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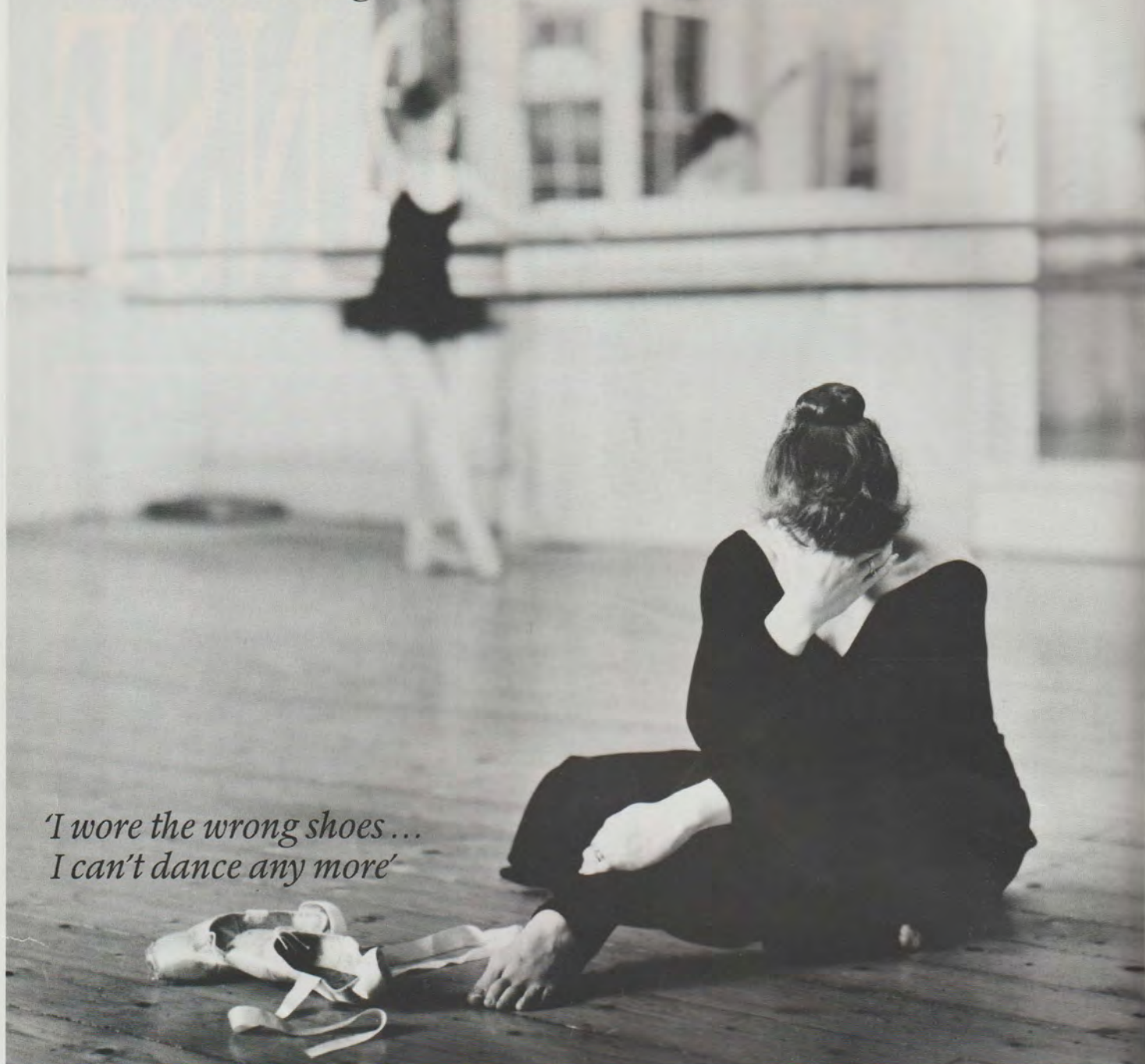
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DANCE-DANSE

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ISSUE NUMBER 60 SUMMER 1989 ETE AUGUST/AOUT

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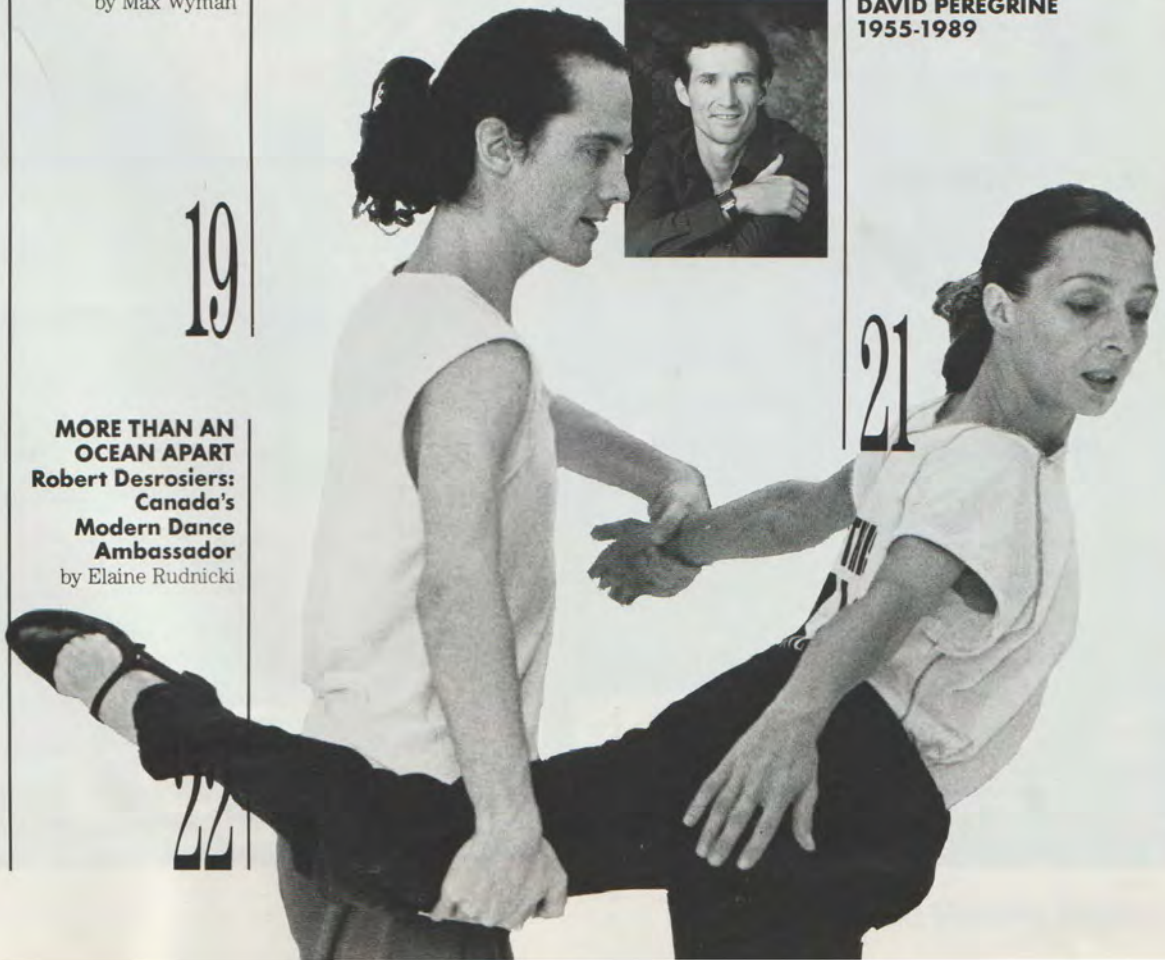
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EDITORIAL

THE BALLET OPERA HOUSE

THE BALLET OPERA HOUSE: If it's worth building, it's worth building well.

The Ballet Opera House is intended to be one of the finest performance facilities built this century and Canada's beacon in the international world of artistic excellence. These lofty ambitions and high, yet appropriate expectations are not out of step for a project of such national significance, necessary to nurture and showcase the considerable talents of the National Ballet of Canada and the Canadian Opera Company.

Photos of the model of the 2000-seat theatre suggest a successful marriage of the monumental scale appropriate to a national house and the intimate relationship between performer and audience, so obviously lacking at the cavernous O'Keefe Centre. It is too soon to formulate any opinion on whether the acoustics and sight lines will enhance rather than restrict performances. Again, it is no doubt too early to fully appreciate just how successfully the support areas for the theatre — rehearsal rooms, side stages and the like — will enhance productions. Available drawings suggest a more ample than normal allocation of space and an undeniable logic in the relationship between these spaces.

It might be interesting to repeat the successful experience of Ontario's Shaw Festival Theatre, by involving performers, the ultimate users of the space, in the planning and further development of rehearsal and production spaces. The success of a theatre depends on its ability to support and attract artistic talent. Without quality productions, what need is there for a theatre?

A stunning, faceted glass tour-de-force, the Ballet Opera House, although pretty, raises many questions regarding the building's use, fit and symbolism.

While many issues can and will be resolved during translation from concept to reality, the design for the front entrance leaves one confused. Plans show the front facade on Bay Street but do not clearly indicate where entry takes place. Entering a cultural facility often takes on a formal symbolism: people enjoy the approach to and entry through a significant point of arrival. There neither appears to be such a grand entrance, nor does the project appear to offer weather protection or vehicular drop-off facilities for dignitaries, the disabled or people clad in garments suitable for the lush interior.

Entrance from the underground garage may offer more accommodating access, but moving from your car through an underground garage to the grand staircase is a less than inviting prospect. The option to make a grand entrance or to watch others in the elegant processional that precedes ballet and opera performances may need further consideration.

Subway patrons are af-

forded a more elegant introduction to the Ballet Opera House. A small entrance, comfortably framed in the existing Yonge Street building wall, connects to the main foyer by a long serpentine gallery. The politeness with which this large project meets Yonge Street without overwhelming the small human scale of this main street is the Ballet Opera House's greatest urban design gesture. This aspect of the project, however, raises significant questions. How many people will arrive by transit? Will those elegantly clad for an evening at the opera or ballet really consider arriving by subway?

While recognized as the designer of Montreal's Habitat and Ottawa's National Gallery, the Ballet Opera House's architect, Moshe Safdi, is perhaps less known as a highly respected urban designer — a designer as concerned with a project's fit into the city as with the design of the project itself. The Ballet Opera House site, with frontage on Bay, Wellesley and Breadalbane Streets offers quite a

challenge as to fit. The neighbouring government buildings to the west and a hotel to the north are imposing and bland. To the south is the highly innovative and playful Y.M.C.A. headquarters, representing a new birth of design ingenuity. Safdi appears to have respected the lands to the west and north in his use of large panels of masonry which anchor a striking, glazed, pyramid roof which extends the daring and drama of the Y.M.C.A. The rather arbitrary punctuation walls, with a variety of arches, circles and strongly middle-eastern forms, are less successful in linking with neighbouring projects or making a meaningful, unique contribution to the public faces of the building.

Sole vehicular access from Breadalbane suggests severe congestion problems, but future road changes may solve these. Perhaps, using the experience gained from Toronto's Sky-Dome, city road-planners will limit car access. But, this approach seriously questions the focusing of the development to Bay Street, given its limited transit capabilities.

It is encouraging to see the serious development of a home for the National Ballet and Canadian Opera Company, by one of the most articulate, observant and imaginative individuals practising in the dual field of architecture and urban design. Its size alone will accord the facility the dramatic symbolism appropriate to its use but a talented and refreshingly inventive interpretation of the form could make the House both a significant architectural object and an inviting and positive addition to the constantly changing fabric of downtown Toronto.

If the Ballet Opera House is worth building, it's worth building well, and in a manner that meets the needs of performer and audience and encourages return. The project introduced to date has made an auspicious, favourable beginning.



A model showing the 2000-seat auditorium of Canada's Ballet Opera House with its 5 tiers

BY CARL KNIPFEL
M. R. A. I. C. / M. C. I. P.

STEVE BRONSTEIN

FRONT PAGE

CANADA'S BALLET OPERA HOUSE

CANADA'S BALLET OPERA HOUSE: A combination of imagination, practicality and design excellence.

Project models and designs of architect Moshe Safdi's Ballet Opera House, a joint venture of the National Ballet of Canada and the Canadian Opera Company, were on public display from June 29 to July 9 at Toronto's Eaton Centre. Scheduled to open in the Fall of 1994, the 2,000-seat facility will be built on a 4.1-acre downtown Toronto location provided by the Government of Ontario with the assistance from the City of Toronto. The site is located on the southeast corner of Bay and Wellesley Streets.

The Ballet Opera House, dedicated solely to ballet and opera is heralding Canada's entry into the global family of world renowned ballet and opera houses. Presently, Canada is the only one of the Group of Seven Industrialized Nations without a

dedicated facility for opera or ballet. The Ballet Opera House will secure Canada's place in the international world of opera and dance.

The new building's exterior will be striking and powerful employing Italian marquetry with grey and cream-coloured concrete inlaid with multi-coloured marble. An open, 8-story, soaring, glass rotunda allowing circulation of the public, designed to be accessible at all hours, will serve not only the needs of patrons attending performances, but visitors who may

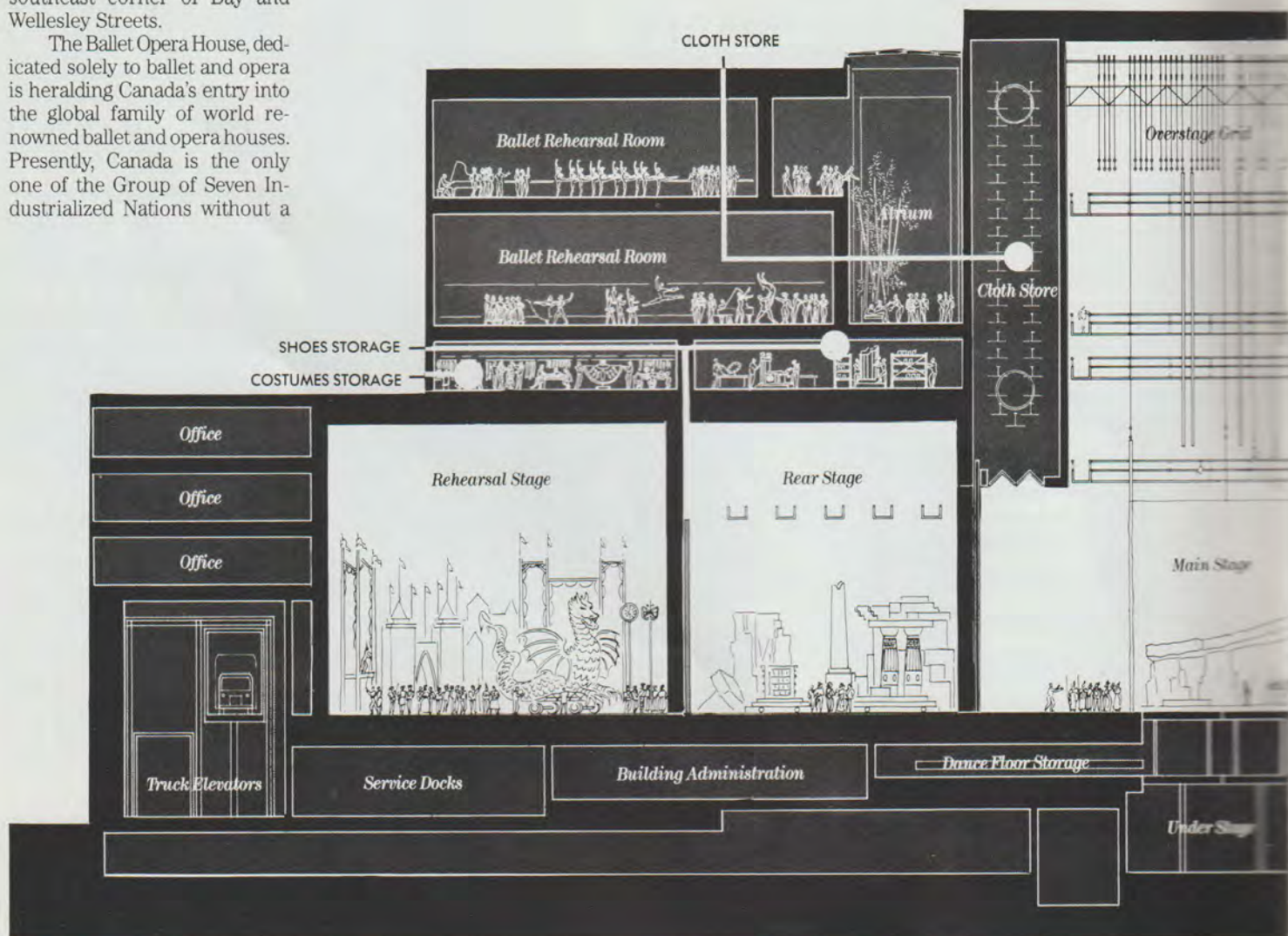
be shopping, visiting cafes, restaurants, exhibitions or attending educational events.

