

Shirley Mordine and Company provides a pleasant evening of dance

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Shirley Mordine and Company

Rating: ★★★★★

Let's begin with the anticipation of seeing Shirley Mordine, *thee Shirley Mordine & Company* at [The Dance Center of Columbia College](#), of all places (she founded The Dance Center herself and directed it until 1999). Personally, I had never seen Shirley's company, and must say that it was largely, exactly what I thought it might be: a combination of "Columbia-ized" modern technique with some (as my date for the night coined it): "Dancemaking III exercises thrown in" (Dancemaking III is a dance making composition class offered at The Dance Center). Shirley's roots at The Dance Center, and how she shaped it can be seen in her work, even years after she has left it.

Beginning with *I haven't gone there...*, the show starts off as Mordine walks onto the stage and mutters some charming welcoming words before being interrupted by loud pounding on the auditorium doors. After getting over the initial shock, audience realizes the joke. It is the performers themselves knocking on the door. While meant to be funny, weak execution hinders this quirky beginning.

After an awkward start, *I haven't gone there...* takes the audience through a quaint world with much personality. The dancers and the musicians sit awkwardly on stage throughout the whole piece looking rather uncomfortable and giving the piece an



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Mordine and Company at the Dance Center
William Frederking

unforgettable flair and charisma. Rich colors and exquisite technique on the part of Mordine's hand-picked troupe make up for a slightly shaky entrance and some dusty transitions.

The second piece of work, *All at Once/Acts of Renewal* is much more dance-y and unfortunately, a little blander than the opening work, lacking in color and quirky flair when juxtaposed against the first piece. Dancer, Katie Sopoci Drake (in town from D.C. specifically for these performances) in her white jeggings and white sports bra steals the show. Sopoci Drake's lines and fluidity are unmatched by most of the bodies on stage and she stands out in white among the others in grays and blacks. *All at Once/Acts of Renewal* is nice, in a word. Floating and twirling happens as dancers enter and re-enter the stage in an easy-flowing manner and, *all at once* (no pun intended), the piece seems to go as easily as it came.

Mordine & Company Dance Theater performs at The Dance Center of [Columbia College Chicago](#) (1306 S. Michigan Ave.), October 3-5, 2013 at 8 pm. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 312-369-8330 or visit colum.edu/dancecenter.

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