

## WESTWORD

### House Work

By Susan Froyd October 12, 2000

Local choreographer Deborah Reshotko spends a lot of time working with ordinary citizens to create community-building performances. Intermingling art and real life is clearly her thing, but her latest project is a bit different: A collaboration with New York dancer Martha Bowers under the auspices of an NEA Millennium Project grant, ***Home Wisdom*** gave Reshotko the chance to hand over the choreographic reins to someone else, while employing the skills of artists from numerous disciplines — musician and sound designer Mark McCoin, Boulder shadow-puppeteer Betsy Tobin — as well as all of those talented amateurs she's worked with so successfully in the past.

The result is a fascinating hybrid, a “tour” of the historic Grant-Humphreys Mansion led by four Victorian grande dames stoked with lore. As viewers follow the women from room to room, they'll be treated to site-specific “scenes” or performances popping up like dreams among the formal surroundings — a bear eating dinner with a Victorian woman in the dining room, a nanny singing the kids to sleep in the nursery. There's even a bowling sequence in the basement, Reshotko says: “Grant built a bowling alley down there, and Humphreys later turned it into a shooting gallery. There are ten pins and a bowler, and you get a sense of people falling in slow motion, but the score has a sound like gunshots in the background. There's a double entendre in there — it's beautiful to watch, although it's also kind of chilling.”

“The real challenge was in taking on a kind of project that no one in the company had ever undertaken before,” Reshotko continues. “There's a lot of talent in the collaboration, and also a lot of excitement.” And it's been downright fun, she adds, to watch her own company dance to someone else's muse. “It gave me an opportunity to experience someone else's vision and process — an opportunity for me to grow.”

But more important, she says, it also gave the community an opportunity to grow — and that's a goal everyone can agree on.