A park will counterbalance the rotunda with an amphitheatre surrounded by a restaurant. The park will allow outdoor daytime performances as well as quiet peace in the City. Most of the upper-level lobby areas will open onto terraces with trees and shrubbery. A glass galleria with retail outlets will provide an entrance from Yonge Street to the rotunda.

The auditorium seating plan is a traditional horseshoe de-

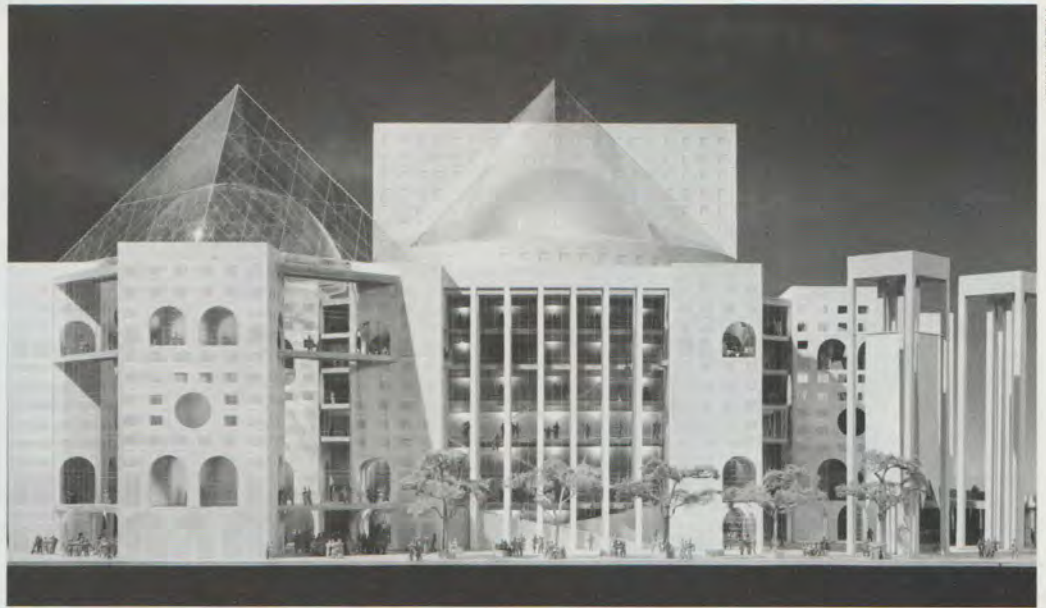
sign with five tiers of balconies creating an intimate performance experience for the audience. A spectacular main stage area, 682 square meters in a four-square configuration, will provide economical space and unique flexibility designed to enhance the quality and number of ballet and opera productions. Other features include a flexible proscenium opening, seven major rehearsal rooms and set, wig, wardrobe and prop workshops. The orchestra pit will accommodate 104 musicians.

The Ballet Opera House will



accommodate the production, rehearsal and administration facilities of the National Ballet of Canada and the Canadian Opera Company. "The house will not only provide a home for these two outstanding companies," boasts Hal Jackman, chairman of the board of directors of the Ballet Opera House, "but will create great economic and social benefits for the City and the surrounding region. And Canada will at last have an excellent showcase for the best of opera and dance."

In 1988, the cost of the Ballet Opera House was estimated at \$234 million. The facility is designed to serve the arts in Canada and bolster tourism, which in turn will have a positive economic impact nationally. The Ontario Government has already committed \$65 million and the land for the site. The Federal Government will be



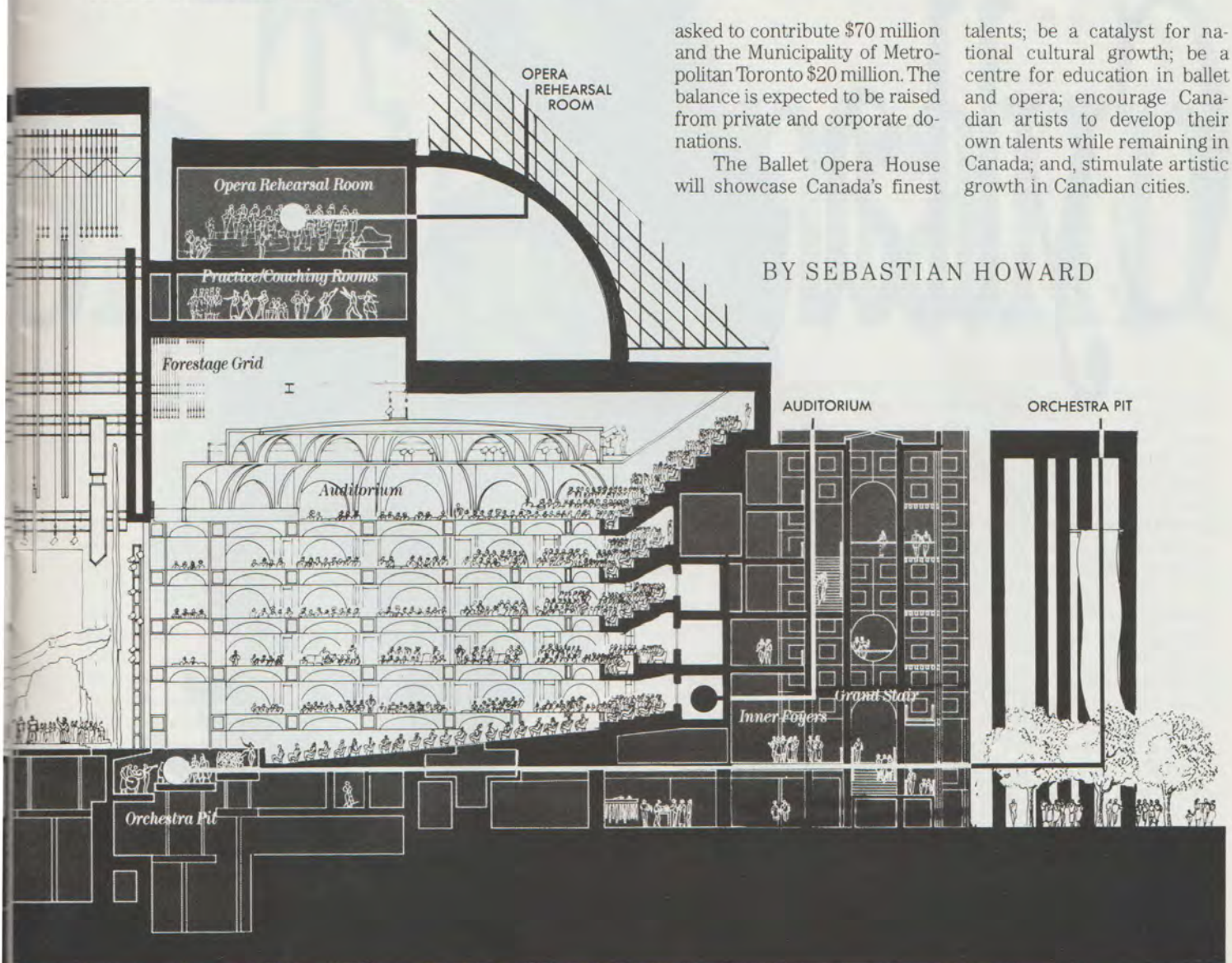
(Above) Front facade of the Ballet Opera House model showing the pyramid-topped glass rotunda to the left, the dome and pyramid roof of the auditorium in the centre and the open amphitheatre to the right (Below) Cross-section of the Ballet Opera House, Moshe Safdi, Architect

asked to contribute \$70 million and the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto \$20 million. The balance is expected to be raised from private and corporate donations.

The Ballet Opera House will showcase Canada's finest

talents; be a catalyst for national cultural growth; be a centre for education in ballet and opera; encourage Canadian artists to develop their own talents while remaining in Canada; and, stimulate artistic growth in Canadian cities.

BY SEBASTIAN HOWARD





JOY VON TIEDEMANN



Cylla

Toronto photographer Cylla von Tiedemann plays a vital yet subtle role in luring dance audiences into theatres.

The photographs that accompany modern dance reviews and advances in the newspapers are very often hers. The intriguing little postcards in theatre lobbies and the most memorable of the posters tacked on outdoor walls around town are usually von Tiedemann's as well — for an understandable reason: she instinctively grasps striking dance images that refuse to lie lifeless on paper, but reach out vigorously to proclaim themselves.

Members of The Canadian Children's Dance Theatre fly enchantingly through a cloud-spattered sky on a poster for their concert *FIGURE PAINTING*. Sonja D'Orléans Juste appears as a piercing slash of sky-rocketing movement, her feet sabres, and her face and hair blended into blackness on a brochure for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce dance season at Harbourfront. A postcard invitation to Claudia

(Above Left) Cylla von Tiedemann (Above) and (Top Right) Margie Gillis

BY PAT KAISER



on Tiedemann

Moore's dance-play *Kleinzeit* features a photograph of an odd, blank-faced quintet that includes Pamela Grundy and Tom Brouillette drolly sitting shoulder-to-shoulder on a bench. The powerful staccato feet of six members of the National Tap Dance Company of Canada elegantly explode from a poster which introduced them to Hong Kong.

Seated in her poster-cluttered office, Cylla von Tiedemann surveys these and many of her other creations that fill her portfolio and files and pepper her walls. She speaks with gentle forcefulness about the challenge of doing justice to an art form that tends to resist being trimmed to paltry split-seconds of its activity and squashed onto small flat surfaces.

"You have to find the highest spirit, the essence," she explains emphatically. "You need a lot of practice to be in tune with a piece and with the choreographer. A photograph has to point to just one moment and everything is seen. If you have to think about it while it is happening, the moment is already gone."

Most dance photography does not

rise much above the category of utilitarianism, a plain serving of 'who was there and what they wore', that can add visual appeal or window-dressing to a written report, before disappearing into a dance company's files for future reference.

Toronto dance audiences remember the posters for which von Tiedemann has created photographs — if not yet the identity of the photographer. Most dancers would be hard-pressed to name more than a few noteworthy dance photographers. Barbara Morgan's brilliant photographic records of Martha Graham are powerful and starkly beautiful, mirroring Graham's dances themselves. Through photography, Anthony Crickmay floats classical ballet to the gauzy pinnacle of its own myth, with poreless sweatless gods and goddesses. Beyond that, a few names may be recalled, such as Jack Mitchell and Martha Swope, but essentially, dance photography is an art that is overlooked and undervalued.

"There has been a long history of collaboration between photographers and dance," von Tiedemann stresses, reeling

off a string of names of important European dance photographers. These 'Old Masters' represent quite another place and time, of which von Tiedemann's own style, with its dark, dramatic shadows and twists of illusion credibly meshed with reality, is reminiscent. "That grand period, the 'twenties and before," she smiles enthusiastically, "is about my favourite, when all the fields of art were exploding."

Von Tiedemann, herself always exploring and curious, as she says, was searching in quite different realms before either dance or photography captured her attention. At twenty, disappointed with Germany's socio-political climate, she left her native country and settled on a small island near Sardinia. "I did my own farming on an adorable little farm in a picturesque valley. I was trying to prove I didn't need anything," she says with a small wise grin. After three years she headed for Paris, where she opened a boutique with her twin sister and focused her creative powers on leather fashion design.

In 1981, while on holiday in Canada, she was drawn into the creative territory



(Right) Members of the National Tap Dance Company of Canada (Below Left) Bill James/Dancemakers (Below Right) Robert Desrosiers



of her brother Rudy, a professional photographer. "I had been given a camera the christmas before," she shrugs, "so I played around in his studio a bit, developed a few things, and he told me, 'You know, I think you are very talented.'"

And so she stayed on, apprenticing at his studio for a year and a half, assembling her own equipment and doing school photography. "It was like watching the world go by, there, before my camera," she philosophizes.

She found her life in Toronto "very frustrating at the beginning. Coming from Germany, from Paris, I wanted to study the arts here, but the country was new to me and I didn't know where or how to look." She contemplated returning to Europe, but was edging into "an instant fascination for the Toronto dance world". At the Toronto Dance Theatre, she took up stretch-'n-strength classes with Murray Darroch. "He's an old pal now," she reflects fondly. "I had been completely unaware of my body, its internal workings, before then."

Upon meeting dancer Brigitte Bour-

beau at a party, she arranged photographic sessions — her first brush with dance before the camera.

"And then I saw Robert Desrosiers' NIGHT CLOWN and BRASS FOUNTAIN and I knew that was it! I wanted to be part of that!"

Desrosiers' extravagant theatricality offered exhilarating inspiration for a novice photographic artist. "Robert gave me this whole magical fantasy world. He is capable of such magic," she says admiringly, and draws from her portfolio a photograph of CONCERTO IN EARTH MAJOR, with its choreographer-dancer as an overlapping double-image of modern and primitive man.

"At the start, he was very important, and then Danny (Grossman) took over. Danny is so clear, so precise, in his body, you read every line. Danny makes me think."

"He started me off on collage," she says, and displays two extraordinary scenes from LA VALSE, both impossible in reality, and concocted via "double exposures and other darkroom tampering", explains von Tiedemann.

One of the LA VALSE stills is of the 'oppressed people', anonymous in their plain shorts, boots, and skullcaps, lined up in a dead, rocky landscape. "He told me they are the soil of the piece," she explains. The second LA VALSE still is of four slick members of the bourgeoisie arranged within a frame constructed of the bodies of the workers. For von Tiedemann, zeroing in on the essence of a dance piece does not necessarily mean using an actual moment from the piece or even posing on a stage or in a studio.

"The best calls are with people like Robert or Danny who leave me the freedom to work it out. It becomes a collaboration, teamwork," she says proudly. "I like being part of a team."

Von Tiedemann's portfolio is filled with prints of her first love, modern dance. "Its inner language fascinates me," she comments, and weeds through her files for her favourites.

There is Desrosiers in a shapeless scrap of fabric, "just fooling around" amidst a pell-mell of floating shapes — "he has a clown in him," she remarks. Andrea



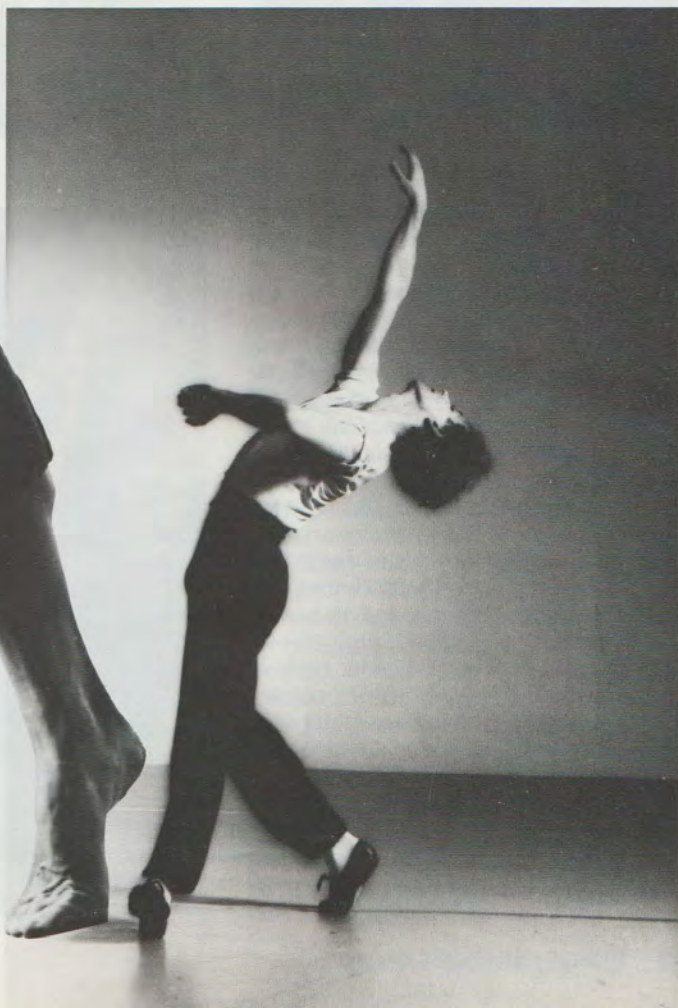
(Above) Carole Anderson (Below) Christopher House

Smith joyously pushes through space with fisted hands before a mottled background; dancers in David Earle's CLOUD GARDEN are poised in sculpted elegance in front of a textured backdrop. "For both, I painted the back walls myself," says von Tiedemann. "One of the biggest problems of a shoot is creating the magic of an environment."

