



DANCE:
REVIEWS
NEWS
CALENDARS
CRITIQUES
PHOTOS
GOSSIP



PHOTO: FLETCHER STARBUCK

At 12:30 pm on Saturday, November 19 Anwar Sadat was en route from Cairo to Jerusalem for a confrontation with the Israeli government. At the same time the pre-game warmup was in progress at Ann Arbor for the Big Ten Football Showdown between the Ohio State Buckeyes and the Michigan Wolverines. And television was covering both (Barbara Walters was even on Sadat's plane). But ABC was

manifesting a certain ambivalence over priorities as it switched from one location to another. If simultaneous touchdowns occurred in Ann Arbor and Jerusalem, which would it show?

At 4pm I was scheduled to meet the stars of the show at the Albert White Gallery and we were all going to assume our roles—Richard Sewell as Artist/Master Printer, Fletcher Starbuck as

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A LOOK AT LAWRENCE O'TOOLE

**MIRIAM ADAMS
 FOR SPILL**

Since Lawrence O'Toole's appointment as dance critic for the Globe and Mail 2½ years ago, there has been much talk about him here, there, and everywhere. Spill thought it was a good time to do an interview with him in order to get some history, some facts and some feelings. (ours and his)

Lawrence O'Toole, who turned 26 on Nov. 28, was born in Renew's Nfld. Renew's is a fishing village with a population of 350 and is south of St. John's.

He attended elementary and secondary school in Renew's and was primarily influenced by his grandmother who was thought by him to be a brilliant lady. She had her own library and she even subscribed to magazines, which at that time and in that place was a rather unusual thing to do. He attended Memorial University in St. John's where he majored in psychology. In his fourth year he switched from psychology to English literature. One of his courses at the University involved taking a year of Graham Technique dance classes. Lawrence had engaged in writing for the College Newspaper as well as the St. John's paper and these were the beginnings of his career as a professional writer.

In 1970 he came to Toronto where he lived and worked for 3 months. He recounts that this period of time was rather traumatic for him — as one can imagine growing up in a Very Small Town in the Maritimes and coming to a Very Big City in Ontario would indeed be a Very Large Culture Shock. He then returned to Eastern Canada and from there to Europe where he travelled extensively. During his travels he

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E.C.'S FAMOUS CHRISTMAS EGGNOG

- 6 eggs, separated
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 pint (2½ cups) light cream
- 1 cup milk
- ½ pint (1¼ cups) whipping cream
- freshly grated nutmeg
- at least ½ mickey of rum
- at least ½ mickey of brandy

Beat egg whites and salt until frothy. Gradually beat in 1/3 cup of the sugar and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Beat egg yolks until light. Gradually add remaining sugar, beating until thick and lemon coloured. Beating constantly, very slowly add light cream, milk and liquor. Whip cream until softly stiff. Gently fold whipped cream and egg whites into egg-cream mixture. Serve sprinkled with nutmeg. Makes about 12 cups which should serve maybe 8 people if you're lucky. *Season's Greetings******

LETTERS

Dear Spill;

The tour is over and we are back in sunny Edmonton..... still trying to spend all that money we made and recieved from the Canada Council to make this tour possible.

Maybe Mr. J.G.Bannerman should send us his address so we can donate to him all our surplus \$. He, in turn, could hand it out to the fifty worthwhile Toronto dance artists whom he knows could make better use of it to create real art.

Sincerely,
Carole & Ernst Eder
Tournesol
11845 - 77th St.
Edmonton, T5B 2G3

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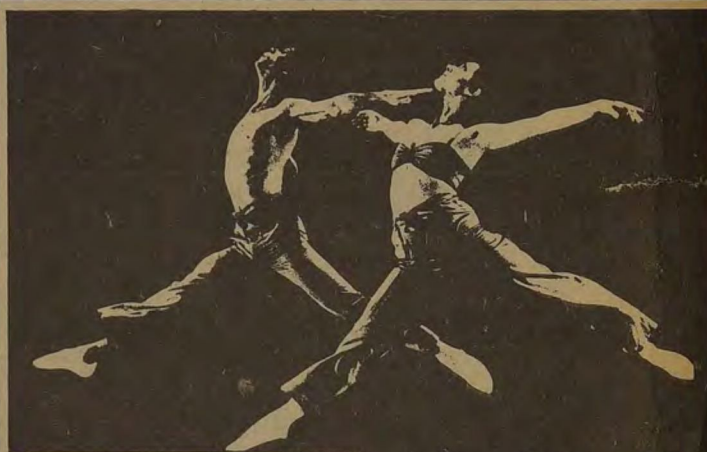
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O'TOOLE

Continued from page 1

absorbed much opera, ballet and music and when he ran out of money he went to Israel to work on a Kibbutz near the Golan Heights. After his lengthy European visit, he returned to Nfld. and soon after came to Toronto.

Upon submitting some of his writing, he was hired by the Globe and Mail and began there by working in the advertising dept. He occasionally was given the opportunity to cover for one of the regular journalists by doing interviews and articles for the entertainment dept. When John Fraser moved from dance criticism into theatre criticism, Lawrence O'Toole became the Globe's dance critic.

Spill asked Mr. O'Toole what had lead him to pursuing a career as a dance critic.

To begin, he said that he liked dance, had seen alot and wanted to see more. On realizing his responsibility as a writer of dance, he began to do his homework by reading more in order to get an historical perspective of the medium.

Many people were disturbed by his age, which at the time of his appointment as dance critic for the Globe, was 23. Lawrence admits that he approached the job with some trepidation since the "hard core dance audience here is small and can be vicious." He was prepared for whatever kinds of responses he might receive from his readers and needless to say the responses were and are many and heavily weighted on the negative side. The letters of flack are from the dance community as well as from the "blue jeaned to the blue-haired." Some criticism comes from people objecting to his use of words - "bedpan", "laxative" - which must appear crude to those who have just stood in the beige carpeted lobby of the O'Keefe Centre the night before, carefully attired in their sequined turquoise crepe, having just taken in the National Ballet's 'Sleeping Beauty'. "I used to go to the ballet at the O'Keefe and began to realize that there was a lot of worship going down. I always felt that I wanted to try to bring that social game down to earth."

He has been highly criticized by the modern and post-modern choreographers and audiences as one who doesn't understand and doesn't seem to have much depth or insight into current dance forms and concepts.

"One thing I would like to make clear. There is no such thing as objective criticism. Every time one sees a performance, one brings with him his experiences, emotions and opinions. To be compassionate, a writer must be subjective."

A common criticism about him by the so-called 'avant garde' artists is that perhaps he is out of his depth when he looks at new dance. "I don't believe in being out of one's depth. I can only look



PHOTO: SPILL STAFF

at what is happening and absorb what the images are doing or saying." Admittedly, sometimes he feels a little confused and needs more time to digest, but reviews must be ready about one hour after most performances, so he must go with his first impressions. "In ballet, the choreography has been around for years so you look for different things. In modern, although now 'modern' is a useless term, there is always something new and one is surprised or bored, but there is always a chancey element to new things. People think I'm setting up rules. I'm not. I only give my opinion. I can't write about a dull performance in a dull way. It has to be snappy, entertaining and witty. I have to be fair to the performers and I can't let my writing smother what they did. It's not fun to write pans. I hate it." Spill asked how he was affected by derogatory 'Letters to the Editor'. He said that the newspaper loves flack. Controversial stuff sells papers. A writer sees the 'Letters' to check for factual errors, before they are printed. If there is no misinformation the editor will use them.

The Globe is seen by journalists as a writer's newspaper. O'Toole is free to say what he wishes without fear of editorial restrictions. If there is a lack of space, a paragraph or two will be deleted, but words aren't often changed or edited.

"I know a critic has a great deal of power. He is dealing with people's livelihoods. I don't like power. I don't know what to do with it. Firstly, I have to be honest to myself. I would like to change attitudes on a social level. I would like to see dance as accessible to everyone. People should feel comfortable with it. In writing, you explain something to yourself that needed explanation and in so-doing, perhaps it gets explained to others." When asked how he felt about his work, O'Toole said, "I can recall some very

good things that I have written. Some not so good. My writing can become abrasive. I realize that and it is sometimes a problem. I believe that critics should be put out to pasture for awhile. They should be able to take some time off --- to rethink things, then they are able to come back with new attitudes, otherwise their approach can become stale.

