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Performance-art troupe scrapes by on tech's edge

Kellie Hwang, The Arizona Republic

As technology grows, artists and performers try to keep up.

Double Vision, an intermedia performing-arts collective from San Francisco, has been working hard to stay on the cutting edge of technology while using basic, traditional styles of performance art.

The company, formed by artistic directors Pauline Jennings and Sean Clute, has been doing shows in California for more than five years. Now it's on its first nationwide tour. The troupe plans to visit small venues and university campuses in hopes.

Double Vision will perform shows at Trunk Space in downtown Phoenix and the ASU Dance Studio Theatre in Tempe.

Here are interview excerpts with Jennings and Clute:

Question: What's your show about?

Clute: It's a combination of video and audio performances, live performers and improvisation with live digital technology. One important thing with our group is we strive to integrate things and use different methodologies to combine types of art.

Jennings: Sean does a live mixing of sound and video, using video, feedback, paintings, backdrops and custom-built hardware and software. ... There is prerecorded animation playing in the screen that tells the story, and then he uses cameras and computers to interplay live action with the recorded animation.

Clute: It sounds very technical, but the end result is this story. ... It's more like a collage of storytelling and a little bit non-linear in a sense.

Q: What's the mission of your group?

Jennings: The mission of our group is really to look into the future.

Q: What's behind the name Double Vision?

Jennings: Essentially we founded the group together, so we are two directors and have a "double vision." Also it exemplifies that we don't just do one thing.

Q: What are you expecting when you come to Phoenix?

Jennings: There is a cutting-edge school in dance and technology (at Arizona State University) ... and I'm really looking forward to a new experience.

Q: Why is your tour called the 4X60 Tour?

Clute: When I was driving from upstate New York to California, I went to see a mechanic and was worried about the air-conditioning. He told me: 'You don't need it, just roll down all four windows and drive 60 miles per hour.' I loved his way of thinking, that even though it isn't the more comfortable solution, it is all worth it in the end.

Q: You're asking for donations to help with tour expenses. Has the response been good?

Clute: People have been responding well because it will be challenging to get across the country. A lot of awesome individuals have sent cards, offered up their places to stay along the way and donated money.

Q: What are you most looking forward to on the tour?

Jennings: The fact that for five weeks we are going to be off somewhere every day, and we are going to leave our day jobs to just be artists for a while. We're also excited to meet new people and share what we feel passionate about and believe in.

Q: What do you have to offer audiences, and why should they come out to see the show?

Clute: It's easy to sit at home and watch TV, watch videos on YouTube. ... But when you're going out and seeing performances, you become part of something living and part of a community.

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Double Vision

When: 7 p.m. Sept. 9.

Where: The Trunk Space, 1506 N.W. Grand Ave., Phoenix.

Admission: \$7.

Details: 602-256-6006, thetrunkspace.com, double-vision.biz.

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