With powerful arms raised overhead, Margie Gillis whirls, her legs lost in darkness and the sweep of the fabric. "She is as interested in collaboration as I am," says the photographer. "She has a great ability to share the full range of human experience — with earthiness and honesty. I want to bring all of that out."

Susan McKenzie wafts about a billowy Loie Fuller surrounded by leafy nature. The still is in black-and-white, but has been delicately tinted by von Tiedemann to evoke a time long past.

Like many photographers, she prefers working in black-and-white over colour. "Even when I have to do colour, I subdue it," says von Tiedemann, and illustrates with a shot of the lusty woodland





faeries in Grossman's *DIVINE AIR*. "Black-and-white is magical; it leaves you free to go on in your mind. Colour gives it all away. It's part of reality, whereas black-and-white is already an abstraction."

Colour would be an irritating intrusion into some of her images of Christopher House. "He has such clarity and simplicity; he is pure, beautiful movement," Cylla remarks with slight awe.

In a tender photograph from *SCHUBERT DANCES* that von Tiedemann has touched with a misty texture, she has captured the dancer-choreographer in a moment that could be termed 'definitely House'; one arm is lifted to the heavens and his head is thrown back.

The inky-shadowed, slender blade of a figure that graced House's program poster this year, too, was an example of von Tiedemann capturing an outline 'definitely House'. The dancer-choreographer is caught with one elbow jabbing back and his other arm stretching out, a bit like a pool shark preparing for the corner shot with an invisible cue stick. The photographer has thoroughly studied the trade-

(Above)
Peggy
Baker
(Left)
Sonja
D'Orléans
Juste

(Right) Benoit LaChambre with painting by Harvey Yalonetzky (Below Left) Danny Grossman Dance Company (Below Right) Danny Grossman



marks, nuances and priorities of her subjects; the essences she grasps may float to the surface in ways other than particular moves, but they indicate the familiarity with a choreographer's craft that can make for excellent photographs.

With the dancer darkened in near-silhouette and a clear sensation not just of his mastery of the space around him but of the tangibility of the space itself, the program poster could also be termed 'definitively von Tiedemann'. It is an assessment that would make the photographer shudder. She dreads the thought of being mired in repetitious patterns. She is constantly branching out in many different ways. This past summer, she photographed Paula Thompson's *SANCTUARY* and Grossman's *BELLA* outside, in nature "where they belong", she explains.

Both in terms of finance and inspiration, Cylla von Tiedemann finds it difficult to live by Toronto modern dance alone; last year she travelled to Montreal to visually record *Montréal Danse*, and this year, had a second session with Paul-André Fortier. She constantly contem-

plates documenting modern dance, possibly for a travelling exhibition — "There is little in this country in the way of modern dance and photography combined."

At the invitation of National Arts Centre dance producer Jack Udashkin, a major exhibit of her work will be mounted at the 1990 Canada Dance Festival in Ottawa. She has added the photographing of modern theatre in Toronto to her credits, specializing in Necessary Angel productions that include director-writer Richard Rose's works, notably his recent, much-praised adaption of Michael Ondaatje's novel *Coming Through Slaughter*.

Von Tiedemann continues to pursue the artistic pleasure of working as part of a team. Recently, her imagination was fired by a video workshop in Vancouver under the instruction of famed Los Angeles video-artist Nancy Hauser. "With an editing screen you don't get your fingers dirty," she says delightedly. "You just sit in front of a screen and make choices." Last year she and choreographer-dancer Sonya Delwaide combined television screens and live stage at Toronto's Poor Alex Theatre,

for a depiction of a scorching struggle beneath the summer sun in *PROVOCATION*.

This year she joined forces with dancers and painters, focusing her photographic lens on explosive, inventive scenes of a curious, offbeat beauty. She displays two samples from the ventures: dancer Benoit LaChambre, long hair askew as he swirls around an oversized Jack of Diamonds playing card created by artist Harvey Yalonetzky; and an exotic Claudia Moore poised amidst David Bolduc's crescent moon and East-Indian streams of fabric.

"I have many projects in mind," Cylla says with a shrug. "I see everything in town in modern dance and I photograph almost everything. Sometimes, in photo sessions, we start with what is there, what it is, a piece — and go no further. Sometimes, with a short little press-shoot, a photocall, we end up with a good picture, perhaps, but not the essence."

She glances again at the picture of Robert Desrosiers "just fooling around", and she smiles, "but I think the really good pictures happen when we say, 'Now, let's play together.'"

A Competition with a Difference

Over 220 dancers from across Western Canada competed in 14 categories for over \$18,000 in cash prizes at the second B.C. Annual Jazz Dance Competition held in Prince Rupert May 11, 12 and 13, 1989. "It proved to be a competition with a difference," stated Teresa Mackereth, president of J.P.A. Jazz Productions Association of B.C., sponsor of this event.

"There was a lot of talent to choose from. The awards were spread out really well," said Dana Landers, a graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and adjudicator for this year's event. Landers has extensive experience in jazz, musical theatre, tap and choreography both in Canada and the United States.

The competitors ranged in age from nine years and up and had the opportunity of competing in jazz, tap, musical theatre, novelty stage and student choreography. Both solo and group categories were featured, with the possibility of a single contestant winning over \$4,300.

Nine-year-old Josh Cyr, from Abbotsford, B.C., was the largest prize-winner in the 12 and under categories with over \$450 to his credit.

Bridget O'Beirne, 15, a versatile young performer from Prince George, B.C., was the largest prize-winner in the competition. She won over \$2,000 and the adjudicator's choice award for the most promising entertainer. This award entitles Bridget to a month's scholarship at Harbour Dance Centre in Vancouver.

Siona Jackson of Sonia Fabian Enterprises won \$1,000 in the category of semi-professional jazz solo and said that she would be putting her prize winnings towards dance workshops in Las Vegas.

Sandy Seymour showed great stage presence with her great smile and charismatic personality and walked away with over \$1,700. "This competition furthered my abilities in dance. It opens up the door," said Seymour.

Kelly Fobert of the Abbotsford Dance Factory, who wishes to be a professional entertainer earned over \$1,100 and the second place adjudicator's choice award. She plans to use the money as part of her dance fund and said she may travel and attend a dance school in California.

Fobert impressed everyone with her show-stopping, technical ability. She brought warmth and grace to her portrayal of the ingenue from the musical PHANTOM OF THE OPERA. It was a well deserved victory for this 14-year-old in the student choreography category. "I like jazz — there's so many types, so you can portray yourself different ways," said Fobert.

J.P.A., a non-profit society, is the driving force behind the B.C. Annual Jazz Dance Competition. Its objective is to help talented young artists financially, to enable them to pursue their chosen dance careers. The organization believes strongly in the promotion of young Canadian entertainers.



Kelly Fobert
performing
the ingenue
in PHANTOM
OF THE
OPERA

BY JEAN EIERS AND T.C. LESTER

Room at the

Top

**Ballet's Changing
Leadership**

BY PAULA
CITRON

Nineteen eighty-nine has been a time of tremendous upheaval in the artistic administration of Canada's six major ballet companies, partly by design, partly by tragic circumstance. The final decade of the 20th century will see a flock of recent appointees dictating this country's ballet future, a future which will be a reflection of the personal visions of these new artistic directors. As Ballet B.C.'s Patricia Neary says, "I see a new life for ballet in this country. People like myself are the 40's age group and represent a different generation of artistic leaders." Here is a run-down on the current state of the art, in geographic order from west to east.

Ballet British Columbia

The departure of Reid Anderson to the National Ballet of Canada left a plum vacancy at Ballet B.C. Founded in 1985, this young troupe has developed a wide reputation for its energetic dancing and high-profile repertoire. The selection committee, headed by Henri Alvarez, was overwhelmed at receiving over 75 applications, most of a very high calibre.

"These incredible applications came from every corner of the globe," says Alvarez, "and we were very pleased that a company this small could attract that kind of talent." Alvarez believes that the allure of Ballet B.C. lies in its uniqueness — the fact that it is not duplicating the repertoire of other Canadian ballet companies — coupled with the dancers' youthful enthusiasm and level of technical skill.

Given the wide response, the selection committee took a long time to screen the applicants before offering a five-year contract to Patricia Neary.

Neary had an illustrious career as a dancer with New York City Ballet as well as logging an impressive list of guest appearances with major European companies. At age 28, she began her rise through the ranks of artistic administration, first as assistant artistic director with the Berlin Ballet, followed by full directorships in Geneva and Zurich. In 1986, she became ballet director of Milan's La Scala, followed by a year-and-a-half of freelance work. Neary's initial contact with Ballet B.C. came in 1987 when she set

Balanchine's *APOLLO* on the Company and on the basis of this success, she was asked by the board to apply for the position. Returning to Canada is something of a wheel coming full-circle for Neary. Although American-born, her first professional job, at age 14, was in the corps of the National Ballet of Canada in 1957.

Says Alvarez, "We're ready to make a move to get a more international profile, so we aimed high in our choice of artistic director. We feel we won't make that push without someone like Pat. She brings superb experience and qualifications to the job."

For Neary, the Ballet B.C. job ends the drought of eight futile years trying to get back to North America and, as she says, always coming second place to a man. She sees Ballet B.C. as her chance to exercise the creative freedom she has always craved but never found abroad.

"After 20 years in Europe, I wanted to return to my roots," explains Neary. "I also needed to get away from opera houses where ballet exists to give the opera chorus a free day. The political situation in these places is appalling.

"I've done the big jobs; I've proven



Patricia Neary, Ballet British Columbia

that. Now I want to help a company grow and Ballet B.C. is on a small enough scale that you can set realistic goals that could happen. There aren't the have-to-dos like in Europe.

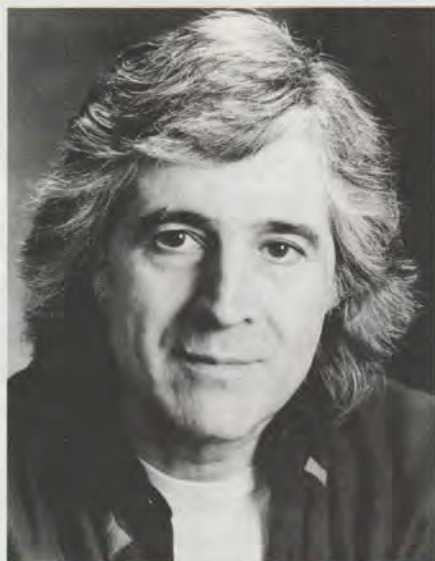
"I also love the family feeling here. There is an enthusiasm from both the board and the dancers that vibrates across the stage and generates excitement. This is a unique company and it's important to keep developing its identity. I feel that my European connections are a great resource because I'm able just to pick up the phone and get works. People don't have to worry that, because of my background, we're going to become a Balanchine clone, because most of his ballets are for large ensembles. For me, the important thrust will be new creations."

Alberta Ballet

With Brydon Paige stepping down, Alberta Ballet's selection team, under board president Marilyn Miller, set out very methodically to pick the most suitable candidate. They created an advisory committee with such well-known dance people as Ludmilla Chiriaeff, Ruth Carson and the late Betty Farrally and drafted a detailed set of criteria for potential candidates.

Explains Miller, "We saw our goals as three-fold: stronger dancers, better choreography and more expensive works. We also wanted someone who had a profile in the international dance community and who could use this network to bring good people to Edmonton. Brydon had developed the Company to a certain point, but we were ready to face identity issues and get more visibility."

Alberta Ballet received over 50 applications of which 10 were Canadian. These Canadian applicants were given top priority and in screening them, Miller discovered a great deal about the dance community in this country.



Ali Pourfarrok, Alberta Ballet

"We found the other companies to be quite territorial and competitive, meaning that the elders of the dance community had a loyalty to their own and didn't want to concern themselves about our desire to develop a strong dance company. They were helpful in the early stages, but when we asked for specific references, they were very critical, in fact, very uncharitable about our applicants, yet they didn't put forward other possible candidates, even telling us that we were too ambitious in our demands. Thank goodness for people like Ludmilla Chiriaeff who is able to see beyond her own company for the good of another.

"Canada has an artistic crisis in dance. We are not encouraging or preparing young dancers and choreographers to take over companies. The late Henny Jurriens served his apprenticeship with Rudi van Dantzig at the Dutch National Ballet before taking over the Royal Winnipeg, but we don't supply that kind of support system. We let people test out choreography and that's all. The Canadians who applied had teaching or choreographic experience, but few had management skills. I'm saddened by the situation because I see nothing happening to correct it. How can you hand over a million-dollar operation to someone with little experience? We had to look outside Canada and chose Ali Pourfarrok because we felt he understood the Company and where we wanted to go."

Iranian-American Pourfarrok has danced with an impressive list of companies including American Ballet Theatre, Harkness Ballet and the Joffrey Ballet. He has also had extensive teaching, choreographic and artistic directorship experience with such companies as Alvin Ailey's American Dance Theatre Company and the Iranian National Ballet. Prior to his Alberta Ballet position, Pourfarrok founded and was head of Dance Theatre of Long



Andre Lewis, Royal Winnipeg Ballet

Island and its North Shore School of Dance.

Says Pourfarrok, "I heard through friends that the directorship was available and I routinely applied. I was familiar with the name Alberta Ballet but I didn't know much about it. My first contact was being invited to teach classes."

According to Pourfarrok, he found a young, disciplined company with nice facilities and was sufficiently impressed by the board that he knew he could leave many administrative matters in its hands. "I have to be in the studio with dancers," Pourfarrok explains. "I don't like wasting time on meetings and fundraising."

Pourfarrok is very blunt about the situation he has inherited.

"My greatest challenge is to bring Alberta Ballet to both national and international recognition. The possibilities here have not been exploited to the fullest. This company had been doing diluted versions of the classics with 16 dancers. There are other companies in the country doing the classics better and Alberta Ballet suffered in comparison. This type of thinking would always keep it provincial. As well, two of the dancers were the stars and the rest were back-up.

"The greatest attraction of this job is the carte blanche the board has given me to make changes. For 13 years, the Company was under the same regime; now is the time for revision — in the repertoire, the artistic staff, the inequality among the dancers, the lack of classes in other movement techniques, the poor visual material sent out to promoters — and I indicated this to the board. Our strength lies in becoming an ensemble, in getting rid of the star system to give others a chance. This will attract better dancers. We also have to tour more, but this will come with better rep. Who would bring us to Toronto to perform COPPELIA?"

"I also feel we have to move into



Reid Anderson, The National Ballet of Canada

smaller venues. Sixteen dancers are lost on huge stages. We should be doing only *THE NUTCRACKER* at the Jubilee. Most of the budget went into fulllength works with little left over for production values for shorter works. I want every piece, no matter what length, to have care lavished on elements of scenic design and lighting."

Under Pourfarrokh, the repertoire has changed drastically, with all the full-length works dropped except *THE NUTCRACKER* which is a perennial moneymaker. He has added ballets by Balanchine, Israel's Igal Perry and, as Pourfarrokh terms it, substitute story ballets like Birgit Cullberg's *MISS JULIE*.

Pourfarrokh's clean-sweep approach has seen a growth in ticket sales and dance critics write that the Company is looking good. What is more important, the board seems happy and Pourfarrokh has just been offered a three-year contract.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet

The 1989-90 season celebrates the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's 50th anniversary, but the festivities have been marred by death. April 9, 1989, was a black day for the Company; within hours of each other, co-founder Betty Farrally succumbed to cancer and artistic director Henny Jurriens was killed in a car accident. Jurriens had only been appointed in October, 1988.