Spill asked Mr. O'Toole how he felt about dance in Canada and what he foresaw for the immediate future.

"I think dance here is healthy. A lot of people are doing alot of things. I feel that there is going to be a big blitz coming up -- more activity from more people. As far as defining Canadian dance as Canadian, it is difficult. There are companies like Les Grands Ballets which keep doing Canadian things. Ann Ditchburn's 'Mad Shadows', choreographed for the National Ballet, has very Canadian sensibilities. There was something Canadian about the whole impression and attitude. I think the way she worked - her choreography was a rather tentative thing that could only have been brought about in Canada. What happens in 'Mad Shadows' is that something in this girl Isobel has been repressed for the longest time and it just doesn't stay in there any longer --- it bursts out. That's what I thought was Canadian about it. All these tentative steps that Isobel took towards this coming out -- this flowering, that's a theme that any dancer, writer, whatever, could get alot of mileage from. Because it is something germane to this country. Now it doesn't have to stay that way but since it has been such, why not explore it?"

"This sounds corny, but I really feel that anyone who is a critic and who is writing about what other people are doing, whether they're dancing or whether they're baking bread, is trying to make things a little better."

LOOKING AT LEAVING

MIMI BECK

Was it the fellow wearing the foot cast ker-klomping out of the Sara Rudner concert who set precedent? Is Mecca spelled E-X-I-T in Torontoneses? Oh, those fascinatin' leavers? They're slipping sliding, bolting, dashing, and often STOMPING toward the nearest saving portal...Sir? are you leaving this performance for physical or political reasons? or both. Was it too wonderful for you?

True, the ker-klomps provided an interesting rhythmic accompaniment to all those unaccompanied 10's on stage. Ninety minutes of them left me feeling like I'd taken every technique class in New York for a solid week. How, though, does a dansus interruptus spectator ascertain choreographic intent? (All considerations of "getting the general drift" are hereby conveniently paced aside.)

A few statistics: Yvonne Rainer's film audience increased in size during screening. 99% of Trisha Brown's leavees used the washroom or water fountain facilities. The other 1% had underage babysitters.

I sat behind a plaid-skirted mother of four during the Charlotte Hildebrand/La Groupe de la Place Royale concert. This woman likes children who sit still and think quietly. How long til?... Frequent glances away from the stage during *Dance for a Gallery*. Side comments. No applause. Seconds stretch. Suspense builds during *Nanti Malam*. This is it. The 5th set of Nee nah nee nah nee nah nee nah nee nah nee nah's duz it. She ambles off and leaves behind a small rumble in her chair.

Nanti Malam grew in sonic and visual intensity before reaching a final, furious crescendo. The sensory load it presented was reminiscent of our days in psychedemia. Light poles accentuated the dancers' feet during the final scene, as they slowly left the space in a clump of movement. The tone of their departure was a somnolent resolve to the earlier agitation.

Welp, sure as the strings of Howdy Doody, there's folks would walk away from Louie Pasteur, 5 minutes from the anthrax cure, jus' tearin' his hair with cotton balls 'tween his teeth. What was he doin' anyway, lookin' so silly?

Looking at Dance. Myopic. Telescopic? Eye - the organ of sight, *sometimes* (italics my own) including the surrounding parts. (Oxford Dictionary)

The critic eye, that microscope of wit, sees hairs and pores. (Pope)

To boo...(Beck)

...or not to boo. (Mac)

to be continued

PRISM DANCE THEATRE VANCOUVER

Dec. 26 - Jan 7 Xmas course in Cunningham technique lead by Albert Reid.
Jan. 6-7 Studio event, Albert Reid & Prism Dance Theatre.
Feb 10 Surrey Arts Centre. Performance
Feb 23, 24, 25 Vancouver East Cultural Centre, Performance.
Mar 19 Queen Elizabeth Playhouse Performance
Apr. 23-30 Vancouver Island Tour
May Judy Jarvis, in Residence

DANCE AT ASPACE

Jan. 6,7 Jennifer Mascal
Jan. 13,14 Jean Moncrieff/Paula Ravitz
20,21 Mimi Beck/Brenda Neilson
27,28 Keith Urban/Yanci Bukovec
Feb. 3,4 Janice Hladki/Johanna Householder
all performances begin at 8:00pm, \$3.00

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PORTRAIT OF LA DRAGU Ricardo Abreut

*Like the light and the sea
your timeless body may be asking
for the sustained dignity
of matter. Lovely
like the sea's settlement
at dusk, your body is more
perishable than a flower. But not only
are you
like the light, you are the light
itself, the light speaking,
saying, "I love you".*

Carlos Bousoño

I don't claim to be a writer or a lover, but la Dragu was there as a source of inspiration for a great novel or as the most exciting company a man would want.

It was worth it to climb the endless staircase to her apartment. At the door waiting was Margaret Dragu—Princess of the underground theatre, Queen of the pool halls, Saint Margaret of scotch—and many other names. She stood at the door, tall and slender, her

face like an exotic jungle flower, her brown eyes clear as warm tea, her beautiful smile—a face that has never known anger.

All about la Dragu, standing at the door, was a gift of comfort.

She took me to this sweet-smelling room, full of light and well-looked-after plants. I mentioned to her how nervous I was.

"Don't worry darling, I get nervous too", she replied. "What do you want to talk about?"

"Everything", I said. "I want to know all about you; your theatre, your friends, your family, your recent tour across Canada with Enrico..."

"Ah, Enrico!", she exclaimed, "Enrico is a true genius, an artist, a poet, and most of all a good friend. Touring and working with him was a wonderful experience for me."

"What about the tour?" I asked.

"It was fantastic. I still don't know how we did it—a lot of hard work, but such fun doing it. Beautiful people, big houses for every show."

I asked her if there was one single experience from the tour she wanted to talk about.

"The performance in Regina", she said. "My grandmother came to see me. It was really marvellous. I wasn't too sure how she would react to the piece. However, she understood my point, she related to the character—she was one of my best audiences."

Her hand reached for a cigarette with the care of a geisha. Her hands are those you would want to kiss gently and have caress your face.

We talked about her work in the theatre, about her nine shows a night at the Zanzibar as a stripper. She talked about the tragedy in her work, the tragedy of a girl from a small town coming to fulfill her dreams in a big city, dealing with those who could afford a closet to hide in after a night on the town. The bars, the supermarkets, the welfare officer who would rather have interviews at his place, the lonely, the dying, the empty telephone line between one and one's past, the submarine sandwiches, the day to day living.

There is tragedy in Margaret's work and more. She talks about what we see and are with glittering beauty, as a reminder, perhaps, that things are not all that bad.

La Dragu and her work speak of today—what she feels and how she sees us. To her we are more than just an audience; we provide the themes for her, the laughs, the tears and the final judgement.

She is the angel in us and not the evil, the peace and not the anger.

The Princess of Underground Theatre, the dancer, the stripper, the nun, the friend, the lover, the business woman, the choreographer, the film director, the artist. Margaret is all that and more. She is her own agent and her own producer, and one day this planet will see the light through the window of her smile.

THIS IS NOT ABOUT DANCE BUT IS RATHER ABOUT PICTURES, MOVING AND OTHERWISE

JENNIFER OILLE

Continued from page 1

Famous Photographer, and I as Art Writer—and play art, a game which seemed to rank with football in relevance to the Sadat mission. But then Richard grounded his enterprise in the reality of the current moment when he said that avoiding photography in art today would be like ignoring colour in painting because photography provides the vocabulary of our time, the source of information. His recent prints incorporate or refer to photographs, especially Fletcher Starbuck's, in an examination of the painting/print-making/photographic disciplines, a monologue on form quoting the histories of the arts, the visual image rather than reality itself—just as our knowledge of the world is derived from images rather than direct observation.

