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A Dance In Space

Author/Choreographer to experience Zero G for “Stardance” film project.

6 Miles Above The Earth – On December 30th a dream will be realized when award-winning author and choreographer Jeanne Robinson, along with her “Stardancer” Kathleen McDonagh, rocket through parabolic arcs in a specially designed 727 operated by Zero-G Corporation (www.GoZeroG.com). In free-fall they will put Jeanne’s concepts of “dance beyond the bonds of gravity” to the test as part of pre-production for her large format film project “Stardance” (www.stardancemovie.com).

“The principal purpose of this trip is to inform the choreography for the Stardance film through direct experience of the weightless environment. I’ve had zero-gravity choreography in my mind and heart for over 30 years – now I’m going to know it on a cellular level,” says Ms. Robinson, who originated the concept of zero gravity dance in her novel “Stardance,” co-authored with her husband, acclaimed science fiction writer Spider Robinson.

Slated to be the first zero gravity dancer through NASA’s “Civilian In Space” program, her opportunity of a lifetime vanished when the program was scrubbed in the wake of the Challenger disaster. Ansari X-Prize creator and ZERO-G Co-Founder Dr. Peter Diamandis renewed the opportunity by offering two slots on a ZERO-G Corporation flight (a Space Tourism company) after hearing Jeanne Robinson’s “Stardance Film” presentation. Jeanne was quite overwhelmed by Dr. Diamandis’s generosity. “He’s going to end up having affected our film as profoundly as he affected the entire human race by creating the \$10M Ansari X Prize. Like him, we want the Stardance experience to help reignite humanity's fire to travel to space.

This planet is simply too fragile a basket to keep all our eggs in.”

Also on board for the ride will be Jeanne’s collaborator and producer/co-director of the Stardance film, James Sposto (www.sposto.com). The advertising executive and filmmaker was also intrigued by Ms. Robinson’s speech and offered his assistance. When queried as to what provided the impetus for his involvement in the project, he commented, “I was inspired by the opportunity to create a film that combines artistic and humanistic themes within the backdrop of science and space exploration. This film will transcend genre and elevate the public’s perception of what space and space exploration can mean to humanity in our own time, as well as in the future.” Having been a long-time reader of the Robinsons’ work solidified his resolve to bring to bare his skills as a hands-on media creator and allow Jeanne to realize her vision.



About The Project

The Stardance Experience (www.stardancemovie.com) is loosely based on the Robinson's series of novels, Stardance (Dial Press 1979), Starseed (Ace Books 1991) and Starmind (Ace Books 1995). It follows the story of astronaut Treya Anderson, a full time maintenance worker on a space station orbiting earth in the not too distant future. Both a dancer and an engineer, she chose science and space over a career in dance, but circumstances and opportunity combine to allow her to merge her two passions into transcendent art, with cosmic consequences. Slated to be shot in large format (The 15/70 format pioneered by the IMAX corporation), the film will push the boundaries of the medium, combining live action and digital FX to create an emotional and visceral connection with the audience. The film's ultimate goal is to help reignite humanity's fire to go to the stars -- to reach ordinary people and communicate the majesty, beauty, grace, mystery and transcendence that await us all, just above our heads: the bliss of the stars.

Jeanne Robinson is a writer, choreographer, former dancer and teacher. She studied at the Boston Conservatory and the Martha Graham, Alvin Ailey and Erick Hawkins schools, and performed with Beverly Brown Dance Ensemble in New York. Artistic Director of Halifax's Nova Dance Theatre for eight years, she choreographed thirty original works. Her Hugo and Nebula winning 1976 novella "Stardance" pioneered the concept of zero gravity dance, and inspired three novels. Robinson is a lay-ordained Buddhist monk in the Soto Zen lineage of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi.

Kathleen McDonagh is one of Vancouver's premiere dance artists; a dynamic performer, teacher, and choreographer, she is also the director of g space, a studio specializing in the physical training modality of the Gyrotonic® Method. McDonagh has been a principal performer with many of Canada's contemporary dance companies having performed locally, throughout Canada and internationally for the last 18 years. In 2003 Kathleen was the 2nd recipient of the Isadora Award that recognizes artists for their outstanding contribution to Dance in Vancouver.

James Sposto is an entrepreneur, filmmaker and co-founder/creative executive of new-media advertising/design and communications agency Sposto Interactive (www.sposto.com). Both he and his company have won numerous awards for various national advertising campaigns, commercials, web sites and interactive experiences.

About ZERO-G

Zero Gravity Corporation (www.GoZeroG.com) is a privately held space entertainment and tourism company whose mission is to make the excitement and adventure of space accessible to the public. ZERO-G is the first and only FAA-approved provider of weightless flight to the general public.

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