The Company held a press conference in May to announce plans for its 50th anniversary, including a lavish gala, exciting new repertoire and extensive touring. "Henny was our future," says publicist Mary Bashaw, "but we are determined to carry on, although the tone of the anniversary year will naturally be different."

According to general manager William Riske, Jurriens was a methodical planner, which has enabled the Company to carry on business as usual. "Henny not only left explicit details about next season,



Frank Augustyn, Theatre Ballet of Canada

but plans for seasons beyond which the existing artistic staff can expedite," says Riske. "In the meantime, a search committee has been struck which puts us right back into the marketplace after only 18 months."

For the day-to-day running of the Company, the board of directors has turned to Jurriens' personal staff — André Lewis, artistic coordinator, Catherine Taylor, assistant to the artistic director and Alla Savchenko, ballet mistress. This triumvirate will be advised by artistic director emeritus Arnold Spohr.

"I feel confident our team can continue until a new artistic director is found," says Lewis. "Henny was a delegator; he allowed others to execute his decisions, not like Mr. Spohr who did everything himself, so we were able to escape a management crisis situation when he died. Henny's primary thrust was to create a more sophisticated repertoire with the emphasis on works that are meaningful, contemporary and artistic, rather than just having broad appeal. He wanted to educate the audience and brought in ballets by choreographers like Hans van Manen who is really avant-garde for Winnipeg."

At the memorial tribute, Lewis summed up the current philosophy at the Royal Winnipeg: "Henny believed that you cry when you're grieving, but there comes a time when you have to say 'stop'. We've shed our tears; now we're carrying on dancing."

The National Ballet of Canada

When Valerie Wilder and Lynn Wallis stepped down as co-artistic directors of the National Ballet of Canada, they vacated the behemoth of Canadian ballet jobs. Not only would the new artistic director be taking over the country's largest company with the highest profile, he/she would be inheriting a morale ravaged by the death of Erik



Linda Stearns, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

Bruhn three years ago. Wilder and Wallis, who had been part of Bruhn's artistic team, held the National together over this crisis period and their accomplishments should be noted, from forming a close and productive relationship with choreographer Glen Tetley, whose original works for the Company received international recognition, to implementing the Erik Bruhn Competition for young dancers.

What the Company lacked during this period was a well-defined artistic vision and it is this factor that the selection committee, under board president Judy Cohen, made its priority.

"We had over 100 people who expressed interest," says Cohen. "To serious candidates, after the initial screening, we gave a detailed list of the aims and objectives of the National and asked each to speak to this piece of paper during the interview."

In an interesting twist, the selection committee discussed the five people on the short list with National dancers, from corps to principals. "Our choice was not made in a vacuum or dictated from on high," states Cohen. "The new person had to be the people's choice as well; we're a democracy at the National."

The appointment went to Canadian-born Reid Anderson who made his mark in the ballet world as both a principal dancer and ballet master with the prestigious Stuttgart Ballet. He went on to help build Ballet British Columbia into an overnight success. Anderson first worked with the National when he set Cranko's *ONEGIN* on the Company.

Says Cohen, "Reid fit what we were looking for, both our criteria for artistic director and his vision for the Company. He has a classical background, yet understands contemporary ballet. He knows the Company well. He has worked administratively in Canada and therefore understands the way the arts work here which is

DAVID STREET

MICHAEL SLOBODIAN

different to the arts scene in the United States and Europe."

For Anderson, the decision to leave Ballet B.C. was not an easy one. "I had thought that Ballet B.C. would be my career," says Anderson, "but when I was asked to apply at the National, I had to re-evaluate my life. The National is a big company and I'm more used to the large format because of my Stuttgart years. I knew the Company could make good use of my teaching and coaching skills as well as my world-wide network of ballet connections. I also felt that the success of Ballet B.C. was proof that I could do the job. I'd like to think I was chosen, not because I'm a Canadian, but because I was the best person for the job. I see my main goal as creating programming that will get people excited."

In an unusual move, Anderson asked Valerie Wilder to stay on as his associate director and Wilder agreed.

"I need someone to handle the administration to free me up for studio time," explains Anderson. "I also need a right hand that you can trust. Because she knows the ropes, it seemed silly to bring in someone new. I also work well with women and felt we could be a good team. It says something marvellous about Valerie's ego that she was willing to become second in command after being first."

As Wilder points out, she is one of the few women artistic directors who has a husband and children and she originally stepped down to devote more time to her personal life.

Says Wilder, "Lynn and I took over in an emergency situation and I don't feel that anyone could have handled these three years better; we're leaving healthy audiences and interesting repertoire. Reid is inheriting a smooth ship. For me, the job just became too time-consuming."

"When Reid asked me to stay on, I talked it over with my family, including the kids, and then I talked to Reid and the board about the amount of commitment I was willing to give and they agreed to my terms. I see myself as an expeditor/implementer of Reid's decisions, as I did for Erik, as well as a resource person and agent of continuity. I have been offered a very cherished and privileged position; I can pursue things close to my heart like the Ballet/Opera House project, yet I'm not in the frontline with direct responsibility. It's a tailor-made job."

Theatre Ballet of Canada

When founding artistic director Lawrence Gradus resigned, the board of Theatre Ballet of Canada, under chairman Edward White, did some serious soul-searching.

"We felt that in these first 10 years, we had come to a standing start in Ottawa," explains White. "We were dealing with a community known for its reserved entertainment tastes and with a very competi-

tive international dance scene at the National Arts Centre. Against that, we had built up a satisfying image in Canada and the United States, a solid base with which to grow."

Unlike Alberta Ballet or the National, White's board had no fixed criteria concerning the new artistic director. "We had no presuppositions of what we were looking for; instead, we wanted someone to tell us what he/she would like to do with the Company. We also had a very catholic view and did not restrict ourselves to choose only a Canadian. We had over 20 applicants, more than we expected, and many of them wrote thoughtful reports after seeing the Company. A priority for us was someone with vision who could put our company on the map locally, nationally and internationally."

That visionary is Frank Augustyn, principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada, whose administrative experience has been limited to being artistic director of the yearly ballet gala, *Le Don des Etoiles*, and whose choreographic output is nil. Augustyn, who had become known to the Company through a series of guest appearances, was asked to apply.

According to White, Augustyn's was the most attractive proposal submitted and in his interview, he struck the board as a man of both energy and ideas. As for his lack of experience, White feels that the board will address the problems as they arise. Apparently Augustyn was a good candidate because he would not be defining the Company by his own choreography; by choosing works of others, he would make the repertoire of Theatre Ballet at once broader and more eclectic. Augustyn also has a name that will help in fundraising as well as a wide network of personal dance acquaintances who will help him build the Company.

"Directing a company seems right for me at this time," says Augustyn. "Teaching and coaching for me are not exciting careers on their own, but being an artistic director is all-encompassing and it is the challenge I want."

As he was hired in May to begin July 1, by necessity, Augustyn will be planning programs based on last year's repertoire, but he also plans to mount an original full-length production at the National Arts Centre during the Christmas season, a production he hopes will become an annual event and a continued source of revenue. He believes that a small company can do full-length works and would like to see a new one produced every two years. He adds, "The Company must grow from 10 to 14 or 16 dancers to make performance demands easier and provide backup. We also need a new space; we're working in a dump and paying too much rent for it."

For Augustyn, a high priority is strengthening the home base of the Company. Because of the wide international scope of the National Arts Centre dance

series, Theatre Ballet has been appearing there only every two years and was spending most of the time on the road because it didn't have a home theatre. Fortunately, the recently opened 1000-seat Centre-pointe Theatre in Nepean will provide a more accessible Ottawa venue.

"More important than touring to American college towns is developing an identity in Ottawa," states Augustyn. "We'd like this full-length work to become a signature piece so that Ottawa audiences will realize they have a ballet company. We also have to perform more often at the National Arts Centre as well as Nepean. We should have an education program to incorporate the children of Ottawa. I also would like the name to change to Ottawa Ballet which says where we're from and gives us an instant identity; Theatre Ballet of Canada is a big name for a little company."

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

The only company, at the time of this writing, which does not have a new artistic director appointed is Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. When this writer spoke to general manager Colin McIntyre, the application date had just closed and he expects that a decision will be made by summer's end. McIntyre also adds that out-going artistic director Linda Stearns has left a wellplanned season and that the transition to the new regime will be smooth and orderly.

With no new artistic director to talk with, space should be devoted to Stearns who for 28 years has been the heart of the Company, first as a dancer, then ballet mistress, co-artistic director and finally artistic director. It has been Stearns who has held the Company together through never-ending shifts of policy and several co-artistic directors.

"The last four years have been excessively difficult ones," says Stearns, "because of administrative and artistic changes. I have been flattered to remain the fixed point, but the situation put a strain on me personally and I felt it was time to go. For example, the demands of the job were such that I've never had a summer holiday. An artistic director needs fresh energy and when you're tired, you should leave. I have lots of interests — dogs and horses, cooking and gardening — that I want to pursue. But even though I'm officially retired, I'm still here working; I'm devoted to the Company and I want to make sure that everything is in place for the new person and that no one has any worries."

Stearns is acting as advisor to the selection committee and is delighted by the calibre of the applicants. She is also leaving a healthy company with box office up 50% and glowing reviews for its recent Diaghilev programs.

As Stearns says, "It's good to be going with both the public's and the board's confidence restored in the Company."

Reid Anderson:

New Beginnings

BY MAX WYMAN

The artistic director of the National Ballet of Canada made his public performing debut at the age of 5 as a glowworm. He has been lighting up the world of international dance ever since.

At 39, Reid Anderson prepares to assume the post of artistic director of the country's largest dance institution after a career that included almost 20 years with the Stuttgart Ballet, many of them as a principal dancer. He has spent the past two years in his home province of British Columbia, masterminding the meteoric rise to national prominence of Ballet British Columbia.

Now Anderson is about to tackle one of the most significant dance jobs on the North American continent. Is he ready for the challenge? He laughs at the question. "Ready?" he says. "I can't wait."

In a sense, it's a post he has spent his life preparing for — though it certainly wasn't a conscious preparation. Anderson's life in dance has been a constant series of serendipitous coincidences, and he long ago learned to follow wherever his personal fate beckoned.

At the beginning, Anderson didn't even like dancing.

He is 17 months younger than his sister Susan, but they were raised almost as twins, and Susan refused to go anywhere without him. So when their mother enrolled Susan in a tap class, Reid had to go along to hold his sister's hand "and one day she was doing a tap step, shuffle-knockdown, and I thought, 'Well, I can do that' — just like the character in *A CHORUS LINE* — so I did shuffle-knockdown, and that's how I started dancing. It was just a fluke."

Within the year, young Reid made his performing debut singing *Glow, Little Glowworm*, one boy with six little girls, complete with pipe-cleaner feelers and a battery-operated light attached to his rear — "and every time you turned your bottom to



(Left) Judith Cohen (Centre) Reid Anderson (Right) Valerie Wilder

the audience, you pushed the button and the light came on."

Soon he was entering contests. As a performer, he was a natural. But he had no technique. By the time he was 6, Royal Winnipeg Ballet founders Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally, adjudicating at a dance festival near his home in the old district of Sapperton in New Westminster, B.C., advised his parents to send him to ballet class. "Even Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly

studied ballet," they said.

His father, a foreman at a lumber processing plant, hated the idea — "but he thought that if someone who's an authority said this, it must be true," Anderson recalls, "so I started ballet."

Anderson's father built a dance floor in the basement of the family home, and after Reid and Susan had done their homework and eaten dinner, they would go downstairs to rehearse.

"And what was quite extraordinary was that my father was the one who would rehearse with us. He had a fabulous eye, and saw everything, and nothing was ever good enough. He'd come to our classes (with New Westminster teacher Dolores Kirkwood, who taught Anderson until he was 17) and watch, then go home with us and work on the things we'd done. His favorite saying was: 'Can't is a beggar too lazy to try, so go back and start again.'"

Soon Reid and Susan became a popular entertainment duo, singing and dancing in public two or three times a week. "My parents loved all that," he says. "What they didn't realize was that at 11 or 12 I'd fallen in love with ballet."

"For my father, that was devastating. Ballet dancers were sissies who ran around in their long underwear on the stage. He also didn't think you could make a living as a ballet dancer, and in those days you really couldn't. I remember telling him, 'I don't care if I live in a cold-water basement. This is what I want to do.' But it was a long fight."

It was not the only fight he had. Ballet was not a popular pastime in rough, tough Sapperton. "In those days, you just didn't wear tights," Anderson says. "Nowadays, there's no stigma attached — cyclists wear them, weightlifters, runners — but then it was a really big problem. I was always scrapping."

Early in his training, Anderson was turned down by the National Ballet School. "I could dance, but I had no techniques, and what the NBS auditions ascertain is whether you have the right body and whether physically you can do it. There's no test for what you can do on the stage."

However, he says "in my experience, most of the most interesting dancers have problems with their bodies, and it's through fighting all that they become something... because the general public don't really know if your feet are pointed or if you're turned out from the hip, but they really know if you're dancing with your heart. They know the difference between doing steps and dancing. Well, I could dance but I couldn't do the steps, and it took me quite a few years to get all that together."

At the age of 17, Anderson had it all together well enough to be accepted at the Royal Ballet School in London, paying his way with money he'd save from appearing in such shows as *THE SOUND OF MUSIC* at the Vancouver International Festival.

Once again, fate came into play. He left for England from Winnipeg, and before his flight, took a class with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. After the class, then Royal Winnipeg Ballet artistic director Arnold Spohr offered him a place in the Company. Anderson turned the offer down, "but the last few hours I spent in Canada before I moved to Europe, which turned out to be for almost 20 years, were spent with Arnold trying to persuade me to stay."

More serendipity guided him to Stuttgart. It was the Royal Ballet School Christmas party of 1968. Anderson was 19, just out of school and working with London's Royal Opera Ballet.

Friends dared him to ask the school director to dance. "So I did, and we talked, and she asked if I was happy, and I said not really, I didn't feel that as a Canadian I fitted in, and she said a friend of hers, Johnny Cranko had called her from Stuttgart, needing dancers for a big tour of America, and she thought it might be a company for me."

The idea intrigued him. "You ask yourself why; I still do. I had a vague idea of who John was, but I had to look Stuttgart up on the map." Two weeks later, he flew to Stuttgart to audition (his parents sent him the airfare), and by February 1969 was a member of Cranko's company, then just beginning its historic rise. "In the end," Anderson says now, "my father was immensely proud of how my career came out."

During his latter years at Stuttgart, Anderson was increasingly involved with the National Ballet of Canada, teaching, staging and performing in Cranko's *ONEGIN*, but it took a long time for him to decide to allow his name to go forward for the Toronto job. By the time the possibility came up, he was running Ballet B.C. — "I'm far more comfortable directing a ballet company than I ever was as a dancer; it's like putting on something you love to wear, as opposed to something you don't look too bad in" — and he was excited by its potential.

But once he had decided to stand, he realized just how much he really wanted the National Ballet post. "So when it happened, I got off the phone and leaned against the wall, and went, Phew! Well, you've got to think, right? A little 4-year-old growing up in Sapperton who didn't get accepted by the National Ballet School one day becoming... Well, you do think that. But in the same breath you cancel all that out, because your whole life has been one of going through all the processes and moves to make you the kind of person who can do the job."

Two decades in Stuttgart inevitably shaped Anderson's directorial approach, in terms both of dancers and of their repertoire.

"I have a really gut feeling about dancers," he says. "I believe there has to be a whole lot more there than the technique. The public has to be able to relate to that person, their look, their size, their sensuality, the way they move before they even do a step. At the same time, on the technical side, I became more and more critical. Instead of becoming more magnanimous about it, I get more and more picky."

"So maybe I'm going into the right job now. I'm really enthralled by practically all the dancers at the National. That's the reason I'm going there, because I like what I see. Of course, there'll be changes. But I'm going there because I love that company and because I think the moves that have been made are the right ones, not the wrong; because I like the repertoire, not the opposite."

"There are so many things to do, and when you've got a crack group that can do them, then the possibilities are limitless. Some companies have wish lists and everything has to be accomplished in layers, cumulatively, to work; but here, so many of those layers have been accomplished — physically, emotionally, choreographically, organizationally — and it's just ripe to do wonderful things."