Sadat second hand on celluloid via satellite. Indeed contemporary life is the big quote, today as *Today* at 8 pm on NBC, history as *You Are There* and the *March of Time*. And the arts are quoting their individual recorded histories, rather than recording reality (concrete or abstracted). Lichtenstein's paintings quoted comics and ads, the lines and dots of commercial technical reproduction becoming the visible formal elements commenting on the traditions of painting—flattening linear perspective, simplifying tonality into the four colour layout, mechanizing the autographic. He then moved from mediations on painting to meditations on the styles of painting. *Still Life with Goldfish* and *Still Life with Sculpture* moved Nice to New York and paraphrased Matisse. *Pink Flowers* and *Lemon Before a Mirror* flatly denied the Cubist premise of 3 dimensionality in 2 dimensional form. Films are making films about other films, presenting worlds mediated through other movies, the historical consciousness of Martin Scorsese, George Lucas and Peter Bogdanovich. *Star Wars*, *The Late Show*, *Robin and Marion*, *The Last Picture Show*, *What's Up, Doc?*, *Obsession*, *Young Frankenstein* and *Play it Again, Sam*, assert their imitativeness and/or references and actively incorporate our knowledge of the conventions of earlier films into their own structure, using the history of cinema per se as a shared objective foundation.

As a matter of fact I am quoting myself (*Art and Artists*, June, 1974) regarding Lichtenstein and referring to Roger Copeland's "When Films Quote Films" (*The New York Times*, September 25, 1977) in relation to cinema.

And to decode the conventions of printer, painter and picture taker, Sewell chose to use Starbuck's

photographs, images which have been erroneously called Social Landscapes by those who assume that anything that does not convey *The Beautiful* is some kind of documentary. Actually Starbuck deploys all manner of devices and designs, camera angles and chiaroscuro to stage manage the banal (bathtubs, bagging breasts) into the bizarre, rendering linear time and logical space absurd. Actions and objects out of time and place, episodes without beginning or end (the scream in the forest) deny cause and effect. Yet like the sound stage fabrications of the 30's/40's film, they would have us accept artifice as the actual. In choosing to synthesize such a contrived source, Sewell is creating a still analogy to Scorsese's moving picture, *New York, New York*, structured on the 1940's big band musicalization of life. Everybody, from Lucas to Lichtenstein, is restaging the already highly staged, using convention to directly comment on convention and thereby indirectly comment on the source of the framed image, life.

Tic, Tac, Toe is a 9 part triptych, purportedly the Portrait of a Spring Afternoon when Josh Starbuck (the smaller one with the hat), Gruffle (the one with the tail) and Richard Sewell (the one with the hat and no tail) celebrated the loss of winter's crisp on a Toronto Parking Lot, aided by sundry props, a sou'wester, stick and sweater, an avocado plant and the Street, Richmond, provided by friends, a tree and the City, Toronto, and photographed by Starbuck as scenes which have nothing to do with Tic Tac Toe, Spring—or anything else (Richard lights a cigarette and the avocado stares from a fence; Richard stands in the street, holding the avocado and a bentwood chair). But it doesn't matter because this lithograph/silk screen rendition of drawn, painted and photographed images is really an investigation of the specific master photographer/printer and the universal master printer/painter relationships and is carried out by segregating the inferred media—drawing, printing, painting, picture taking—and developing each separately in cross reference to the total synthesis. He uses the painting devices so often reproduced in prints (the print as a souvenir of the painting) to expose the technical dichotomy—The Tic, Tac, Toe symbols, the X and circle, sit on the surface as brushstrokes, means particular to painting which printmaking cannot duplicate and therefore must symbolize in order to manufacture the necessary illusion. Areas of the photograph have been

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blocked out and rendered as drawings and as these grow less literal and more expressive from line to line, the photographic image gains in importance as the source of information, binding the nine frames into one triptych, the photograph as frame of reference, the constant factor juxtaposed to the drawing as variable.

Ken Noland Schlept Here is the printer's interpretation of paintings' traditional articulation, peripheral action drawing the eye to a central focus—Noland's green, red, yellow and blue stripes on white ground void the centre of a street scene. The printmaking process, however, requires the printer to think in overall, rather than localized, terms. Ironically Noland arranges his canvases with equivalent emphasis on the whole.

Five works poise individual Sewell-Starbuck images, a ploy permitting Sewell to make a print of the Starbuck in a painting style suggested by the photograph, distilling the theatre of the absurd into a grammar book of common historical knowledge. Who/what is *V Blue*? Seurat? Wrong, the beach scene is Maurice Prendergast and American Impressionism. Starbuck's camera peers down on a sandwich on a Navajo blanket, a spilled cup of coffee on the floor. Voila, it's Georgia O'Keefe in *111 Grey*. Starbuck isolates an armchair, out-of-date 1950's modern and lo and behold—the photorealism awfulness of *11 Pink*. And obviously Starbuck's lady, naked between her easter bonnet and knee socks, suggests the cross hatched reference to Donatello's *David* in *1V Brown*.

Lots of paintings copy other paintings so Sewell painted *A Not Overly Original Painting*, a sort of Cezanne still life. Lots of prints are just copies of paintings so Sewell printed *A Not Very Original Print Based on a Not Overly Original Painting* and a t-shirted torso (black and white print as drawing) holds a paint by numbers still life (colour print as painting). People distinguish between the art of painting, every brush stroke a creative act, and the activity of printing editions, a mechanical process. Therefore Sewell painted three *Overtures Apollinaris*, simultaneous still lives. People assume that a print is not as important as a painting so Sewell hides the subject of *August Storm—Owen Sound* behind a big slash, printmaking's symbol for the brushstroke.

Of course I have committed a cardinal sin by consistently referring to Sewell's works as prints without specifying the subdivision—lithography, silkscreen, etching. Presumably this can only compound the confused integrity of the print/painting/photography procedures. Historically artists distinguished graphic qualities from those of painting and Goya, Hogarth and Daumier realized that one medium could express what the other could not. Today

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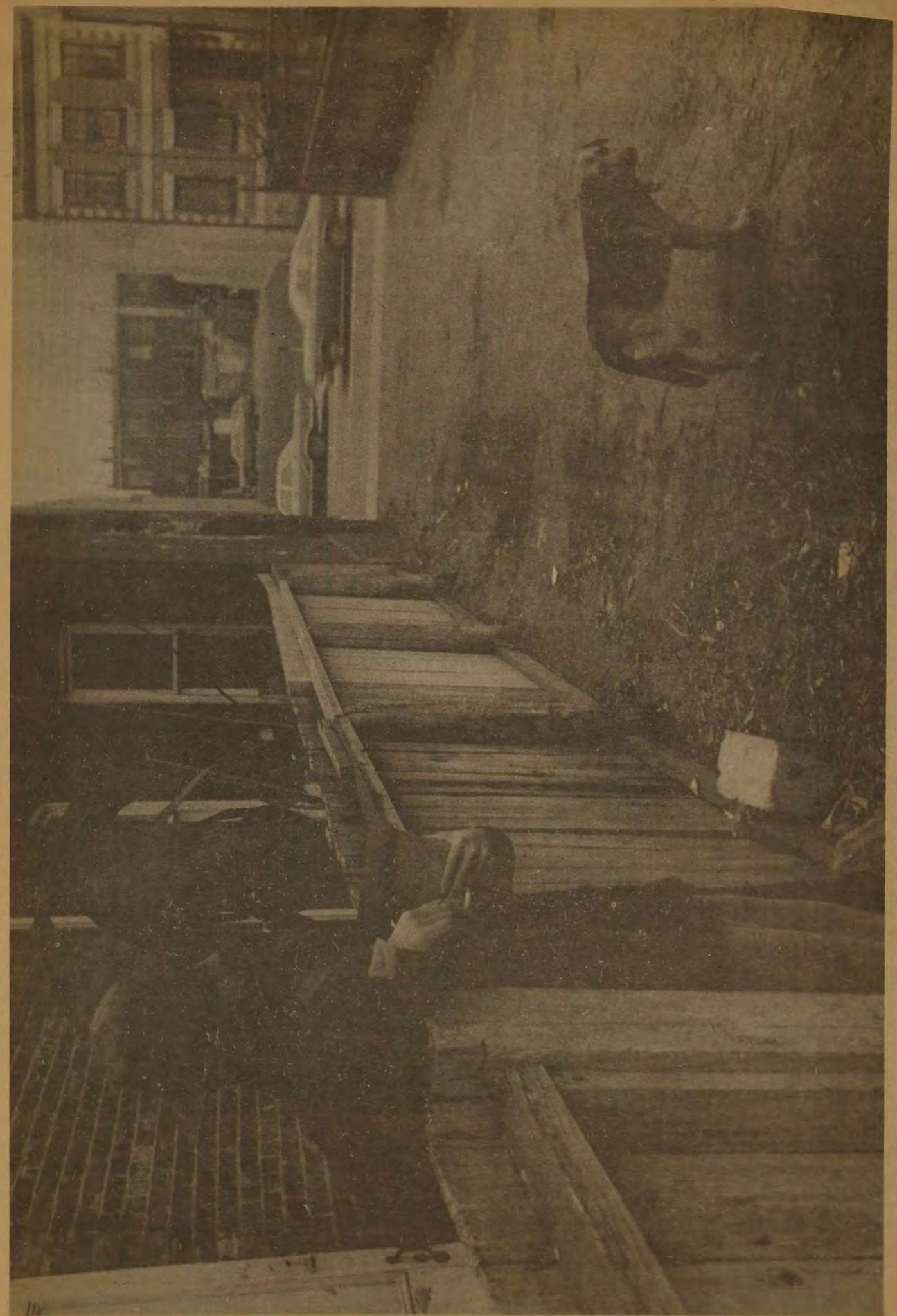


