

[◀ Return to Full](#)

## LexisNexis™ Academic

Copyright 2006 Star Tribune  
All Rights Reserved  
Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

**November 19, 2006 Sunday**  
Metro Edition

**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 4B

**LENGTH:** 482 words

**HEADLINE:** TU Dance's `Veneers' can rock your world with its sensations;  
**DANCE REVIEW:** Uri Sands' rigorous new work is inventive, intelligent and beautiful.

**BYLINE:** Camille LeFevre

### **BODY:**

Every now and then, a dance comes along that rocks your world. It does this with a blend of intelligence and beauty, rigorous structure and inventive choreography, and integrity of performance so singularly wrought that the work rips your expectations from their moorings. Uri Sands' "Veneers" is that work.

Premiered by Sands' and Toni Pierce-Sands' TU Dance this weekend, "Veneers" is a punishing work for both performers and audience. Set to music by Arvo Part and the Kronos Quartet, the choreography is an abrupt, stylized amalgam of militant, religious, political and vernacular gestures.

The dancers - wearing black, gladiatorial-style skirts - hold their noses, stand rigidly at attention, slap themselves, preen on tiptoes, point fingers, violently shake their arms and open their mouths in silent screams. It's not pretty, but utterly compelling.

In their duet, Sands and Eva Mohn are a brilliant contrast in physicality: She's small and slight, with limbs that ripple like ribbons; he's sturdy, muscular and razor-sharp. They push against each other until they're folded into one smooth entity, then arms and legs wildly scramble out until their bodies are separate again. Their uneasy negotiations end with Mohn in a triumphant stance and Sands crumpled on the floor.

The work concludes with Berit Ahlgren frantically performing the gestures as if to stave off the other dancers - now wearing white skirts - moving slowly toward her, dropping flower petals and flagellating themselves with their bouquets. It's a beautiful and profoundly disturbing requiem for the personas we adopt, and ends with a devastating image: Ahlgren with her head in her hands.

If "Veneers" is Sands' masterwork to date, then the rest of this superb program includes selections from his greatest hits. "Tones of Adney" has never looked more luminous. This lush abstraction is full of delicate, creature-esque moves conjured with odd angles, charming squiggles and lean limbs. "Work XVII: Lady," set to music by Ladysmith Black Mambazo, is an exuberant Africanist celebration of community.

"(Happy)," however, strives for accessibility at the expense of artistry. It's a loosey-goosey quartet with repetitive, rhythmic head bobbing, spins and arm pumping. On the other hand, Dwight Rhoden's duet "Showman's Groove" is a crowd pleaser with a jazz personality.

Jason Jacobs and Yusha-Marie Sorzano, who perform with Broadway-style pizzazz and fabulous rapport, had the audience cheering with their I'm-too-fabulous-for-you routines and hyperarticulate moves. It's a wonderful addition to TU Dance's fast-growing and remarkably diverse repertory.

Camille LeFevre is a Twin Cities dance critic.

## TU DANCE

**What:** Includes two new works by Uri Sands and a new work by Dwight Rhoden.

**When:** 2 p.m. today

**Where:** The O'Shaughnessy, College of St. Catherine, 2004 Randolph Av., St. Paul

**Tickets:** \$15-\$24; 651-690-6700; [www.tudance.org](http://www.tudance.org)

**GRAPHIC:** PHOTO

**LOAD-DATE:** November 21, 2006