Anderson is particularly interested in expanding the repertoire for the sake of both the dancers and the audiences. Of course, he wants the classics to be "even more impeccable. You want the line to be perfect, because you know it can be."

But he also sees a growing need for new work from the 20th century, and he

names a number of choreographers he'd like more works by — Europeans he has been involved with in his own career, such as Cranko, Kenneth MacMillan, William Forsythe and Jiri Kylian, plus U.S. choreographers like Jerome Robbins and Eliot Feld. And he is also strongly committed to the idea of developing new choreographers through the Company.

For one thing, new work in the modern vein helps the dancers grow as performers. "When I watch these dancers dancing Jiri Kylian or (National Ballet artistic associate) Glen Tetley or (Company first soloist) John Alleyne, they are so much freer. You've got a lot of racehorses out there, but nowadays they're racehorses with the blinkers on."

But he stresses that he wants new ballets that "will do something for the dancers and the audience, so that everyone can grow together here. I'm a very theatrical person, and I believe what we're doing is not a matter of the choreographer having his jollies privately. It has to be for the public."

At the same time if there is to be any hope of allowing new work to emerge, choreographers have to be given room to develop, and in that regard Anderson is heartened by what he feels is the "immeasurable" growth in sophistication and openness of the Toronto audience: "They understand the need to nurture."

For instance, at a recent performance of a new work by Alleyne, one of the Company's most promising young creators, "people were 'bravo-ing' and carrying on, and this isn't the most accessible work in the world: this is thought-provoking, different, and the audience was willing to sit and watch and learn and take and understand. That bodes well for the future."

Much of what he says will have a familiar ring to anyone familiar with the directional philosophies of the late Erik Bruhn, the Company's former artistic director. Does Anderson feel he is picking up the Bruhn torch?

"Perhaps, spiritually," he says. "I think spiritually Erik and I were in many ways alike. We were totally different human beings, but we got along extremely well. I knew where he was coming from and vice versa."

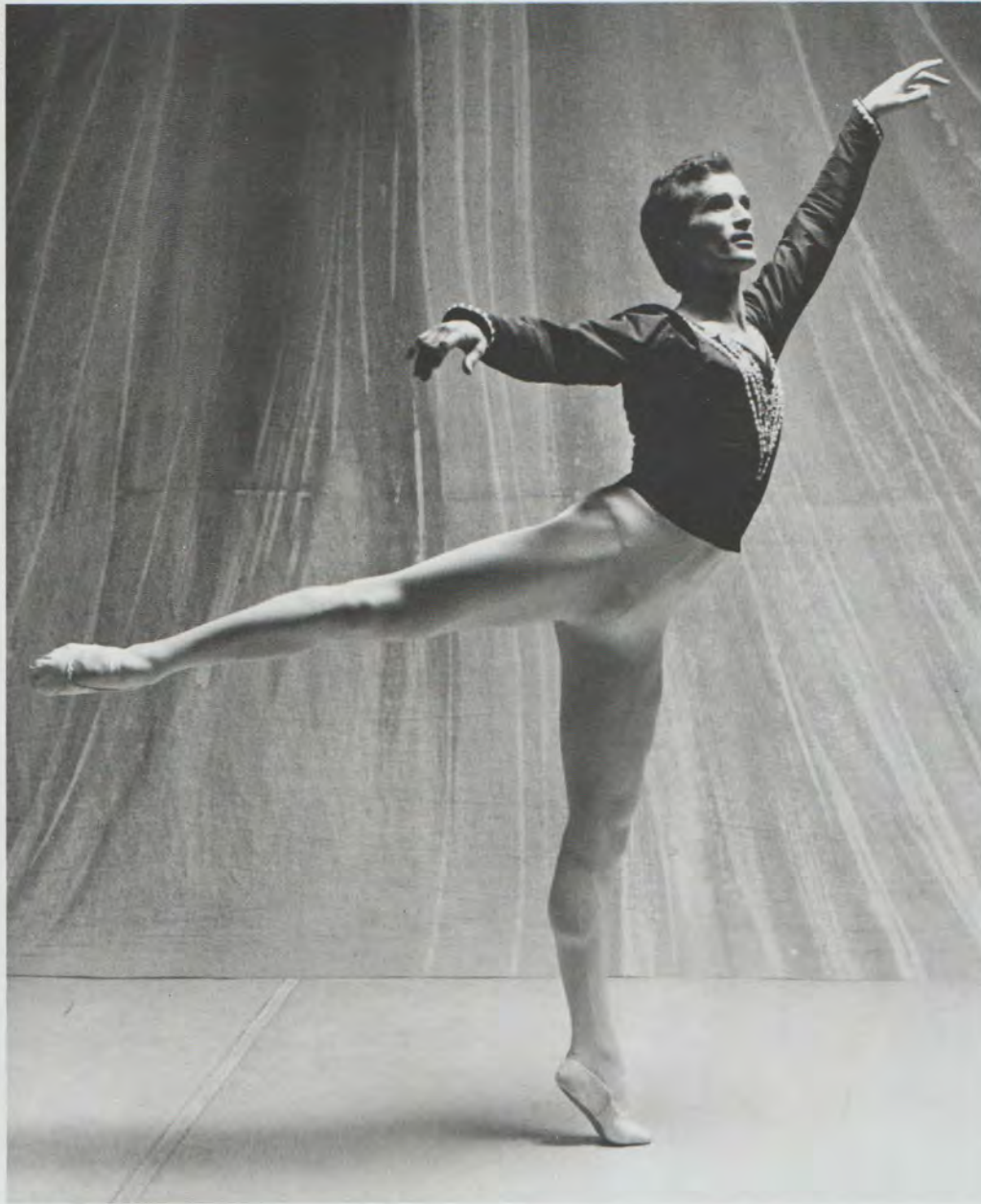
"I'd like to think," he says, "that Erik would be happy that I'm taking over." Though Anderson does caution that "the way I will attain things, my bedside manner, is different."

In what way different, he isn't prepared to specify — yet. "People often ask me," he says, "what I want to change. I can't say it will be this change, that change. But I know what I want it to be like; and whatever changes that involves will happen. They will."

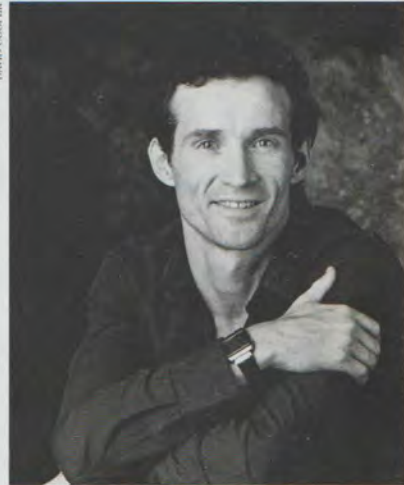
Max Wynton is dance critic for the Vancouver Province and is writing a book about Royal Winnipeg Ballet dancer Evelyn Hart.

David Peregrine, 1955-1989

DAVID COOPER



DAVID COOPER



(Above) David Peregrine (Left) in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet production of John Neumeier's THE NUTCRACKER

BEAUTY, CINDERELLA, A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM and SWAN LAKE, as well as ballets choreographed by Maurice Béjart, Balanchine, Rudi van Dantzig and Hans van Manen.

In 1987, David Peregrine was made an officer of the Order of Canada.

In addition to his role as principal dancer with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, David was a popular guest artist. He performed with the Festival Dance Company, Alberta Ballet Company, San Francisco Ballet and the Boston Ballet. Recently, he appeared with the Louisville Ballet in THE SLEEPING BEAUTY and COLLETTE by Domi Ritter Soffer and at LE DON DES ETOILES gala in Montreal with American Ballet Theatre dancer Marianna

Tcherchassky. David appeared on a number of television specials and also enjoyed acting in live theatre productions. He appeared in the Manitoba Theatre Centre productions of NICHOLAS NICKLEBY (1982/83) and recently in FRANKENSTEIN: PLAYING WITH FIRE (1989).

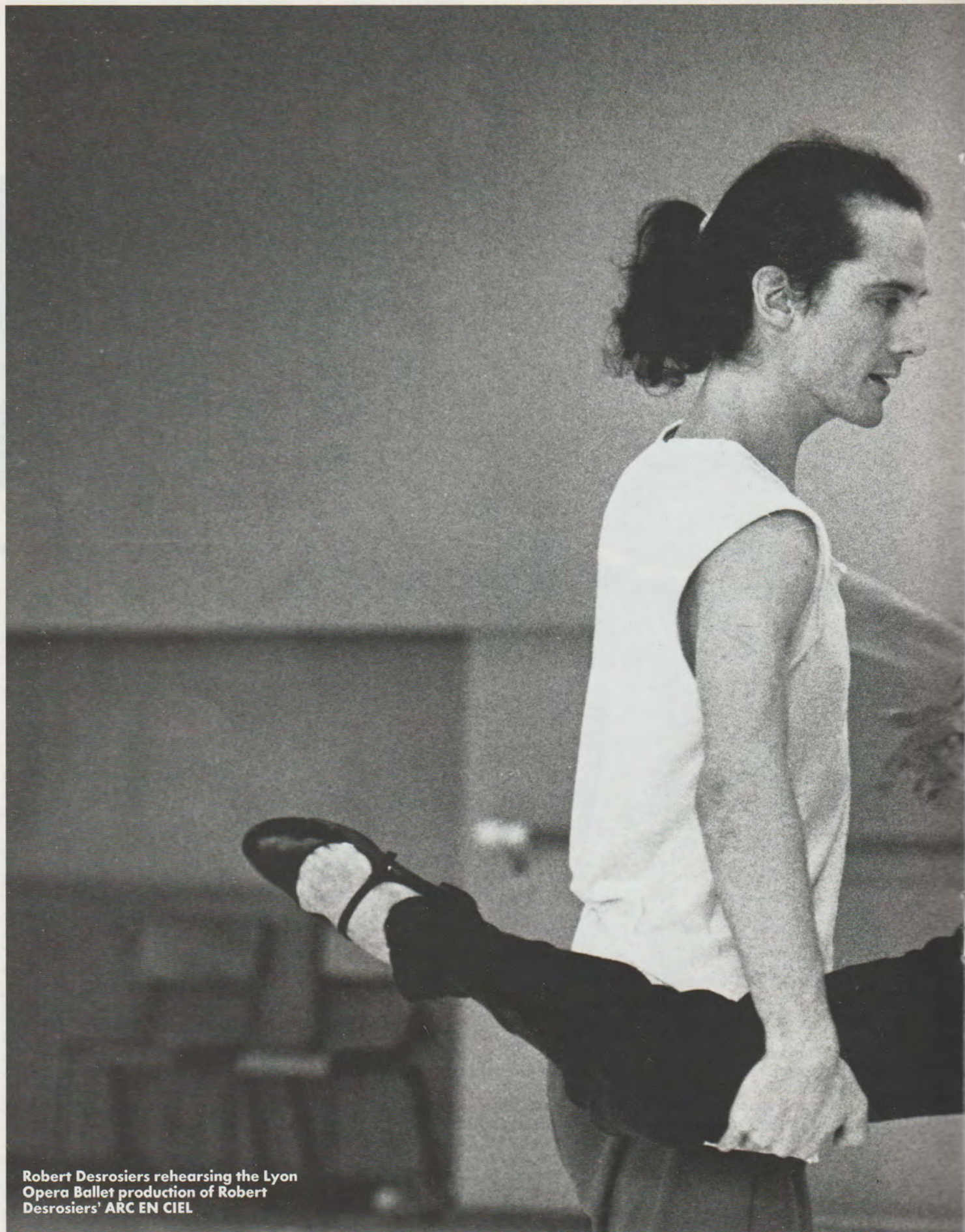
David is survived by his father George Peregrine Evans, his mother, Joyce Sheffield Evans, brothers John and Gwilym and sisters Barbara, Corrine, Shelly and Meaghann. His youngest brother Meirig died with him.

David Peregrine, 34, was killed in a plane crash on June 12, 1989.


Peregrine was born in Llay, Wales and moved to Ottawa, Ontario with his family in 1967. He made his professional debut with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1975, after training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School Professional Division, the Banff School of Fine Arts and the Nesta Tomaine School in Ottawa. David studied with Arnold Spohr, David Moroni, Jorge Garcia, Galina Yordanova, Chiat Goh and Ludmila Bogomolova.

David was promoted to soloist in 1978 and principal in 1980. World-wide recognition came the same year for his achievements in international competitions. Partnering Evelyn Hart, Peregrine won the bronze medal at both the World Ballet Concours in Japan and the International Ballet Competition in Varna, Bulgaria.

David performed with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet on tours throughout the world, performing in all of the Company's ballets. His repertoire included leading roles in ROMEO AND JULIET, THE SLEEPING



Robert Desrosiers rehearsing the Lyon
Opera Ballet production of Robert
Desrosiers' ARC EN CIEL



More than an Ocean Apart

**Robert Desrosiers:
Canada's Modern
Dance Ambassador**

Lyon, France, May 18, 1989

Robert Desrosiers is in one of the dressing rooms backstage at the Maurice Ravel Auditorium in downtown Lyon, France. The Auditorium, housing a 2,000-seat theatre, is the home of the Lyon Opera Ballet, providing rehearsal studios and administrative offices. It is mid-morning and the dancers are arriving for company class in twos and threes. They are remarkably fresh following eight weeks of intense, some say backbreaking, rehearsal and the previous evening's world premiere of *ARC EN CIEL* — a tour de force uniting dancers, music and lights for an hour and 20-minute production that carries the instantly identifiable stamp of Desrosiers. This is the second full-length work he has created for a large cast of classically trained dancers. In 1985 Desrosiers mounted *BLUE SNAKE* on the National Ballet of Canada; this production brought widespread recognition of Desrosiers' poetic and outlandish choreography.

For *ARC EN CIEL*, Desrosiers was offered the luxury of bringing along his entire creative team: choreographic assistant Lorraine Blouin, composers John Lang

BY ELAINE RUDNICKI

and Eric Cadesky, and costume and set director Myles Warren. John Spradbery, a magician in his own right and a long-time acquaintance of Desrosiers from the Lindsay Kemp Company, designed the lighting. Twenty-six dancers from the Lyon Opera Ballet worked indefatigably to realize Desrosiers' work and on the whole they do it justice. As for Desrosiers, he confesses to have plunged into the creation without any particular knowledge of French modern dance or its premises and preoccupations. Putting aside the financial and artistic risks, the inspiration for this international collaboration was mostly due to the artistic vision of the Lyon Opera Ballet.

At the forefront of French Dance: Diversity and Eclecticism

It is thanks to the unique policies of the Lyon Opera Ballet that Robert Desrosiers is the first Canadian choreographer to create a full-length work for a French company. The Company is distinct in France in that its mandate is to create a hotbed of contemporary work while staying married to the Lyon Opera. This relationship, if no longer artistic, is innovative in the scheme of things. Traditionally, every French city has an opera house with a resident ballet company whose dancers are more like civil servants than artists. This tradition, though gradually disappearing, has not contributed to the establishment of dance as a major art form, further than providing a mere *divertissement* in operas. Likewise, these provincial ballet companies, because of their lack of artistic goals and content, have only reinforced the dominance of the Paris Opera Ballet as the single serious reference of classical ballet in France.

It has been up to the younger dancers and choreographers to forge a new direction for this art form, currently considered as the meeting point of an entire generation. As of 1969, the Lyon Opera accepted the challenge of establishing dance as more than a simple third-act entertainment; but, it wasn't until 1985 that the Company seriously considered the incredible modern dance explosion France was experiencing. From then on, they opened their doors to modern choreographers who would contribute to the Lyon Opera Ballet's identity.

The artistic directors of the Lyon Opera Ballet, Françoise Adret and Yorgos Loukos, took their mission to its extreme in commissioning a work by a Canadian choreographer. Repertory companies are far more common in Canada than in France and the Lyon Opera Ballet is the only company that invites choreographers to mount finished works or commissions new pieces. Individual choreographers with their own companies normally produce one piece each year and invariably take it on tour. Only the larger companies sometimes tour more than one piece at a time.