Photo page 1, R.G.Sewell & Fence & Plant.....Study for Tic Tac Toe Suite. Photo page 7, R.G.Sewell, Joshua & Gruffle, Study for Tic Tac Toe Suite.

E.C. AT ASPACE

DEC. 1-4, 1977

GRAHAM JACKSON

I wish I could get to the heart of Chitty the way she can (almost indecently) to a pose, an attitude, a defense mechanism—call a gesture, she'll pound a stake in it. That's why I thought her black tights and T-shirt and the ghoulish make-up she wore for **True Bond Stories** was so appropriate: she looked like a vampire doing Edith Piaf. After half a dozen Chitty specials, I'm beginning to recognize a few common features in her work that help me get a hold on *The Lady and Her Unfollowable Acts* and, more to the point right now, help me talk about her recent *A Space* show.

Her rhythm is staccato—invariably. Nothing really follows anything else in a logical way in her works and the staccato underlines this. Sometimes the illogical is an unconscious element in a work, just part of her creative personality (though I wonder if Chitty ever creates unconsciously, or if anybody can); but sometimes it's used very deliberately to point up the mindlessness of a specific activity or attitude, as though Chitty were anxious for us to see its connection to the craziness all around us, to all the lives

lived in stupid frustration. In *Extreme Skin* and *TBS* (and *Lap*, too), the mindless activity involves the performer's(?) wilfully setting up difficult—sometimes, painful—physical obstacles to conquer. (The only thing I didn't like about *ES* and *TBS* was the physical abuse some of the performers experienced. Chitty, too, sliding down that whitewashed post, landing with a thud on her hip or ass! Christ, that hurt!) And then trying to overcome them with a fixity of energy, of concentration, that is almost autistic. In *ES*, this fixity of effort was somewhat relieved by the colourful costumes (leotards, gym shorts, sweat-pants, etc.). The activity, performed in symphonic mass by 20 dancers, looked like a take-off on trust exercises or gym classes and though its rigidity and uniformity were a bit chilling, it was mostly, as in Danny Grossman's *National Spirit*, funny.

By the repetition of activity, Chitty can also emphasize its pointlessness, its meaninglessness—sometimes at the risk of numbing or exhausting her audience. Granted, the exhaustion and numbness don't widen our horizons or make us better people or anything, but, in Chitty's case, the consistency of her vision is its own reward. In both *ES* and *TBS*, the repetition of certain sequences achieved the potency of ritual and left me mesmerized.

These, for me, are the features common to Chitty's work. Add to them a fascination with push-pull, weight-

counterweight relationships and also with the tension created between an active or assertive body and a passive or completely submissive one (often an inanimate object like a wall, say, or a post or even a floor is used instead of a passive body). If anything does, this abstract concern for body constructs in time and space makes Chitty's work "dancey"—*ES* is actually the "danciest" I've ever seen Chitty get.

But she's also a real showperson—intellectual, yes, but no less theatrical for that. There are sequences in *ES* that could be allusions to other works. The way the dancers entered and exited through that small white door in the *A Space* studio, for example, made me think of Alice's rabbit hole and the nonsense world it led to; and, later, making forays from one side of the room to the other at different tempos and rhythms and going different distances before turning back, they looked like figures in one of Magritte's paintings—I can't remember what it's called. But the genius behind them is mostly unadulterated Chitty. That ritualistic cough that preceded and concluded each exercise drill, the charade delivered by 20 deadpan



she tied to a post, the other she pulled on, as though testing its strength, until it broke. That it broke came as no surprise to her; in fact, I got the idea that she (Chitty's persona, that is) was trying to prove to herself that escape was impossible (figuratively speaking) and that ties—emotional and sexual—could



performers to the audience—they couldn't have been anybody else's.

In *TBS*, the use of props—baby oil, capri pants, battered high heels, nylon stocking, and diary—was as funny, even funnier, than her deployment of dancers in *ES*, but funny in a more serious way. (Solos often seem to be more serious, even when they're not, because of their concentrated focus.) Chitty's activities (she was the solo performer as well as writer-director) seemed to make points in a more determined, less random way than *ES*. The middle section (I'm speaking temporally, not structurally), for example, saw Chitty concocting an escape ladder out of nylon hose; one end

always be broken, so why bother. This particular sequence was perhaps the best illustration of the "text", too—an unembellished account of "her" failed personal (bond) relationships which, in a flat, unassuming alto, she read from a black diary.

The test itself made *TBS* funnier, in a different way, the *ES*, partly—obviously—because words communicate more directly to the mind than physical activity and require for maximum effect a different kind of suppleness, the suppleness of a good actor or comedian. If *TBS* didn't work for some people, it at least showed them

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CURIOUS SCHOOLS OF THEATRICAL
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MARY ASLAMAZOVA

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JENNIFER MASCALL



This woman is a ballet teacher. She's Russian with a background that's slightly more than awesome. What she is doing here is opening a new studio; Bloor and Ossington. Try it.

She's been currently teaching at the Pavlychenko Studio, 625 Yonge, and will keep that up while teaching single handed four levels of ballet technique plus all its adjunct classes. (Pointe, Partnering...)

Professional to the core. Whatever that means. Father, a makeup artist, mother, a dentist. She knew all the ballets by the time she was ten, then the Kirov school for eight years—we know all about that from *Children of Theatre Street*. The Audition of 600 children between 9 and 12 years: day 1 they measure them. If the body fits, there's day 2, about a month later. Two hundred left in front of a jury, in groups of ten they walk in a circle changing pace as the tempo of the music changes. At the barre, trying to stand in first position while a nanny forces the thighs to determine natural, and the potential to be forced, turnout; lift the leg, they lift the leg, arch the back, then leave the barre to see the jumps. If the child is a natural bouncer a paper announces the result and the remaining 60 are back for day three. Perhaps 23 get in.

Eight years of daily ballet, character three times a week, Historical dance twice a week, piano lessons, music analysis, makeup, dance and music history, partnering...exams every quarter, failure is expulsion.

"And this is all life. And suddenly was gone. Four years very short time for a dancer, you just become somebody, you know, just started, but the reason is, I was lucky, because I had a good memory..."

She graduated and danced with Kirov for four years. An abrupt end when it was discovered that Mary A. had a chronic kidney injury.

"I always wanted to be a ballet master...it was good that it happened now...because in Russia you have to dance for twenty years and retire. I would be thirty seven years old and nothing to do anymore, just pick up my pension, nothing else."

Next the Leningrad State Conservatory to become a ballet master. It's impossible in Russia to be a choreographer or head of a company without this degree. And the requisite for the conservatory is the diploma as a dancer. Another five years training to be a ballet master (Russian choreographer). Twenty-four imperative subjects: librettos, notation, conducting, staging, atheism history of all arts and of the communist party, set and design, science communism, improvisation...Two years articling as director of the Magadan ballet company, choreographing 12 ballets on a company of 60 returning to co-direct the Malegot musical theatre in Leningrad.

And now Mary A. is here. About 30 years old with about 30 years of full time dance devotion. Still passion, no slide

rulers or gold leaf tutus.

