



LET ME DANCE

A rapidly rising professional troupe in Central Bucks demands to be seen.

Article and photography by John Andrulis

In modern dance, as in all art forms, you need a firm grasp of the basics before you go bending and breaking the rules. Reina Faith (pictured, top) appreciates sculpting young talent because she knows well the thrill of breaking the mold.

Faith, a former professional dancer, and her husband, Chris, an actor, opened the Dance Arts Collaborative in Pipersville when they moved from New York City to Doylestown in 2002. Faith, who studied dance at Emerson College in Boston and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City and performed in the national tour of *The Secret Garden*, saw the collaborative as the perfect opportunity to transition from dancer to teacher.

The program has 150 students enrolled. Building upon the obvious interest, Faith last year launched the newest phase of the collaborative, a professional dance and theater troupe called Artists in Rhythm (AIR) for which she serves as director and choreographer.

Modern dance is where much of Faith's experience and interest lies. As a student at Emerson, she was a member of its contemporary dance company Off-Balance and Moving West. And as the associate direc-



tor of dance at Moravian College, she was a choreographer for the jazz ballet production *Collaboration*. AIR is, of course, heavily influenced by Faith's natural leanings. But, as an unknown entity, it has the advantage of being able to forge its own path. Many of the pieces that it performs are original.

The dancers that comprise the troupe are veterans of off-Broadway and the theater scenes in Philadelphia and a handful of other major cities across the country. Many

have Bucks County ties. Reading their list of credits, it doesn't take long to understand that the life of a professional dancer requires at least two qualities: conviction and a willingness to pick up and move every couple of months. Which means that the opportunity for some to perform close to home is too good to pass up. For the others, AIR represents an outlet for them to be who they need to be. Yes, it's Pipersville, but tomorrow it could just as easily be Broadway.

AIR performs "We Dance," a fundraiser for the nonprofit company, September 20, 7 p.m., at the Stephen Buck auditorium at New Hope-Solebury High School. Tickets will be available at the door. 215-766-7205; www.artistsinrhythm.org.