Composer John Lang *ARC EN CIEL*

The Lyon Opera Ballet, while being a repertory company, commissions one major work every two years and during the intermittent years is satisfied with acquiring tried and true ballets. While inviting principally European choreographers such as Britain's Christopher Bruce, Sweden's Mats Ek, Holland's Jiri Kylian or America's (but Germany-based) William Forsythe, the American choreographers represented in an otherwise fairly serious collection of contemporary works have been of a popular strain such as Jennifer Muller. The Lyon Opera Ballet has also made its mark with pieces by French choreographers, Mathilde Monnier, Jean-François Duroure and in particular Maguy Marin, *CINDERELLA* created in 1985 by Marin, is the Lyon Opera Ballet's greatest success to date, acclaimed in New York and toured internationally. It remains to be seen if Desrosiers' *ARC EN CIEL* will have the same success.

Pot pourri or serious work?

There is no doubt that the words so often applied to Desrosiers' work, such as acrobatic and hypnotic apply to *ARC EN CIEL* as well. The Desrosiers singularity, if not formula, hasn't changed — the country and the dancers have. Desrosiers is a professional who knows how to meet a deadline despite leaving dancers, directors, ballet masters, lighting designers and composers with their heads reeling. A tornado of ideas and images presented in an unevenly woven whole, sometimes lacking in rhythmic modulation, a Desrosiers ballet is nonetheless an impressive spectacle which blunders only by excess. *ARC EN CIEL* may have a non-narrative logic, but the theme of spiritual transformation is omnipresent, consistent with the themes of

Desrosiers' past work.

In *ARC EN CIEL*, Desrosiers offers, in smorgasbord fashion, the gamut of contradictions and harmonies between good and evil, yin and yang, darkness and light, sun and rain and occidental and oriental. He places back-to-back a broad menu of dance styles from hybrid Kathakali to classical leaps or Graham floorwork, thus confessing to a total versatility that pleasantly surprises or jars as the case may be.

Desrosiers loves entrances and exits and devises rolling boxes from which his symbolic warriors of light and darkness can appear and disappear; later, he exalts union with a moonstruck (literally) wedding ceremony that sails through the sky like some myth rendered as romantically folkloric as a Chagall; he then defies gravity while offering us an aerial view of an army of Kabuki swordsmen descending the upstage wall in a relentless march only to be replaced by Balinese marionettes doubling as musical instruments. And that's not all: dragon ladies, knockout drag-outr duets, a quartet of black-veiled grandmothers cleverly combining tap and flamenco, a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde solo of the kind that Desrosiers apparently loves — in this case a united duality with the key players being no less than life and death, a burlesque act complete with umbrellas and raincloud hats and a tribal dance with opposing circles of twirling women and pole-bearing men that shows Desrosiers is capable of both movement invention and choreographic structure.

Wild images in *ARC EN CIEL* keep one either on the edge of one's seat or overwhelmed to the point of insensibility. Instead of a huge man-eating monster upstage-centre as in *BLUE SNAKE*, a Tibetan sun-god rules the finale but fails to create

the moment of illumination anticipated throughout the piece.

What a New York audience readily identifies as being pop and video inspired, cheerily relating its excessiveness with funhouse kitsch, a French audience is more inclined to criticize as naive mauvais goût. The fine line Desrosiers treads between extravagance and downright kitsch was in all probability not a calculated risk vis à vis a French audience. One mustn't forget, however, that the French are somewhat convinced that they invented good taste. Indeed, the French dance critic for the leading daily newspaper *Le Monde* described *ARC EN CIEL* as a potpourri . . . as if all the world's choreographers had thrown in an immense garbage-can all that they had rejected as being too boring, too vulgar or too ugly. This surprisingly categorical appraisal is indicative not so much of Desrosiers' finished product, but of the degrees of comprehension that can be expected towards dance trends outside the French consciousness.

Getting Drowned in Possibilities: Open Arm Policy

French modern dance, despite its North American influence, has found its references in other sources. Not the least important were the political and social revelations provoked by the student riots of May 1968, where for the first time a society based on bourgeois values was confronted with a new consumerist and mediated era. Integral to the development of modern dance in France was the accompanying upheaval in traditional values and attitudes relating to physical consciousness, bringing to the forefront new ways of viewing the body. Dance was to become the focus of a new investment on the part of artists from many different disciplines. Indeed, in France a choreographer coming from a specific school of thought or technique is an anomaly whereas a choreographer coming from the visual arts, from a film school or from a theatrical background is far more common.

Desrosiers is unknown in France. The last time French audiences saw him was during the 1984 dance series that was presented at the George Pompidou Centre, where for five days several Ontario modern dance companies, including Dance-makers and the Danny Grossman Company, presented a variety of mixed programs to relatively small, indifferent audiences. France has been absorbed in its own modern dance development (if not revolution) that has, since the beginning of this decade, provoked new state support and has been able to create, for the time being anyway, an unconditional modern dance audience. According to one of France's first modern dance historians, Laurence Louppe, French modern dance can be signaled out as the focus of an immense personal investment to the extent of be-



Performance photo of the Lyon Opera Ballet production of Robert Desrosiers' *ARC EN CIEL*

coming one of the privileged expressions of contemporary French consciousness.

For *ARC EN CIEL*, the Lyon Opera Ballet's artistic directors gave Robert Desrosiers carte blanche. Françoise Adret, the motor behind the Company's policy of contemporary creation, admits that such liberty for the majority of young choreographers can be literally too much and they can run the risk of drowning in too many possibilities. What is sensational from a North American point of view is the existence of a viable financial structure that greets a creator with open arms, offering both artistic freedom, widespread technical possibilities and decent production conditions.

Where does comprehension begin?

The questions that arise are: Does a choreographer need to know and understand French modern dance to choreograph a successful piece in France? Where does a creator's responsibility or satisfaction begin or finish in relation to the public, and in a larger context, to an entire culture? Is modern dance simply another example of North American self-centredness, of which Canada may be less guilty than its American neighbours, to believe that the universal aspect of dance is also a cultural *laissez-passer*? If this is the case, why has the wave of American dance in Europe tapered off radically these past few years? On the other hand, when the directors of the Lyon Opera Ballet commissioned a piece from Robert Desrosiers with the only condition that it be a big, visual spectacle, did they not simply take the risk of any institution or producer who commands a work from an artist? Is it possible to create a universal theatre, or a universal dance? Is an audience's appreciation so

unlikely that it can only be explained by saying, as Pina Baush said at a press conference following her performance during the 1986 Avignon Festival, that the audience liked it because they hadn't at all understood what she was driving at?

Françoise Adret hints that it would be wonderful if Canada could respond with a reciprocal invitation. The average fee for a modern dance company in France is high, even by French standards: between 80,000 and 120,000 francs a performance (between 16,000 and 24,000 Canadian dollars). The policy of creation is widespread in France and, while it has contributed largely to the effervescence of the young creators of French modern dance, the milieu is already witnessing its decline.

In French modern dance, the elements of American modern dance have been acquired and assimilated. Françoise Adret underlines this: in Europe there is an enormous flowering of dance, and among its influences the United States has been very important . . . In France we are very familiar with all the American dance movements, there has been for years a real bridge between us. On the other hand, there is a great distance between France and Canada. The Lyon Opera Ballet will be performing *ARC EN CIEL* at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa in May, 1990.

Where can this desire for artistic and practical exchange be taken? As Françoise Adret seems to admit, the ocean separating Canada from France is also one of comprehension. If Desrosiers is one of the initiators of an increased consideration, and therefore comprehension, between these two dance worlds, perhaps the ball is now in Canada's court. Is it possible that the ocean separating Canada from France is, after all, only one of incomprehension?

SHORT TAKES

WHAT'S HOT, WHAT'S NOT

VANCOUVER

BY SUSAN INMAN

NEW IS NOT NECESSARILY BETTER. WITH THE continual pressure on choreographers to create new works, it was heartening this spring to see an independent choreographer dare to expose a ten-year-old solo for reconsideration. Susan McKenzie's *GREY LIPSTICK*, which she included in *TAKE TWO*, an evening of works by her and Lola McLaughlin at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, is a tiny gem worthy of repeated performances. It could certainly provide a handy model for dance composition teachers struggling to show students why and how, less can be more.

In this slow, aching mediation on pain, McKenzie gradually removes a series of robes, each one contains a remnant of a relationship — a letter or a necktie — which she retrieves from a pocket and then lets fall. She stares resolutely ahead the entire time, her vulnerable yet determined gaze providing ballast for the unflinching revelation of despair occurring within.

This mastery of mood is also evident in *HIGH BEAMS*, a startling piece in which McKenzie engages a primal confrontation with the shadows of hands on a giant screen.

Fortunately, Karen Jamieson is also holding on to the older treasures in her company's repertoire and finding ways to show them to best advantage. During her turn in the Discover Dance series at the Queen Elizabeth Playhouse she included two extraordinary solos from larger works. The breath-activated solo from *CHAOS* must be one of the most thorough and thoughtful investigations in modern dance of the intriguing relationship between breath and movement.

The firebird solo from *RAINFOREST* captures the essence of the entire work, as Catherine Lubinsky, a part punk, part feral creature, wildly charges the space announcing her existence with ferocious pants and menacing claw hands.

Jamieson also adapted her recent solo *VESSEL* for this larger space by incorporating an astonishing collection of suspended African-inspired sculptures. Carol Itter's *CHOIR OF RATTLES* contributes just the right suggestion of tribal presence in this study of the universal dance impulse.

Of course, not all remountings are so successful. When the Anna Wyman Dance Theatre, the last in this season's Discover

Dance series, included the 1982 *ADAstra* it still had not resolved the problems that plagued the work the first time round. The giant pulsating cloth-covered platform that blankets the stage in the opening, like some primeval sea, is an overwhelmingly powerful and promising image. When it later disappears from the stage and dancers cavort in various divertissements that bear no obvious relation to any of the initial themes, the sense of disappointment can not be overcome merely by closing the work with the same churning sea.


The Company also premiered *CHROMA SHADOW* which highlights Wyman's capacity to celebrate colour and shape. The dancers, each clothed and painted in a solid neon-bright hue, represent sculptures, manipulated by a domineering artist. They take revenge when they come alive and in the process reveal more of their individual imaginations as they playfully accumulate a jumble of colourful garb and explore more of the shape-

oriented movement-sequences which Wyman is so talented at creating.

WHITE BREAKFAST, a collaboration between director Andrew McLroy and choreographer Paras Terezakis of Kinesis Dance was also remounted this spring. This fast-paced piece of movement-theatre shows the unravelling psyches of five psychotherapists during their own group therapy session. Though admirable in its goal of examining the world of mental health professionals, the analysis of issues is often thin and, at times, downright incorrect. The over-prescribing of medication by psychiatrists and physicians is certainly an issue; but alluding to it by having a female non-psychiatrist therapist dispensing pills is at best misleading. As the various female therapists reveal their own psychological maladies, which clearly impinge on their professional practices, the piece begins to read more like an unconscious exercise in misogyny rather than the insightful exposé of the curious world of psychotherapy.



CHRIS RANDLE



(Left and
Above)
Karen
Jamieson
in the
Karen
Jamieson
dance
Company
production
of Karen
Jamieson's
VESSEL

EDMONTON

BY SUSAN HICKMAN

AT THE END OF HIS FIRST SEASON AT THE HELM of Alberta Ballet, Ali Pourfarokh envisions a company able to make its own statement and in a position to attract international choreographers, a live orchestra and a team of talented designers within the next three to five years. Already, the former director of New York's Dance Theatre of Long Island is putting a new emphasis on full production values, with even the briefest of repertory pieces given attention to costumes, scenery and lighting. His elimination of former director Brydon Paige's star system has met with mixed reviews from Edmonton audiences, and although he intends to maintain the traditional elements of style of his predecessor's full-length ballets, minor modifications are being made to suit individual dancers.

Pourfarokh's new approach was evident in his restaging of Paige's *COPPÉLIA* in February. Swanilda was less coy and a little more worldly, Franz was a fickle youth intrigued by, rather than in love with, the doll, Coppélia, and Dr. Coppélius was less cartoonish and a bit more believable.

COPPÉLIA had all the elements of the innocent comedy created by Arthur Saint-Léon in 1870, but it lacked the charm to really animate and the young inexperienced dancers failed to breathe magic into the three-act ballet. Nancy Latoszewski was technically proficient but somewhat uncomfortable in her portrayal of the determined, self-assured young heroine, Swanilda. Lenny Greco performed the role of Franz a bit too casually and didn't quite connect with Latoszewski. The corps de ballet, however, put in flawless performances, particularly in their execution of the exhilarating mazurka and the Hungarian czardas. Luc Vanier was a veritable ball of fire, both in his dynamic performance of the first-act czardas and as Jupiter, who takes part in the wedding pageant at the end of the ballet. The character of the old toymaker, Dr. Coppélius, was magnificently dramatized by Christopher Jean-Richard.

Pourfarokh's flair for the dramatic and the lyrical came through in Alberta Ballet's *GAMES PLUS*, a varied repertory program presented in May and consisting of two of Pourfarokh's new works, the dark, confrontational *GAMES* and the light, flowing *ITALIAN SYMPHONY*, as well as his improved version of *TANGO*, a ballet first staged by the Company a year-and-a-half ago.

The fourth work on the program was Benjamin Harkarvy's classic quartet *MOZART K.458*. Some of the dancers were obviously attuned to the sweet tones Harkarvy apparently hears in Mozart's *STRING QUARTET NO. 17*. Latoszewski's innocent lyricism and Nathalie Huôt's distinct display of tenderness set an exciting tone for this well-

paced work. On the other hand, veteran Alberta Ballet dancer Stephani Achuff was all technique and confidence but no emotion or excitement.

Achuff and Daniel McLaren were featured in *ITALIAN SYMPHONY* in a beautifully choreographed duet which takes full advantage of the sustained notes in Felix Mendelssohn's *SYMPHONY NO. 4*. The partnering, however, was awkward and Greco and Latoszewski outshone them in the final movement.

Outstanding in this season-end performance were the eloquent and sensual Tisha Ford and newcomer Miguel Aviles as her smooth Latin lover in a refurbished *TANGO* set to the thrilling, seductive music of South American composers Piazzola, Delfino and Pontier.

Closing the program was the dramatic, modern, but disappointing *GAMES* with its competitive sense of urgency. Particularly appealing was the fourth movement, *LABYRINTH GAMES*, which featured McLaren defeating an agile and athletic Aviles as the menacing, masked Minotaur on a spectacular stage set.

THE BRIAN WEBB DANCE COMPANY CELEBRATED its 10th Anniversary this season. Thirty-eight-year-old Webb, the Company's artistic director, is a controversial artist who has been throwing innovative modern dance at Edmonton audiences for a decade.

Webb's collaboration with writer Scott Taylor, *THE LIGHT WATERING STUDIO*, presented in March, was his most extravagant production to date. Featuring several gymnasts, more than a dozen dancers from Grant MacEwan Community College's dance program and two actors, this two-act, multi-media spectacle, inspired by Swissborn architect Le Corbusier and French landscape painter Claude Monet, was intended to challenge the mind, according to Taylor. It succeeded, however, in only boggling the mind. *ALOKA-MONET: THE LIGHT WATERING STUDIO* was a drawn-out production whose elements, if somewhat fascinating, were overwhelming and inconsistent. Even the best of scenes failed to redeem a work disjointed by a flood of images and words.

Webb fared better in *LE CORBUSIER: MAN MINUS MACHINE EQUALS MIND*. As the noted architect, in bowler hat and tails, Webb was at his most comical and radical. Both acts were accompanied not by music, but by well-chosen, foreign-accented voices giving various interpretations of the lives of Monet and Le Corbusier.

In May, Webb presented the provocative *PARTY ON THE EDGE*, by five fellow dance artists, as well as a couple of his own pieces. Highlighting the program was Tracy Rhoades' brief but imaginative and sensitive *REQUIEM*, skillfully performed to the beautiful *PIE JESU* from Gabriel Faure's *REQUIEM*. A principal dancer with Della Davidson and The Moving Co. of San

Francisco (and an advanced clairvoyant student at Psychic Horizons in San Francisco), Rhoades used his very large and intensely creative hands and feet with spellbinding effect.

In words, a showcase for New Yorker Karl Anderson's exhibitionism, the audience was exposed not only to every inch of his well-toned, unclad body but also to his innermost sexual ponderings, with a taped voice in the background fading to a whisper. Although at ease exhibiting his physical sexuality, his sexual feelings were cloaked and uncertain as he surrounded himself with phallic symbols — candles and a menacing dagger embedded, in an upright position, in a mound of stones. Primal instincts came through, too, in Anderson's *DUET WITH BEAR*, a story of stalking a bear through the tundra and taking solace in its dead carcass. The child in Anderson was apparent in both works, the former featuring children's nursery rhymes about love and marriage and the latter a teddy bear Anderson had stuffed under his jacket.