"Dance for me is a very good expression of your intelligence, or um of um, expression of your feeling and emotional mmmmm, power, understanding; for me, the highest art is symphony music, because when it's excellent everybody, it doesn't matter what level of your education, will get something from it, you can't touch it...they've found the universal language, we didn't—dance I would say the second one because it has more abstract than other arts. It gives the illusion of some kind of form and that is the human body, but what is an arabesque? what is an arabesque?"

The most unusual aspect of her teaching is the implicit understanding of history, that makes the rigid dogma of ballet vocabulary bloom in all its absurdity, however, simultaneously makes you want to follow delightedly the idiosyncratic tautologies in admiration of its thoroughness. An example of one of these astonishing tidbits was Mary A.'s declaration that one should never let the palms show, ever, while dancing. If the reason isn't obvious try doing multiple pirouettes and hold you hands under the inevitable proscenium blue and red lights. There. You see the red palms bloody, just like a butcher's...It's the white snow white, lily white flesh that's to be seen only. Frivolous? No. Excessively neoclassic, perhaps. But the advantage to this approach is that she can explain and justify every muscle, flick, gesture, grimace, attitude in a perspective that uncovers not a motheaten petrified swan frozen into Pavlova's point but the unfolding progression of how Russian ballet has developed in the practising tradition of Pavlova, one of complete government financial support and public respect that encouraged change and refined honing.

As a teacher Mary A. is warm, supportive, voluble, broadminded, explosive.

As a trainer—insistent, gruelling, uncompromising.

Her classes are unaffected and as advanced as she can push the students. A burdening feeling of infinity as she, determined to ration out, only what we can handle explains that only after petits jetes, temps leve, sissone, brise, and multitudinous other little and medium jumps can we do the leap that was in my first modern class—at the end of the year maybe.

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BORDERS, BOUNDRIES & THRESHOLDS

A DANCE/THEATRE PIECE

GRAHAM JACKSON

The Upper Gym of the Benson Building has probably never had it so good. With Terrill Maguire decked out in gas station attendant's coveralls acting as host, the room hung with black curtains, and the floor laid out into "regions" more symbolic than real, you got the feeling **Borders, Boundaries and Thresholds** was prepared to be a Béjartian spectacle—even the title is Béjartian in its pomposity. As things got underway though, you began to realize that the collaborators, Eileen Thalenberg (writer-director) and Linda Rabin (choreographer), were in another league entirely, that without the Béjart glitz and the Béjart skin, they didn't have a hope in hell of making a spectacle; the closest they came to one was a too-long parade (called "The Parade of Stars") which boasted a real-live group of drum majorettes (the Scarborough Elainettes, believe it or not) tarted up in Hollywood-blue uniforms that would have done Johnny Brown's proud. The poverty of the spectacle wasn't merely visually disappointing; it also meant there was virtually no distraction from the intellectual pretensions of the work.

BB&T began promisingly enough though, with the focus on a still and sombre family dinner in one corner of the performing space. This family, attended by a maid in hair net and traditional black and white uniform, was similar in its introspection, its narrowness, its defensiveness to those mute Italian families-at-dinner that Fellini or Bertolucci sometimes catch out of the corner of the camera. From this nucleus, the work's protagonist, a child (patiently performed by Roberta Mohler), has been exiled (for illness perhaps) to spend most of the evening in her own room, plagued by vivid dreams. The set-up here was somewhat akin to Meredith Monk's *The Quarry*, but **BB&T** had none of *Quarry's* allusive power and none of its restless humanity either.

Actually the child's descent into the free-associative world of dreams produced little that could be called exciting or original. We were given a military coup that looked like a Luigi jazz demo, with projections of Picasso's *Guernica* as backdrop; a parade of the seasons, unremarkable except for a giddy springtime puddle-splashing danced and choreographed by Jennifer Mascall, Carolyn Shaffer, and Zella Wolofsky; a vision of old people in flesh coloured masks and loose gowns whose tenuous hold on life was symbolized by a balloon attached by a long string to their wrists (shades of *Separation?*); and the *grand defilé* mentioned before. Midway through, however, the

perspective seemed to change and you suddenly found yourself not in the middle of the child's dreams, but in some ritual of psychic growth. The "Rites of Passage" section in which the child has her pigtails shorn by three characters out of the Tarot deck bearing cups and swords marked the change of perspective with barely a pause—and no excuse. Certainly the cerebral perambulations of the Intellectual that immediately preceded "Rites" didn't prepare us for the change or shed any light on the proceedings, but then, as Thalenberg made very obvious, they weren't meant to.

In a very predicatable way, the Intellectual figure came to represent the collaborators' mistrust of intellectual activity which they depicted as being somehow "outside" Life. This mistrust though didn't stop Thalenberg herself from taking a fairly complex, loaded theme—the border theme has fascinated and bewildered the so-called Third School of modern psychology for decades now—and doing variations on it that were supposed to be Significant, but were, in fact, vague and aimless. Even Linda Rabin's rather guileless series of solos for Mohler entitled "Dance of the Bundle" were made by their position in the programme and the rather obvious subtitles that accompanied them to bear a Significance they really couldn't support. While Thalenberg and Rabin were exposing the Intellectual's evasiveness, his platitudes, his spiritual constipation—even meting out to him a crude and violent end—their own vision of a world of expanded consciousness (represented by Mohler's voyage of self-discovery) was guilty of the same evasions and clichés and of a pseudo-spirituality (60's love-in style) that was more offensive than the Intellectual's aridity of soul.

Some of the performers, however, managed to give **BB&T** a bit of sparkle: the magnetic Johanna Householder, as part of the family circle, kept drawing the eye to her, even when she shouldn't have; David Lippett (late of the *Teacup Entertainers*) looked in his various roles like a slightly mad Pre-Raphaelite visionary; and, as for Carolyn Shaffer, she does for rubber boots what Dame Margot does for Blackgama. With these performers and a lot more capital, there's no doubt Thalenberg and Rabin could have created a more captivating entertainment, if not a more thoughtful one—they certainly possess the theatrical *chutzpah* for it. In a city not known for its theatrical *chutzpah*—at least not since the old Global Village days—that's *something* to be grateful for.

AU COURANT

BRIAN ROBINSON

The Merry Exessmas season is with us again along with enough snow to keep everyone in for the next month or so but for those wanting to brave the elements **Another Dancers' Ball** presents **Immaculate Conception**, 163A Manning Ave. (½ block s. of Dundas), Friday December 16th after nine; a hoped-for highlight will be the long awaited debut of the **Clichettes**...at the Bathurst Street Theatre on Dec. 14, 8:30 pm, **Figgy Duff** present their Newfoundland based mummies' play and dance which celebrates the current season...municipal operating grant time for **Metro** contact David Silcox at City Hall, deadline Dec. 31, 1977...for **City** contact new part-time arts officer Julie Rekei (929-5177), deadline Jan. 31, 1978...A Space's Video Co-Op is presenting a series of Video Presentations, **Welcome to Another Quiet Night in Front of the T.V.** every Thursday at 8:30 beginning Jan. 5 continuing into March (works by Johnny Silva, Harvey Chou, Jon Watt, Terry McGlade, Lawrence Adams and others will be shown)...The **Hummers** (Marion Lewis, D Anne Taylor, Bobbe Besold, and Janet Burke) along with John B. Mays re-present **The Bible As Told To Karen Ann Quinlan** at A Space (964-3627)...watch for another VideoCab production **As the World Burns** featuring Randy and Bernicci...**Centre of Movement**, 175 Hampton Ave. (Chester subway stn.) are planning an active Winter Program, Jan. 7-April 1 (466-9549)...Melodie Benger (of **Rinmon**) offers Monday evening classes beginning Jan. 16 (654-3833) at their new studio...**Dancemakers** are on the road in January after their incredibly busy choreographic workshops at the T.D.T. studio...**Entre-Six** are semi-finalists in the du Maurier Search for Talent...**Ballet Ys** (364-3428) are planning more choreographic workshops in the new year...**Dance Sphere** presents a re-creation of Charles Weidman's choreography to **Bach's Christmas Oratorio**, 519 Church St. (923-2778)...**Gallery 76** (76 McCaul) presented **Sexuality and the Arts**, a series of seminars, films, videotapes, performances, readings, slides and dances, Nov. 24-Dec. 1. (Margo St. James, Art Metropole, Pascal, A.A. Bronson, A.S.A. Harrison, Dawn Eagle, David Brown, Isobel Harry, John Faichney and John Scott were among those participating)...The **Art Works**, 50 Blecker St., a gallery/performance space is currently the home for Joe's Bowling's production of **Genet's The Maids** until Dec. 17 (923-2434)...**Marijan Bayer Dance Company** are touring their production of the **Nutcracker** to fourteen Ontario locations throughout December...**15 Dance Lab** is going through January renovations which will pioneer new programming and events in February and thereafter...in the meantime have a good holiday season.

