



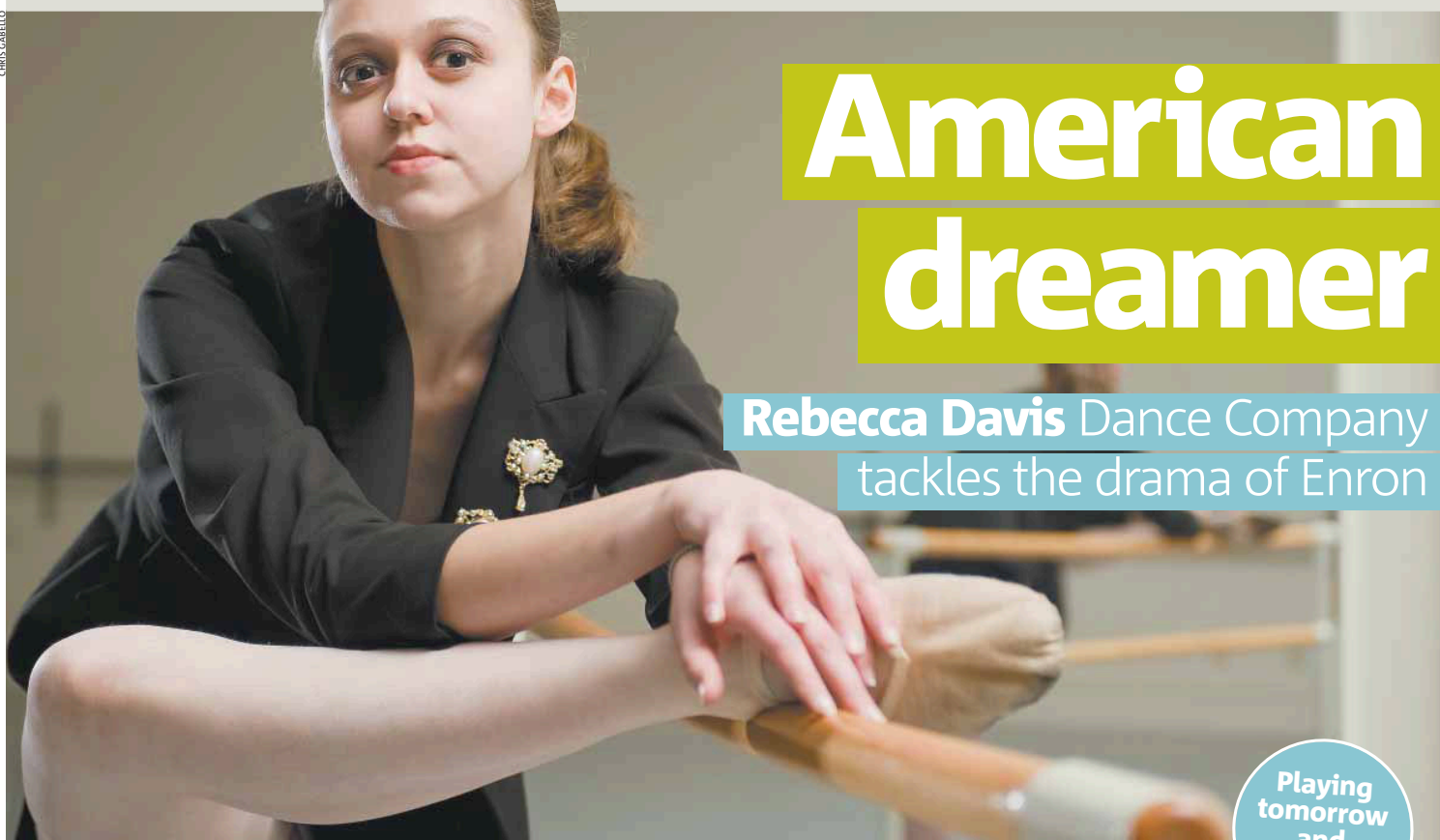
Chaim Potok onstage again

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# American dreamer

Rebecca Davis Dance Company tackles the drama of Enron

Playing tomorrow and Saturday

Rebecca Davis poses in her studio on Broad and Moore streets in South Philadelphia. Since 2005 she has attempted to create narrative dance that delves into social issues.

**BRUCE WALSH**  
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**It is unusual to hear arts administrators use the E-word. But in discussing her nonprofit dance company, Rebecca Davis sprinkles derivatives of America's favorite French loanword throughout her sentences: entrepreneur, entrepreneurial, entrepreneurship.**

A native Canadian, she transferred to Temple University because there wasn't enough "entrepreneurial focus" at her first school, York University in Toronto. She studied the

Vaganova Ballet system in Moscow, while on a Fulbright scholarship, but she always put the practical side of the arts first, returning to Philadelphia to finish her business degree in 2004 and to lay the groundwork for the Rebecca Davis Dance Company. If, in this season of economic collapse, you were hoping Davis' latest modern dance piece — "Greed: The Tale of Enron" — would be an expression of outrage against capitalism as a whole... well, as you can probably tell, that isn't a big part of this artist's world view. "I feel like it's really easy for us as citizens to say, 'wow, that was

**"You feel like those clowns with all of the plates spinning. You're basically running a small business, but you're an artist too."**  
Joe Canuso, Theatre Exile

three evil people at the top and therefore they destroyed many lives," she says, during a rehearsal in her company's second-floor studio South Philly. "And that's of course true, but I think that the lesson for us is that we can all be tempted by different

things, and when we're put in a situation that's very challenging, it's really up to us as individuals to make sure that we choose the right pathway." Rather than beginning with movement, Davis' dances always start on paper, cleanly laying out each

act, scene and dramatic moment. She says she only considers music after she understands the arch of her subject matter. During the interview, a boom box is turned on and 311's slickly-tight pop metal careens throughout the rehearsal space. Ian Dodge (who plays Ken Lay) and Sergey Pakharev begin to mark through the swelling end of act one. It isn't easy to get the rights to popular music like 311 for a public performance. In fact, many — if not most — small companies simply ignore or defy the rules and hope for the best. But Davis is far more business-like than most. "Most of my time over the

last three years has been spent on building something from nothing," she says. "It's interesting that that's paralleled in the artistic productions: creating a ballet out of Enron, where it's just an idea to start with. But the mechanism that we've done that with is to build from the ground floor. In that sense it feels very entrepreneurial."

**'GREED: The Tale of Enron'**  
 Prince Music Theater  
 1414 Chestnut St.  
 Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m.  
 \$25 - \$30, 215-569-9700  
 www.rebeccadavisdance.com