WINNIPEG

BY JACQUI GOOD

NOTHING SEEMED THE SAME AFTER THE TRAGIC death of Henny Jurriens, artistic director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Dancers and fans missed his vision and his warmth. And the Company's first performance in Winnipeg after Henny's death became a memorial.

It was the most eloquent memorial imaginable. In the ballet *THRENODY*, a group of friends is shattered by the loss of one member and they mourn on-stage just as the dancers had been mourning off-stage. But there's something beyond sadness in this ballet; *THRENODY* is also a joyful piece in which the dancers create circles of movement with chains that are sometimes broken but that can always be refashioned. The pulse of life continues.

THRENODY was the first new work that Henny Jurriens commissioned when he became artistic director of the RWB. He strongly believed that his dancers needed to be challenged by the creative process of having a dance created especially for them. Importantly, he turned to a Canadian modern dance choreographer, Judith Marcuse, for this first commission. The result is a deeply emotional modern work with a classic feel.

It shared the program with a venerable old classic, *LES SYLPHIDES*. Jurriens was conscious of both dance history and Company history. The RWB danced *LES SYLPHIDES* in the 1950s but it didn't have Evelyn Hart then. She is incredibly supple and sylph-like, and the RWB should keep doing the classics if only to remind us how remarkable a classical dancer she is.

But she displayed the flip side of her personality in *PIANO VARIATIONS THREE*. Cho-



(Left) D-Anne Kuby and (Below) Sharon Moore, Fiona Drinnan and D-Anne Kuby in Contemporary Dancers' production of Tedd Robinson's **LEPIDOPTERA**



reographer Hans Van Manen has the happy knack of turning traditional movement inside out and then adding new things he's just thought up. Here, Evelyn Hart was defiantly un-sylph-like, impish instead of wistful, angular instead of soft. You could practically hear her chuckle as she flexed, rather than pointed, her feet, and her partner Mark Godden virtually laughed aloud. Everything about the piece is in contrast to Erik Satie's gentle music which as played by an unflappable Michael Sczesniak seated at a rolling piano.

There was another spoof on the program as well. I think of Jiri Kylian's *SYMPHONY IN D* as the male dancers' revenge for all those years of propping up women and carrying them across the stage. In this witty piece, the men go on strike, either refusing to lift the female dancers or dropping them. The men shoo the women out of the way so they can cavort at centre stage, the women retaliate and the entire piece becomes a power struggle. These dancers miss their cues, forget their steps and make entrances at the wrong time, all while keeping up the Haydn's sprightly music. It was especially funny when the classical pas de deux that preceded it demonstrated the more serious difficul-

ties of partnering. There were some hesitations and wobbles as two younger dancers tried out the virtuoso intricacies of the *DON QUIXOTE PAS DE DEUX*. Both Laura Graham and Brendan Collins looked more assured when they danced on their own.

Henny Jurriens believed in challenging his dancers with new and difficult roles, and in early May, at the Concert Hall in Winnipeg, they came through. And some, like Elizabeth Olds, Mark Godden, and Diane Buck, did much more than that. They remembered Henny Jurriens by dancing brilliantly.

THE OTHER HIGHLIGHT OF THE SPRING DANCE season was the long awaited premiere of Tedd Robinson's full-length work, *LEPIDOPTERA*. Robinson devoted a year's money and energy to mounting a new work for his Contemporary Dancers and subscribers and fans just had to wait. It was a big risk but one that seems to have been worth taking. Months of rehearsal resulted in very strong and synchronized dancing as the dancers practically burst onto the stage.

A healthy budget produced handsome costumes and set and the best score

that Robinson has ever had to work with.

LEPIDOPTERA bears the mark of earlier Robinson works with more sheer exuberant dance. He has a troupe of brave, athletic dancers and this time he really uses them. This is non-stop dancing, tumbling, fearless leaping through the air and even some hula dancing.

The barest bones of *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*, the Puccini opera that inspired Robinson, are contained in *LEPIDOPTERA*, but little more. *LEPIDOPTERA* is, after all, the scientific word for butterfly and here Robinson is looking through a microscope. These dancing butterflies live brief, frenzied lives; near the end, one is even impaled on the set, rather like a specimen in a collection.

The music, written mainly by Aaron Davis, with the help of Puccini, gets closest to the opera. Ahmed Hassan led a group of on-stage musicians who played an extraordinary diversification of musical instruments.

There were three wonderful butterflies — Sharon Moore, D-Ann Kuby and Fiona Drinnan. In general, the women in the Company outshone the men, partly because they're stronger dancers and partly because the choreographer is on their side.

LEPIDOPTERA was enthusiastically received during two performances at the *FESTIVAL OF CANADIAN MODERN DANCE* in Winnipeg and at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. But right now there is no money to tour the work.

Tedd Robinson is hoping he can resurrect the dance as easily as he resurrects his dead butterfly.



TORONTO

BY PAULA CITRON

ROBERT DESROSIERS' *INCOGNITO*, REWORKED substantially since its Calgary Olympic Festival premiere, was performed at the Bluma Appel Theatre, a venue not usually associated with dance. As a result, the theatrical side of Desrosiers' full-length work was the main attraction to an essentially non-dance audience. In this vein, Desrosiers was a success, pleasing hordes of people with his imaginative use of props, special effects and magic, and winning a new audience for the art form.

INCOGNITO is also the least tangential and most strongly focused and disciplined Desrosiers work to date. The very athletic dancing performed by his sensational company is a stunning combination of gymnastic floor exercises meeting Martha Graham — in fact, surrounded as it is by all the other Desrosiers trappings, sometimes it's easy to overlook just how much hard dancing there is in his works — and the new score by John Lang and Eric Cadesky fits the piece like a glove. In short, *INCOGNITO* is exceptionally well-crafted.

Yet something was very wrong. The piece, ostensibly, is about a nervous breakdown, a working through of the horrors of the breakdown and a coming finally to a sense of peace and calm. It is the most personal and introspective Desrosiers work to date and it should have had a powerful impact on the emotions. Although I appreciated the visually clever build-up of his argument, particularly the family, hospital and nightmare scenes, I was not moved. The slick work had a hollow ring and I felt a profound yearning for the rawness and gut-wrenching honesty of Desrosiers of old. In polishing his craft, Desrosiers has lost his rough edge and, somehow, his heart. He is still a brilliant master of creating dance theatre, but I want him to find his heart again.

BILL JAMES' FIRST WORK FOR DANCEMAKERS since he took over as artistic director proved to be the most controversial of the season. For weeks after, people were talking about *PREDATORS OF LIGHT*; it was either loved or loathed.

A collaboration between James, architect Dereck Revington and composer Rodney Sharman, the full-length work deals with obsession, both sacred and profane. The point of departure for the three was the Don Juan legend, which in their hands becomes a statement about quest and conquest, taking as its central metaphor, a moth drawn inexorably to a flame.

Revington created three symmetrical, but different sized, wedge-shaped moveable columns of scrim material, which allows them to be translucent when needed. Sharman's score, at times mellifluous, at times jarring, is a seamless

grafting of music to dance. James' movement, always challenging, keeps the dancers in constant motion. The work is a brilliant culmination of three minds working as one to a common purpose.

For those expecting *PREDATORS TO BE* like James' wild environmental extravaganzas which first made his name as a choreographer, the new work came as a surprise. The piece is stripped down to its essentials and zeroes in on the human element and the experiencing of different kinds of passion; a change of pace for James, it is a dancers' piece all the way.

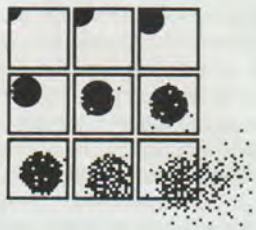
The work's controversy arises over the mix of religious and sexual ecstasy, the sado-masochistic tendencies exhibited, the violence, the raw emotional heart of man, exposed for all to see in all its baser or higher instincts. For some, the implied statement that religious transfiguration is little different from sexual orgasm is hard to take. But for those willing to give themselves into the embraces of the work, *PREDATORS OF LIGHT* sweeps one away to a world of senses, sensual, sexual and spiritual. James' great lyrical sweeping movements, punctuated by sudden shuddering jerks and twists and danced with great commitment by the Company, lays bare the naked soul of man.

LAST SEASON, DANNY GROSSMAN GAVE US HIS dark and searching *MEMENTO MORI* which dealt with an individual's coming to terms with death. For a complete change, Grossman moved to the light side for his latest premiere, *TWISTED*. Surprisingly, audiences were not prepared to accept a lighter Grossman devoid of a message that socks one in the jaw and the work was not very well received.

Although light, it is clever and witty, a delightful romp. Using five fabulous jazz numbers by Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, Grossman has fashioned a bizarre love story. In one song, a woman complains that her analyst told her she was mad, but the rest of the lyrics indicate that she's only a rugged individualist. The second character emerges from a song about an alcoholic who won't give up his bottle. After separately singing the blues, the two meet, fall in love and couple violently together at the end. There is also a generically dressed Greek chorus trio who play whatever other characters are needed.

Mary Kerr has dressed France Bruyere and Stephen Osborne in quasi caveman/woman outfits which set the tone from the beginning. These are people who are motivated by instinct. Grossman's choreography is extremely funny and although no deep message is preached, the music is great and the energetic dancing is fun.

TAGORE, GLEN TETLEY'S LATEST CREATION SET on the National Ballet of Canada, is a ravishingly beautiful, yet challenging, work. Rather than having a clear narrative line,



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CYLA VON TIERSMANN

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the work is a philosophical and spiritually abstract. Tetley has managed to do the seemingly impossible in *TAGORE*; he has captured a multi-level metaphysical concept in movement.

Set to a song-cycle by Austrian composer Alexander Zemlinsky, the lyrics of which are seven love poems by the Nobel prize-winning Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, the ballet uses love as its central metaphor. To Tagore, earthly love was only one embodiment of passion. A higher passion was the quest for the ultimate fulfillment of the human soul. According to Eastern philosophy, man can find nirvana only by loosening the bonds of desire, for it is desire which chains man to the wheel of life.

Astonishingly, Tetley has managed to convey this abstract truth in his work. Brilliantly utilizing his hybrid style which is a mix of classical ballet and modern dance, Tetley can be as lyrical or as grounded as the demands of his concept dictate. With the full range of two disciplines, his movement can be punishing. Yet, the National dancers respond magnificently to his challenges. *TAGORE* is a masterpiece of life forces translated into art and is the culmination of Tetley's intellectual yet passionate approach to dance.

The National Ballet added two works to its repertoire: Glen Tetley's *DAPHNIS AND CHLOE* (1975) with music by Ravel and William Forsythe's *STEPTEXT* (1985) to fragments of Bach.

The former recounts the Greek mythological tale of Daphnis who, although he loved Chloe, could not manifest that love physically. In time, both the young lovers

awaken to physical pleasures through encounters with darker forces. Tetley has created a work that is both visually gorgeous with designs by Willa Kim, and intellectually satisfying. He overlays the myth with modern psychological sensibilities, which make for a fascinating contrast.

For its part, *STEPTEXT* is cheeky and daring. Forsythe, artistic director of Frankfurt Opera Ballet, is the hot new blood in the ballet world and, although he uses classical ballet vocabulary, he is redefining the terminology. *STEPTEXT*, for one female and three male dancers, takes fragments of movement from another ballet of Forsythe's, *ARTIFACT*, and literally plays with the steps, adding, recombining, eliminating and exploring, in short bursts of action. There is also an underlying uneasiness about the male/female relationships involved. In short, it is a work that says volumes using minimal material.

TWO IMPORTANT CONCERTS WERE GIVEN BY Windsor-based Gina Lori Riley Dance Enterprises which has remounted nine works by Judy Jarvis, and former Jarvis dancer Andrea Smith who presented an evening of her own choreography with guest artists Tatiana Alexandrovna and Sylvie Bouchard.

Judy Jarvis, a seminal influence on Toronto modern dance, died tragically in 1986. By reconstructing her works with the help of Pamela Grundy, another Jarvis alumnus, Riley has not only given us an important link to our dance past but she has also allowed us to recognize belatedly a great Canadian artist. The works show the influence of German expressionists,

particularly Mary Wigman with whom Jarvis studied in Berlin. Spanning the years 1966 to 1974, the pieces still remain fresh and inventive, whether short studies with names like *FLIGHT*, *PROPHET* and *WATER* or more full-scale theatrical enterprises such as *JUST BEFORE AND IN BETWEEN*. Jarvis' style is lean and spare. There is not one movement too many in any of her pieces and it is this very economy which gives her works such a sharp focus. Her incisive pictures of human foibles, her biting satire, her sense of humour, her compassion and her passion are now preserved for all to see and appreciate. It was a very important dance event.

In her early professional life in Toronto, Andrea Smith made her debut with Jarvis and later co-founded Dance-makers. She then spent ten years in New York dancing with Falco, Lang, Monte, Moulton, Dunn and Graham and her work is the sum total of these influences. While Smith may not be the most original choreographer in the world, her works ring with sincerity. Her new major work is *24 PRELUDES* in which she and her guests, in a series of solos, duets and trios, conveyed the essence, spirit and sensibility of these brilliant Chopin miniatures. At times, she chooses to capture the patterns in the music, sometimes the mood or sometimes the thematic conflict, but always something of the quintessence of the prelude. To tackle 24 different pieces of music and find an infinite variety of ways to render each into dance was an ambitious task which Smith handled delightfully. The three women together were elegance and grace personified.

T.I.D.E.'S COLLECTIVELY CHOREOGRAPHED THE TRIAL, inspired by Franz Kafka's dark novel, managed to capture the insidious face of bureaucracy and the plight of a person caught in the horror of a system of justice beyond his control. Once the performers had established the menacing atmosphere, they had difficulty in sustaining the idea and, as with many T.I.D.E. pieces, the ending fell apart as the Company advanced further into obscure images such as a macabre birthday party. Also, by constantly changing the character playing the role of Joseph K., they diminished his plight because we could not build up sympathy for the character. There was, however, very good use made of props; a prison cell was created out of stacked tables and briefcases became weapons of menace. Although they sometimes falter, T.I.D.E. is never uninteresting.

New works were also presented by T.I.D.E. members Kim Frank and Tama Soble and former member Paula Ravitz.

Given the T.I.D.E. roots, each work contains dramatic and theatrical elements, along with weightier-than-average subject matter and heavy use of symbols. Frank's major premiere, *BEYOND FOUR WALLS*, deals with loneliness and isolation, while Soble's *BREAKING EXPECTATIONS* examines women contemplating the possibilities of motherhood. Both women showed a fairly deft handling of their material, including the element of surprise, and had little difficulty in manoeuvring sizable casts around the stage. As well, both have managed to include humour and not to take themselves as seriously as they tend to in their home company.

The less said about Ravitz' piece, the better. She had a talented cast of dancers, a score by John Oswald and a text by John Krizanc, yet the work was poorly focused and underdeveloped. The piece seemed to deal with communication problems but was so obscurely episodic that the only thing one could be certain of was that the end would be the same as the beginning, hence the title *FULL CIRCLE*.

WILLIAM ORLOWSKI, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF The National Tap Dance Company of Canada, mounted his first solo show, *SHOES WITH WINGS*, with mixed results. On the plus side, the concert was a pleasant enough evening of fairly upbeat material. On the downside must be tallied the cutesy opening and the overlong George Gershwin homage — *THE MAN I LOVED* needs a good editor and more varied choreography. The program did contain wonderful new work, however, which was worth the price of admission. *SWING WITH BACH* was innovative in its inspired use of different surfaces, such as a sand box and a roll of paper towels, for dance floors. Orłowski's incredibly skilled feet turned the taped jazz trio of Jacques Loussier into a quartet by literally becoming another instrument. Overall, though, the show was crying for a



STEPHEN KATZ

Tama Soble in the T.I.D.E. production of THE TRIAL

fireworks display of tap. Orłowski needed to set the theatre sizzling with at least one solid showy tap number, both as a climax and to provide a frame of reference for his own more artistic approach to tap choreography.