Louise Garfield stands in front of Susan Swan, their arms winging in unison, Susan towering over Louise by a head and a half. They lie facing each other on their backs, feet together in Bokonian worship style, pedaling their legs or rocking them back and forth to the accompaniment of a long conversation between them of mutual complaints and comforts on the subject of self-pity. Louise rolls across the floor, hands over her genitals, arching her back at the top of each roll. Louise and Susan shuffle around a tight circle, backs to each other and arms linked, simultaneously reciting the same tale of ingratitude and injustice about the other's failure to keep a tryst.

I like Louise Garfield's work alot. I like it because it's overwhelmingly original. No one but Louise would think of showing slides of people about to eat worms to the accompaniment of an absolutely mad song on hard times. No one but Louise would leave Susan on her back with her legs in the air for ten minutes reciting a list of grievances. Perhaps no one but Louise would think of doing a sincere satire on self-pity, titled **Down + In**.

I like her work because it's constantly hilarious. To paraphrase the rhetorical question of Martin Shore of Second City, "Why is Garfield so funny?" When Louise and Susan legpedal to comments and consolations on self-pity, why is this funny? When one makes a seemingly ordinary response and the other stops pedaling and begins leg-rocking, why is this utterly ludicrous? Not simply once, but every single time? I'm always too busy laughing to tell.

I like her work because it is quintessentially pure. Every single sound and movement is vital. When she throws herself against a wall at each grievance Susan recites, I know that Louise isn't repeating the action because she likes how it feels, or looks, or because she can't think of anything else to do, but because each wall she's trying to break through is a different wall.

I like Louise's work because it's heartwrenchingly human. The concerns of her work touch the lives of each of us, and they are presented with naked, gentle honesty. If one cannot feel compassion for oneself, one will be incapable of feeling compassion for anyone else.

Dressed in garbage bags, two foot circle masks, ropes around long sticks, and peanut butter, the guys from Cafe Soho, et al., performed Roger Guetta's play, **Place of Thunder**. I think that Roger should apply for an award or a grant and write another play. Or two or three. Right now.

Sitting in a white spot, dressed in white with a large white head mask beside her, Nancy Schieber read Excerpts from **C.G. Jung**, on the conscious and unconscious, reality and dreams. Then she stood up and put the mask on. The assumption of persona was almost instantaneously accomplished in a deep knee bend. The dance alternated between a gracetul



DANCE WORKS/IMPROVISATION AT THE MUSIC GALLERY

J.GROO BANNERMAN



PHOTOS: PETER MACCALLUM & IAN STUART



hornpipe with vim, verve, and vigour for Joan Phillips' work, **Hornpipe and Yoke Dance**. More rehearsal time would have helped the first and last sections of the piece, but it was good, clean fun.

An exploration of sitting styles, tension and relaxation was the core of **A Piece Choreographed by Grant Stitt for Irene Grainger**. Irene seemed to be very loose and controlled and I felt a real sense of comradery between her and the audience.

Carolyn Schaffer's untitled work with John Oughton led me to the deduction that she had noticed Hallowe'en and seen **Separation**.

Improv. is dangerous, not only because you hopefully never know what you're going to do, but also because whatever is done is very revealing of your inner nature. The impression I gained from watching Martha Lovell,



slow flow, and sharp, jagged steps and arm movements, often done out of a very fluid back. The piece had a stunning impact. It would be possible to describe it as "young" but it was obvious that alot of work and thought went into it.

A dance of people stepping over or around the prone bodies of Janice Hladki and Louise Garfield went on for about fifteen minutes before the show officially began. They were lying one in each of the two doorways into the performance room, tied down with party ribbons taped to the floor. They were singing love songs very badly and sweetly, for Janice's piece, **Love Part 1**. When the lights went out, they sang two songs in the dark and then stood up, the ribbons ripping softly. I can hardly wait to see **Part 2**.

Pat Fraser danced an authentic

Barbara Villeneuve, and Lynda Shannon in their improvisation is that Martha has what I'll term as a slight ego problem. Barbara coped as best she could and the calm, quiet way Lynda moved was a great relief.

The striptease halfway through Brenda Nielson's **Structured Improvisation** was mildly interesting, considering what she had to work with. However, they were the high points of the piece.

Because of a personal bias against TV, I couldn't stay to see Mimi Beck's showing of **Canadian Pneumatic**. I saw a little of it when the tape was being checked out before the show, however. I thought Mimi's idea of wearing an evening gown and lighting candles above the TV sets to show a tape of herself wading through miles of construction site muck was pretty droll.



PETER DUDAR

Various Ways in Which Charlotte Hildebrand and Le Groupe de la Place Royale (and etc.) Reflect the Diseased State of Canadian Dance

(Disease: An abnormal condition of an organism or part, esp. as a consequence of infection, inherent weakness or environmental stress, that impairs normal physiological functioning. Infection: Invasion of a bodily part by pathogenic microorganisms.

Invasion: 1. To enter by force in order to conquer or overrun 2. To encroach or intrude upon 3. To infest 4. To enter and spread harm through.)

or, Commentaries Derived from the Selection of Performers for "Looking at Dance—Live" at the Art Gallery of Ontario

("This program was never intended as a survey of Canadian dance. As a matter of fact, the Canadian inclusions were strictly gratuitous, uh..." "Listen, we're funded primarily by the government of Canada; it's our responsibility to throw in a couple of Canadian acts." STRICTLY HYPOTHETICAL STATEMENTS)

Let me make my position on dance clear. I hate it. That's why I'm trying to replace it with something else. The dancer prototype is perfectly described in this passage from Hagakure by Jocho Yamamoto (written in the early 1600's in reference to Samurai):

A man who earns a reputation for being skilled at a technical art is idiotic. Because of his foolishness in concentrating his energies on one thing, he has become good at it by refusing to think of anything else. Such a person is of no use at all.

Le Groupe de la Place Royale embody this concept (along with the National Ballet, Toronto Dance Theatre, etc.) The administrators of

these organizations have one motivation: MONEY (and the power which its possession implies). THAT'S ALL. Anything else they say is SHIT.

Anyway, before diverging too far, I should state that this is intended as a general overview of dancey things and not a comprehensive review of the AGO dance series. (Interesting, the selection, though - two-thirds of the program consisting of foreigners.)

I only went to the performance with the Canadian group Le Groupe de la Place Royale; and the American, Charlotte Hildebrand. Trisha Brown I'd seen a couple of times in the United States previously...

I have to diverge here. The following are general instructions on how to form a New York style avant-garde dance group. First of all, it's best to be born in the States. For, unlike Americans arriving here, a Canadian has absolutely no rights, privileges, or access to government funding. In Canada, however, you can feel free to lift American ideas indiscriminately since their style is not yet firmly entrenched here. Take a few classes with Merce Cunningham or one of his former students - that's a must. You have to be a girl (though a trendy variation here is to throw in a little Steve Paxton type contact improvisation) - do try to keep your figure nice and trim - the cuter you are, the better. Devise a series of moves particularly suitable for your body, and put them together in such a way that your dance will have a structured look (it's the keep them counting approach). That's important because you really don't have anything else to communicate. (Though there is the Yvonne Rainer variation in which you throw in allusions as to how fucked up your love life is.) Now find a group of girls who don't look nearly as good as

you do, or move as well - and have them memorize your repertoire of moves. Don't worry, they won't be in your league in luring audience attention.

Now, the look: recognizably dancey, you know, maybe leotards and terry cloth pants (as a rule, everyone should wear matching outfits), and maybe running shoes. After all, Twyla Tharp is into Adidas, you know.

Neat and austere—that's what you're striving for. (Admittedly, there is the Meredith Monk variation, heavy on theatre. Consider voice lessons for you and your crew.) Some makeup would look good under the lights.

