



## **ON TIME DANCE STUDIO**

2125 Crompond Road  
(Corner of Crestview and 202)  
Peekskill, N.Y. 10566  
(914) 736-5681, 737-9514 (studio)

**CONTACT: JO-ANN MILLER,  
PRESS SECRETARY  
914-528-8798**

For Immediate Release: September 6, 1994

### **INMATES IN WOMEN'S PRISON DANCE TOWARDS REHABILITATION-- "The Cabaret": A Memory to Believe In**

Inmates at the Taconic Correctional Facility will take to the stage on Friday, September 30 at 1:00 p.m. in a tap dance production called "The Cabaret." The show, choreographed and produced in cooperation with CASAT, the prison's Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program, was initiated by Westchester Arts Council residency artist Mary Johnson. The first performance of the group was held on 7/22/94, and featured seven women inmates, and became the first use of dance therapy for the prison. Considerable interest has been generated in having this kind of program duplicated at other correctional facilities if funding to support it can be obtained.

Artist and choreographer for this project, Mary Johnson is a well-known dancer who has appeared on nationwide tours with Olantunji and Gregory Hines. She is the founder of the On Time Dance Studio in Peekskill and works with a number of local school districts as part of the Arts-In-Education program.

Director of Education for the Westchester Arts Council, Dana DeMartino speaks enthusiastically about the prison project. She Says, "We were overwhelmed by the sense of pride and ownership that the women had taken in this art experience. This kind of programming demonstrates a need to have the arts in the prisons today."

Don Bennett of radio Station WLNA has been an enthusiastic supporter of this initiative and cites how important it is for the inmates to have something positive to concentrate on during their free time.

But perhaps the most eloquent statement comes from one of the women inmates who told a reporter, "Mary Johnson has given me a memory to believe in."

The September 30th performance will be open to select guests and the media. To arrange to attend, please call Jo-Ann Miller at 914-528-8798. The Tacomac Hills Correctional Facility is located at 250 Harris Road, Bedford Hills, New York.