

Pasatiempo - February 22-28, 2008

Rhapsody on Alto Street

Craig Smith

George Gershwin gave jazzy, vibrant voice to a whole era of American music and theater – and to the culture that nourished them. His songs, his piano pieces, his musical comedies, his opera *Porgy and Bess*, and his ballet *An American in Paris* are tuneful and evocative glimpses into the fashionable, international big-city life of the 1920s and '30s.

National Dance Institute of New Mexico puts moves to Gershwin's music with three concerts this weekend: at 7 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 22 and 23, and 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 24. The repertoire has been choreographed by NDI founder Jacques d'Amboise and two members of the NDI-NM faculty: artistic director Russell Baker and Jefferson Baum, the company's director of dance. The music included Gershwin's *An American in Paris* and *Second Rhapsody*, and the performers include NDI's Company XCel as well as students dancing in other group ensembles.

D'Amboise hosts a 30-minute "Encounter with Dance" discussion about *An American in Paris* at 6 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 22. Tickets for both the talk and the evening's performance are \$25. Tickets for the performances alone are \$10 to \$15. All performances are at the NDI-NM Dance Barns, 1140 Alto St. For information and tickets, call 983-7661.