Study up on Lucinda Childs, the aforementioned Trisha Brown, Laura Dean, and so on. (If you were American and had their earning potential, you might even be taken on by Performing Art Services in Westbeth, their mutual manager.) Be a bit disdainful of Twyla Tharp since everyone knows she's sold out.

But, about Trisha Brown specifically. Remember the article about Trisha in *ArtsCanada* a couple of years back. *ArtsCanada*, huh? Anyway, on the night of her performance of the same old stuff she's been doing for years it was a question of either going or watching the Shanghai Ballet who at least seem to have a good reason to be doing what they're doing, on television. So I didn't go.

Maybe I should put things in order. Trisha (nice, my career was supported by my mother, upper middle/bourgeois class name) wasn't first on the program. David Earle, Danny Grossman (New York, American), and members of the Toronto Dance Theatre were first. As you might well guess from my intro, I gave up on them I don't know how many years ago. Actually I should partially credit them with confirming my decision to get involved with choreography. It was an "anything I can think of has to be better than this", reaction.

Danny Grossman—yes, well last time I saw him he was sucking up to an Ontario Arts Council officer to stomach-wrenching excess. I'm sure he would have been on his knees, but the officer was a lady. I have this idea that a choreographer's everyday integrity somehow reflects the integrity in his work. So fuck Danny Grossman. (BY THE WAY, I DON'T MEAN TO POINT HIM OUT AS AN UNUSUAL CASE.)

Next on the program: Sara Rudner (American), whoever she is. Apparently she danced with Twyla Tharp (note the running shoes in Sara's photo on the poster). Let's imagine this conversation:

—We could get Sara Rudner.

—Who's she?

—Well I don't know anything about her work, but according to her management, she used to be with Twyla Tharp.

—Well then, she must be good. Think we could get her for a thousand plus expenses?

I looked at her photo and thought, "a typical New York choreographer who gets a bunch of girls together who don't look as good as..." then, "it's not really fair to assume all this from a god-damned photo". Never saw the performance though, it was sold out.

Speaking of sold out, the American Charlotte Hildebrand was on the next program with Le Groupe de la etc. Charlotte is the typical case of the American with insufficient talent to make it back home who comes to Canada where the derivations in her work aren't immediately recognizable by most.

(I know you're going to get pissed off at me for what I'm saying about you, Charlotte. But, fuck it, it's true.)

Charlotte's piece was basically the New York stereotype with mostly Meredith Monk variations. Cliche props: chair, television, hanging light bulbs (I wondered if she borrowed one of the light bulbs from Elizabeth Chitty who'd used a similar setup a couple of years ago). A few leaps were thrown in to impress the audience. Badly done; ah, well. A few lines were recited with southern American accents: "When I was a young girl, I thought that love", sorry, it was more like, "When ah wuz ay...". (Basic Yvonne Rainer variation.) The most entertaining aspect of the piece was that a couple of the dancers with bigger tits than your standard dance model (refer to *Standard Female Dance Physique*, 1977, by George Balanchine) tended to bounce quite a bit when they got moving—but, we're not supposed to notice this. The other part I liked was the flash of a car's headlights through a crack in the curtains. I think Charlotte could have improved the piece dramatically by turning the TV set around so the audience could watch it while she and the girls played around.

Some audience members applauded mildly at the end though they didn't know what the fuck was going on, but figured that there must have been something in it because it was programmed by the AGO, and in a place as big as the AGO they must know what they're doing.

I'd predicted earlier that strategically it was a bad move for Charlotte to be billed with Le Groupe de la etc. because they would outclass her technically, and audiences generally recognize and love technique. What distracted from the pleasurable element in Le Groupe's physical display was the fact that the piece was obviously choreographed and performed by morons. They played around and made funny noises like happy, carefree natives on an island somewhere in the south Pacific. It was sickening. Most of my acquaintances left, they COULD NOT TAKE IT. I forced myself to stay, thinking, "I can't believe how bad this is, but if I force myself to sit through it (and it went on, and on, and on), the more justified I can feel in wreaking vengeance. And these assholes deserve it."

By the way, Le Groupe de la etc. recently moved to Ottawa where the Canada Council is, and away from Montreal where the Quebecois are.

Anyway, back to the piece (I can't describe it in detail, I can't). Apparently it had cosmic implications, because as the performers exited, the choreographer kept saying things like, "Alpha Centauri is x zillion light years away, Andromeda is..." I wanted to say, "John Pierre Perrault is a jerkoff, and he's only several meters away." But, I didn't. I really regret that.

Some of those that remained applauded enthusiastically because they felt the rest of us couldn't appreciate "avant-garde" concepts. What a laugh.

BUT WITHOUT THESE CHANGES, QUEBEC—AS ALL THE REST OF CANADA—CANNOT AVOID HEADING TOWARD ANNEXATION TO THE UNITED STATES. ECONOMICALLY, THIS ANNEXATION IS FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES ACCOMPLISHED. CULTURALLY, THE PROCESS IS WELL UNDER WAY. POLITICALLY, IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME.

NO, THE CANADIAN UNITY CRISIS IS NOT CAUSED BY THE LEVESQUE GOVERNMENT, NOR BY QUEBECOIS NATIONALISM. IT IS THE RESULT OF THE COLONIZATION OF CANADA BY THE UNITED STATES.

Pierre Vallieres
U.S. 'colonialism' is more a threat to Canada than the PQ, Toronto Star, Nov. 16/77

to be continued

I don't Know If You Believe This Could Actually Happen in the Art Gallery of Ontario.



Lily Eng and I had been scheduled to perform at 9:00 pm on Thurs. Nov. 17/77 at the AGO. We arrived—the programs read 9:30 pm. But, actually, we didn't get started until 9:45 because I

had some film in the program, and the lights couldn't be turned off in the surrounding hallways of Walker Court until 10:00 pm closing time.

As Lily entered to do her solo number, I reminded her to make it at least 15 minutes. A security guard approached the 2 martial artists in one of my pieces and asked what was wrong. Derek and Henry said, "Nothing". The guard then asked what THAT WOMAN (Lily) was doing. "Performing", they answered. "No she's not!" he responded, and stormed into Lily's performing area. She was lying on her back at the time. He said something and tried to grab her arm. She pulled away, her lips moving. All I could make out was "Get the fuck out of my performing space!" He drew back (he seemed to be contemplating charging in), noticed the 150 or so people staring at him, then exited, so to speak.

Lily went on a bit, then laughed maniacally a couple of times. Again she continued, throwing in a few flashy moves to demonstrate that she can do anything she wants. Then she addressed the audience:

Every time I come into this fucking place the fucking security guards harass me. Well if you want to get me out you'll have to fucking come and drag me out!

This was soon followed by an announcement over the loudspeaker system that the gallery was closing immediately.

A small girl began imitating Lily by rolling around in the carpeted hallway. A security guard told her to cut it out.

With the lights at last off, I showed *Crash Points 2*, at the Berlin wall, the details of which I don't want to go into because I'm tired of it.

Lily went into Graham's Surgical Supplies in the Medical Building at Bloor and St. George on Monday

morning to be measured for a spinal brace. It was ready Thursday morning. We whipped together some ideas on the afternoon of the performance, and

Continued page 18

PETER DUDAR Continued

called the piece, *Labour and Management* (in the developing stages).

When she was set I roundhoused Lily quite loudly in both ribcages, moving her a couple of feet to each side in each instance, then sidekicked her in the small of the back where normally it really hurts. The steel pieces in the brace took most of the shock, and the leather binding helped emphasize the sound.

I noticed that Grant Strate who's presently teaching at York University left after this piece. I was embarrassed last time I met him because I couldn't remember who he was.

A friend of mine, Margaret, said something that triggered off an idea for another piece:

Lily looked quite uncomfortable, as if she were in a straitjacket.

