition, a course designed to teach students choreography. The college started offering the course this semester.

Meyers said she thought learning composition was important for students because she has noticed choreography becoming what she calls "MTV-like," depending too much on lyrics to tell a dancer how to move.

"The sole purpose of dance should not be to reflect the lyrics in the song," Meyers said. "Dance is an art form. ... If you have crafted a fine choreography, that should be evident in the movement and the audience wouldn't have to depend on the lyrics to find out what it is you're trying to express."

Two students are taking Meyers' course this semester. They will showcase their dances for the first time tomorrow night and Sunday afternoon as part of the college's Spring Student Fine Arts Celebration. Dance composition student Ann Greyson, 37, decided to choreograph a solo jazz and musical theater piece. She will dance the role of Victoria in the Jellicle Ball scene of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Cats*, a favorite of hers.

Greyson, of Columbia, will use the music from the show, but alter the costume. She will be a Siamese cat, her favorite.

"I feel like I want to present the show and also present my style," Greyson said.

Meyers' other student, Heather Dixon, 20, decided to choreograph a solo tap dance to "I Need a Hero," a song from *Shrek 2*.

"I'm a little nervous," said Dixon, 20, of Beltsville. "I haven't really choreographed anything on my own before. It's my first time putting myself out there."

ys the flute in rehearsal. On  
 Nathan Kemper is reflected in  
 cert band's spring concert



erience for  
 watch her  
 and getting  
 Miller said.  
 opportunity to  
 s president,  
 s from Balti-  
 practice. She

did so because of all the bands she  
 played for, she said the Columbia  
 band was the best.  
 "I liked the fact that the members  
 had a high quality of musicianship,"  
 said Shochet, who now lives in Elli-  
 cott City. "They practiced. They im-  
 proved from week to week. They  
 were serious during rehearsals,

which means you could grow."  
 And sweat.

The Columbia Concert Band will  
 perform its spring concert free at 3  
 p.m. Sunday at River Hill High  
 School, 12101 Route 108 in  
 Clarksville. Information:  
 301-596-9783.

## the season on a lively note



y O'Beirne are two of many guest artists who will  
 Pro Cantare tomorrow night.

eloved. They  
 ch Lomond,"  
 Through the  
 ough the Fair,"  
 Scotland the

Brave." In between kicking up your  
 heels and feeling the urge to tap your  
 toes, you may wish to come prepared  
 with a handkerchief for the tears you  
 will feel compelled to shed at some of

the heartfelt ballads.

The evening begins with a precon-  
 cert talk by Mary McAuliffe from 7  
 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. McAuliffe is compos-  
 er of a work commissioned by Colum-  
 bia Pro Cantare that will be perform  
 as part of the program, *An American  
 Odyssey: The Triumph of the Irish Im-  
 migrant*. The work follows the path  
 of an immigrant traveling by sea to  
 America, his isolation when he ar-  
 rives, the difficult life he finds here,  
 and his hopes that his sacrifices will  
 enable his children to lead better  
 lives than they could have in "the  
 Old Country."

After the concert, and in the spirit of  
 traditional Celtic hospitality, a  
 post-concert party is planned at  
 Slayton House featuring light re-  
 freshments, a cash bar, Irish dancing  
 and lots of twinkling eyes. Audience  
 members are invited to purchase a  
 \$5 ticket to the party along with  
 their concert ticket.

Advance concert tickets are \$23 for  
 adults, \$20 for senior citizens and  
 students and \$25 and \$22,  
 respectively, at the door. Information:  
 301-854-0107 or 410-799-9321.

Dixon said she is still finding her niche in choreog-  
 raphy.

"I guess I just do what feels right," she said.  
 Greyson and Dixon choreographed a modern  
 dance duet that they will perform this weekend.  
 Their piece is inspired by *Cross*, a poem by Langston  
 Hughes.

Through their dance composition class, the stu-  
 dents learned how to convey the emotion in the  
 poem through movement.

Greyson said that when she read Hughes' poem  
 about growing up as a biracial child, she felt the two  
 main emotions expressed in the poem were accept-  
 ance and forgiveness. The challenge was to show  
 those emotions in a dance.

"I kind of like those little challenges," Greyson said.  
 "You have to be more physical instead of vocal."

Dixon added that it is important to keep the audi-  
 ence in mind, too.

"As a dancer or any kind of performer, you like to  
 have people watching you," Dixon said. "You want  
 to do stuff you like and [that] stays to the theme of  
 what you're trying to convey. And at the same time,  
 you don't want your audience to be yawning."

Dixon and Greyson's three pieces are among 17  
 ballet, modern, tap and jazz dances that will be per-  
 formed this weekend.

Dance performances will be held at 7:30 p.m.  
 tomorrow and 3 p.m. Sunday in Smith Theatre,  
 Howard Community College, 10901 Little Patuxent  
 Parkway, Columbia. Tickets are \$5. Information:  
 410-772-4800.



Ann Greyson will dance the role of Victoria from  
 Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical "Cats."



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