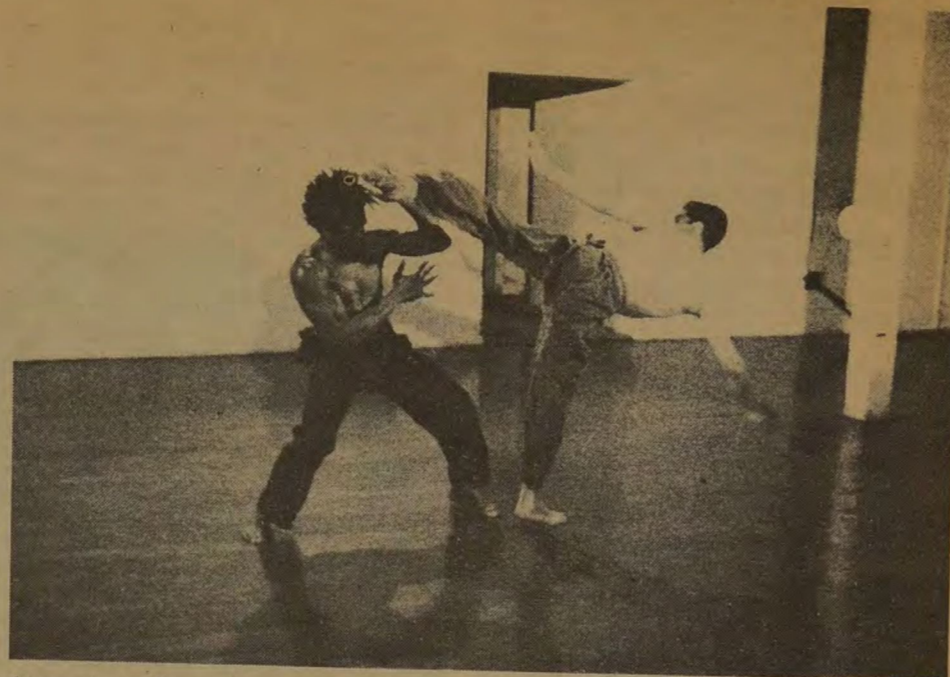
Then it went on to the sparring match with Henry and Derek. In contrast to the vicious intent of their actions, I mentioned afterward that I really liked the part in the film segment of the piece where they put their arms around each other. It was a simultaneous projection, 2 screen film with a left and right soundtrack. The performers' actions had been filmed from opposite sides with 2 cameras (actually a third camera was involved in the shooting, but this footage is being reserved for version 2 of this piece which is called *Penetrated*). The 2 images and soundtracks are supposed to begin in sync, and then separate increasingly further with each edit in the film. The last part of the film has 2 completely different sequences juxtaposed. The movement is so fast and furious that as the images separate you have to resort to listening to screaming on the left speaker followed by the same scream on the right to piece movement together. It's a simultaneous flash forward, instant replay situation.

Derek's cocoa skin tones and dreadlocks, contrasted with Henry's Aryan feature are really nice; part 3 will have Lily taking on another female.

The conversation took place at the end. It's interesting to note that we were the first performers ever the Art Gallery of Ontario to draw in working class persons (including Chinese from the surrounding community) along with the usual AGO audience; and yet we're the most advanced choreographers in this country. We're also the only Toronto choreographers to come from working class families. (*Not true—Ed.*)

I initiated the whole thing by asking if there were any immediate questions about the preceding pieces, which there weren't because there usually aren't immediately. So, I mentioned something about second class treatment of independent Canadian choreographers in their own country to give people time to think. The bureaucrats took off immediately; and not just the AGO bureaucrats.

Amerigo started screaming with someone about the people looking



down on us from the members lounge with drinks in hand, and being middle class; but left soon afterwards because he found it hard to resist the urge to punch her. John Faichney said he felt a fight would have made everything perfect.

Somebody asked if the last film should have been in sync at the beginning. I said yes it should, that it was equipment failure, but that I edited with non-sync projectors in mind because usually they were all I could get. We just weren't given time to test anything.

It's ironic that I ended up using these projectors because they were initially built for Michael Snow's *Two Sides to Every Story*, in which I'd performed, and they would never have built them just for me. (Wyn and somebody else mentioned afterward that they thought *Crash Points 2* was the best 2 screen projection film they'd seen since Andy Warhol's *Chelsea Girls*. Admittedly, it's true.)

I think I also mentioned something about the inability of Canadian choreographers to deal with social reality. And of how it was generally assumed that dancers should be inarticulate. And of how dancers were usually presented as mythological beings aloof (and in their own minds, disdainful) from an audience.

As soon as it was obvious that we'd finished, Kate McCabe, superintendent of the live events, approached me from the outer lobby and said with her eyes askance:

I heard from someone that you said we didn't give you as much publicity as the others.

I replied:

That wasn't what I said. I said that I assumed the gallery had given us all the same sort of publicity, but that certain major media such as the Star had chosen to pass on information about everyone on the program but us. It was an example of how Canadian independent choreographers, as opposed to American, get second class treatment in the media.

I couldn't believe it. Not 5 minutes after the discussion, I was getting misquotes from the person who was officially supposed to have overseen the whole thing. (I seriously hope they don't fire her. She's uncertain of a lot, but her intentions are basically good, and that's the most important thing.)

I forgot to add to my reply that though we may have had equal publicity, we (and Charlotte Hildebrand, who's presently residing in Toronto) were paid less than the imported choreographers on the program. This has to be corrected in the future.

Afterwards I sat in the members' lounge briefly with one of the persons who had fled:

I enjoyed your show, but I had to leave at the conversation part because it got into money, and I'm tired of people talking about money. As a matter of fact, I was talking about money, but it was video money, all day today.

I don't remember if I said anything immediately, but I do remember thinking, when it was too late, that I should have said right then,

Oh, Lily thought it was because you were afraid of her.

just to see what sort of reaction it would get.

There was something else I said in reply to an earlier question. I said that individuals and public institutions should at least be willing to listen and reply to criticism. That criticism, even when apparently mean and nasty, can be a revitalizing force.

And that the practices of anyone unwilling to face that interchange were highly questionable.

And that we need artists with attitudes of strength.

Bruce made a joke the other day: he suggested kidnapping a couple of AGO administrators for ransom, collecting the money, and then killing them anyway.

I said they'd probably just put extortion money on their next budget request from the Canada Council.

JENNIFER MASCALL —DANCING

BY JENNIFER MASCALL
—WRITING

She said "I would never go to one of my concerts. It's just not my kind of thing." It was pretty long. 40 minutes. Improvisation.

She said "I would never go to one of my concerts. It's just not my kind of thing." It was pretty long. 40 minutes. Improvisation. JMD didn't get bored but a lot of the stuff that came up didn't interest her and she kept trying to get through it. It didn't excite her because JMD had done it before somewhere, probably actually, in the Music Gallery where she was dancing now so she was picking up on shapes and rhythms that were already in the air. It was ok but no edges but someone said it was inspiring so JMD took away one of the buts and inserted comfort. JMW doesn't think JMD failed because it's hard to fail in an improvisation that never stops though some of the yardage can be a dud—it wasn't a dud and it wasn't a failure but it wasn't successful in cutting through the dancer affectation and finding instead of showing the underwear. Which was the costume. Pink silk and white satin. Black woolly legwarmers, white shoes. Harlequin chic. Confusing as she seemed not to take the responsibility for its connotations in the pure hedonism of wearing something luxurious that didn't smell. New things. And there was one fall that fell and felt like falling really feels like and JMD had certainly fallen before but had never done this one before. One new movement every forty minutes slow ratio by calculator standards but whose making standards.

The language was thick with accents; there were ballet classes, aikido classes, tap classes, modern dance for real and nonchalant parodies, imitation of recognizable teachers, and dancers and dance situations—how JMD obviously spends most of her time—her chosen input—it's just a pity there wasn't more of her than her influences.

Hilary Kilbourn improvising chalk on blackboards was charming and colourful and their relationship was casual and ok and not contrived, and when you knew things would just happen as they would, they did, and you could take it or leave it.

She thinks, "I'll always go to my concerts cause I do what I like."

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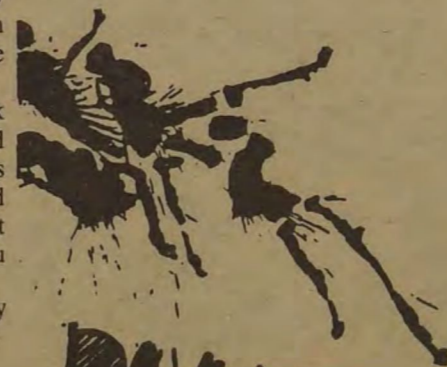
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