DANCE THEATRE PROVED A POPULAR PERFORMANCE format with several companies and independents experimenting with multimedia effects and interdisciplinary genres.

Leading the pack for sheer inventiveness was Peter Chin's *LAVOIXLECORPS*. One of Toronto's most avant-garde artists, Chin has created a dance opera which deals with carrying on in the face of looming global environmental and military catastrophe. While his downbeat ending was reminiscent of the perils the human race is currently facing, en route to his conclusion were lots of fun parts showing the wacky side of the human nature. Chin was not only responsible for the choreography but he also composed the music and created the design.

Another delightful show was Fiona Griffiths' *BIRDS OF PARADISE*. Dealing with different aspects of people striving for some kind of paradise, her work touches on diverse topics from Joan of Arc to love relationships. Although some of her use of symbolism left the audience puzzled, the piece is a delightful parade of people in search of a dream counterbalanced by episodes denoting the rocky life which forces us to keep searching.

Viv Moore and Dave Wilson are the leading lights behind Remote Control. Wilson seems to be the one with a sense of

humour while Moore's works are more mystical and philosophical. The pieces covered a wide range of socially responsible topics from *THE ASSASSINATION OF MARAT* to *MUTANTS*. There was even a wildly funny piece, choreographed by Wilson to a soundtrack of a tour of the Vatican. The sheer variety of their interests, sometimes dance, sometimes theatre, made for a refreshing evening.

Physikal Theatre, consisting of dancer Maxine Heppner, mimist Jay Fisher and actor Philip Sheperd, dares to deal with some pretty heavy material in works such as *KLOWN*, based on the expressionistic novel of Heinrich Boll, or *EDWARD'S SCREAM*, after the famous painting by Munch. The major problem with this group is that, while they are capable of producing clever stage effects, their work at times becomes so obscure that it smacks of self-indulgence; they have been savaged by critics for this approach.

FOOTNOTES: DANCEWORKS INAUGURATED A series called *FIRSTWORKS* to showcase new choreographers. Of the two neophytes, Line Roberge and Michael Menegon, the latter was the more successful with *INNER-VIEWS*, a look at the feelings of young people, with a text based on interviews. Menegon showed he could create stage pictures and expressive choreography. Roberge was more limited, although when she was more focused, as in *HUMAN NATURE* which deals with the perils of conformity, instead of the rambling as exhibited in her other works, she showed promise . . . The National Ballet of Canada's choreographic

workshop indicated that Company member Yuri Ng is a talent to watch. His inventive diversity was demonstrated in two works, *R.I.P. JACK*, a dark look at the murderous Jack the Ripper and one of his victims, and *UNTANGLE*, a wonderful balletic send-up of the tango . . . The National's touring arm, The Concert Group, added David Parsons' *SLEEP STUDY* and *THE ENVELOPE* to its repertoire; these witty modern dance works greatly delighted audiences everywhere they were performed.

TORONTO/MONTREAL

BY PAT KAISER

THESE DAYS THE BARRIERS BETWEEN BALLET and modern dance are flimsy enough that few eyebrows are raised when a specialist in Siegfrieds and Albrechts kick off ballet slippers to investigate the gritty terrain inhabited by José Limon's *MOOR* and Martha Graham's *REVIVALIST*.

A far rarer occurrence is the sight of a modern dancer sturdily filling a major role in an historic ballet. This past March, during Les Grands Ballets Canadiens' splendid *HOMAGE A DIAGHILEV* at Montreal's Place des Arts, choreographer-dancer Christopher House, from Toronto Dance Theatre, appeared in the Canadian premiere of *PETROUCHKA*, in the title role originally created for Nijinsky.

Fokine's sad, frustrated puppet *Petrouchka* doesn't occupy the exalted category of "classical-classical". As House says, "The role doesn't call for — say — a great technician. But it is pretty specific."

In fact, each of the ballet's three fair-ground mannequins is a fragment of humanity, incomplete by design of the ruthless Old Showman who is master over them. But, whereas dancer Kevin Irving's silly, vain *Blackmoor* and Gioconda Barbuto's stiff *Ballerina* are simply vacuous tufts of costumed sawdust, *Petrouchka* is cursed with a human soul. With his limped head, hunched shoulders and frail knees buckling together he pleads with flat, dead hands for help that his creator refuses to give.

As *Petrouchka*, House was nothing short of astounding, utterly transformed. Even longtime member of Toronto Dance Theatre, Karen du Plessis marvelled that she "wasn't really certain it was Christopher until he came forward for the bows".

Les Grands' production employed computer technology to reproduce long-lost technical drawings to aid in duplicating original Alexandre Benois sets and costumes. The handsome results, on reflection, offer an intriguing sort of time travel — the St. Petersburg Fair of 1830 given artistic reading in 1911 by way of IBM Canada Ltd. in 1989.

The Diaghilev evening was mounted to mark both the eightieth anniversary of the founding of Les Ballets Russes and the



Tama Sobel in the T.I.D.E. production of Kim Frank's *BEYOND FOUR WALLS*

sixtieth anniversary of the death of its founder, Sergei Diaghilev. Of the three ballets presented, the most familiar, Fokine's *LES SYLPHIDES* pattered lifelessly along as if choked in museum dust. The fierce regimentation of the Russian peasant wedding in the least-known of the three, Bronislava Nijinska's *LES NOCES*, both uplifted and disturbed.

Christopher House melded beautifully into its synchronized corps work again this year in Montreal as he did last year with Les Grands Ballets in Toronto.

His work in *LES NOCES* and *PETROUCHKA* is part of a continuing collaboration between TDT and Les Grands. House has appeared in James Kudleka's *IN PARADISUM* and has created two works for the Company, *INDAGINE CLASSICA* in 1985 and *JEUX FORAIN* in 1988.

In 1987, he also performed his own solo, *SCHUBERT DANCES*, for Les Grands in Montreal. Prop-free and economic in stage-consumption, *SCHUBERT* has become something of a signature piece. When Ontario Premier David Peterson made an official visit to France in early April, House performed it in a concert featuring Ontario artists at the studio of Paris' new Opera de la Bastille.

The previous week *SCHUBERT DANCES* was also one of six of House's works presented in his first week-long program at Toronto's Premiere Dance Theatre. The program offered an interesting balance and range. The busy flowing, bobbing and weaving texture of his abstract 1983 *GLASS HOUSES* forwarded such nitty-gritty investigations of human behaviour as his 1988

ARTEMIS MADRIGALS.

In the middle of the time-scale lies *SCHUBERT DANCES* and its critics have mentioned to me that they find it clinical and dry, "without any personality".

Before I ever saw *SCHUBERT DANCES*, its pensive, almost carefully self-contained calm was explained via the reflections of its costume designer, Denis Joffre who mentioned that in assembling the character's dark pants, shoes, belt and light shirt-sleeves, he had thought of "a young man at the turn-of-the-century on his first trip to the coast".

"Humm, that's interesting," comments House in a casually dismissive tone. "No, there's no program to it all. It's entirely intuitive. It can appear entirely different from night to night. For example, my final performance (during the PDT engagement) was much more lyrical than the first — a much softer feeling." The music allows him that freedom. As he says, "It has a kind of transparency."

In his new piece, *ISLAND*, musical accompaniment enters another category of transparency; it is performed to a purely percussive score, Steve Reich's *MUSIC FOR PIECES OF WOOD*. As to whether *ISLAND*, like *SCHUBERT DANCES*, changed during the run, House almost moans, "Oh, God, it changed completely."

For this depiction of some unknown tribal society he did not begin work with a satisfactory score until a few days before opening night. "At that point, most of it had been done to these wonderful reconstructions of ancient Greek music (that had) this strange, faraway quality. But it

was just a suite of dances. I was after something else — I didn't know what. A change a music, I rebuilt, and it became a piece."

The "strange, faraway quality" remained, due to a potent combination of all elements: Ron Snippe's dark, cavernous lighting, with small, glimmering patches seeping like sunlight through a thick, humid jungle, Joffre's primeval rags of dark blue and near-fluorescent green, and thirteen omnipotent dancers plunging their way through House's unsettling and fascinating new choreographic territory.

ISLAND is no paradise. Its inhabitants live in stifling disharmony. House has fashioned an arresting style of voiceless speech with hands and arms fluidly reeling off commands and bodies talking in yelps and shouts of lizard-like floorwork and foot-pounding struts.

Once again, as in the choreographer's GREEN EVENING... CLEAR AND WARM, the women seem to have the edge in intelligence. Once again it does them little good. To a dull, unresponsive Ron Ladd, the exotic Mariane Braaf repeated unknown phrases with quick-fingered, smoothly jabbing arm movements. Eventually Ladd and his male companions moved away to pile atop one another in a sort of inexpressive lump.

House could probably strain melody out of absolute silence. Much is made of his musicality and his program seethed with it. House can mesh movement, music

and meaning into a single fine fabric; he can take a scratchy Stravinsky violin and make it speak eloquently about the selfishness of love as in ARTEMIS MADRIGALS or set up conversations between Brahms and dancers as in HANDEL VARIATIONS. Yet each element may stand sturdily on its own and House can make their combining almost too rich for the senses.

OTTAWA

BY ANDREA ROWE

LE GROUPE DE LA PLACE ROYALE PERFORMED in the Studio of the National Arts Centre in February for perhaps the last time. Artistic director Peter Boneham has opted to move towards what he calls a dance laboratory rather than a performing company, and has received the support of funding agencies to do so. This change means that choreographers, both from within the ranks of Le Groupe and those invited to work there, will be given the chance to experiment without the pressure of meeting a performance deadline, although there will still be workshops where an audience can chart the progress of the choreographers.

The performance at the NAC included the recent works of two choreographers, under the aegis of Le Groupe's new dance lab, plus a work by Boneham which had previously been presented in Ottawa. Of note was a piece by Davida



Anne-Bruce Falconer (left), Ken Roy (Centre) and Yvonne Coutts (right) in Le Groupe de La Place Royale production of Davida Monk's ON THE HORIZON

Monk, assistant artistic director/dancer of Le Groupe. The work, ON THE HORIZON, shows a concern with creating dances that are heavily theatrical, relying to a large degree on spoken text. It is made up of nine short scenes, each dealing with an association or impression Monk has remembered from Western movies she has seen. The dancers are dressed like cowboys and cowgirls, with bandannas, vests

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and holsters with guns. In the first scene, they simply stand and scan the horizon, pivoting slowly on the spot; later, they stagger drunkenly out of a bar and cuff each other in friendly camaraderie to the accompaniment of a rousing fiddle tune. In other scenes the dancers portray horses running wildly, the audience is witness to a snowstorm as well as a summer drought and finally, the climactic stakeout.

Monk's intentions are good — her ideas are clear, the piece is well structured and she is successful in creating moments of humour and drama. All too often, however, her choreography seems to suffer from having moved too far into the theatrical realm. One of the problems is that the dancers aren't able to deliver the dramatic intensity the piece requires. They obviously thirst for dance ideas to explore and they excel when given the chance to do so; but, much of the time they are given the task of expressing themselves dramatically through facial expressions or spoken words and their interpretation of these passages is weak.

The women in particular have trouble. Katherine Labelle is unable to hide her dancer's grace even in the scenes requiring an outlaw's feisty attitude — she can't keep a little wiggle out of the movement of putting her gun away for example, and that makes one smile rather than feel the intensity of the moment. One senses that Monk is learning to take her dancers' strengths and limitations into account when she sets the choreography, but she clearly needs to go even further with this.

Some of Monk's scenes are worked out more satisfactorily than others, but on the whole the choreography lacked a flow; there were too many scenes and not enough development within each one. The result was a piece that didn't say anything that hasn't been said before in a similar fashion.

MONTREAL

BY LINDE HOWE-BECK

MONTREAL MODERN DANCE IS GETTING A home of its own — a two-theatre complex devoted to the teaching and professional needs of the community. To be completed by July 1990, L'Agora de la Danse, or Dance Agora, is a \$3.5 million project occupying three floors of Pavillon Latourrelle in the heart of the city's east end. The building belongs to Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and houses the dance faculty.

Plans for the Agora (Greek for "open place") were unveiled April 17 by Quebec cultural affairs minister Lise Bacon to the cheers of UQAM students, faculty and other members of Montreal's dance community. The announcement crowned three years of talks between dancers, teachers,

administrators, presenters and government officials.

The Quebec government has contributed \$2.8 million towards building the two theatres, rehearsal space, public amenities and offices. UQAM has committed a further \$600,000. All facilities in the non-profit Agora will be rented at cost to modern dance groups who have traditionally been obliged to rent commercial theatres for their performances. Because of financial constraints, many small groups have been unable to afford runs longer than three or four nights.

The larger of the two Agora theatres, with 350 seats, will occupy the present gymnasium on the building's second floor. It will be used for teaching purposes by UQAM's dance department who will also play host there to the plethora of independent companies who thrive in Montreal as well as to Canadian and foreign groups wishing to appear in Montreal.

A smaller, 125-seat theatre on the main floor will be home to Tangente/Danse Actuelle, a nine-year-old presenter largely responsible for the growth of small dance groups and young choreographers in Montreal. Tangente which has not had its own venue since the Montreal Fire Department closed it three years ago because its fire doors did not meet city standards, anticipates a big increase in the number of groups it is able to present, expecting its theatre will be kept busy year-round.

Tangente and the Agor's management will share administrative and technical services from quarters in the basement. UQAM's dance faculty will continue to occupy the top floor.

In her announcement, Bacon underlined the impact the Agora will have on the dance community, adding she hoped it would become, "like the origin of its name, a true public place for dance". For their part, dancers, choreographers and artistic directors are ecstatic that Montreal will be the only city in Canada to have such a non-profit modern dance showcase. "Our dream has become a reality," said UQAM's Martine Epoque, a key instigator of the complex along with Tangente's Dena Davida and members of the Regroupement des professionnels de la danse du Québec, a provincial dance organization.

Epoque expects the larger theatre to be in great demand since rental fees will be kept as low as possible by the university-landlord. However, the variety of needs the Agora may serve will not be known for some time. Groups other than modern dancers may get permission to use the space. Geneviève Salbaing, director of Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, asked to be the Agora's first customer in the large theatre even though hers is not a modern dance company. Les Ballets Jazz, one of Canada's most visible and least funded groups, is obliged to rent a theatre to finalize new ballets before taking them on tour. Sal-

baing requested use of the theatre for this purpose and Epoque gave her an unqualified yes.

CHRISTOPHER GILLIS IS MUCH BETTER KNOWN in New York than in his home town, Montreal. So when his sister Margie shared her Montreal season with him May 10-13 and 17-20 at Place des Arts, she doubled the pleasure and the fun.

Margie Gillis is one of Canada's most enthralling, and certainly most travelled, modern dance soloists. For more than a decade, she has wooed the world with her brand of compelling and dramatic movement designed to tug at heartstrings. While her own choreography is simple and sweetly optimistic, even when dealing with the pain and angst integral to her repertoire, it's her delivery that packs the punch. A dynamic communicator, she hurls her message across the footlights, building emotional spirals with quick changes of direction and mood. Her sense of abandon and joy of movement for its own sake are attractive in older works; by comparison, newer dances seem a little less sincere.

Brother Chris comes from a different dance stream. A member of the Paul Taylor Dance Company for 14 years, he is used to team playing and his interest in dance reflects American abstractionism.

Specially conceived for Montreal and given only one other performance, at Winnipeg's FESTIVAL OF CANADIAN MODERN DANCE on May 30, this program offered a rare glimpse of two powerful and different artists. They danced together in three works — Taylor's DUET, Stephanie Ballard's TIME OUT and Chris Gillis' LUVS ALPHABET — and performed solos of their own.

Margie danced five of her own solos, starting with the pulsating ROOTS OF THE RHYTHM REMAIN, an on-the-spot, sleight-of-body piece into which she weaves suggestions of African and Indian dances. This homage to Third World peoples is fast and vigorous with its undulating hips, jerky neck and shoulders and pounding feet. As she slipped swiftly between moods, Margie magically became queen, goddess and just plain Jane.

The nonsensical GIVE ME YOUR HEART TONIGHT showed her at her best. This dance about a frilly rump was performed on her stomach, bottom in the air. Her muscles tensed as she flipped and crawled, pushing her torso along with flexed feet.

BLOOM, performed to Molly Bloom's YES soliloquy from James Joyce's *Ulysses*, is a tour-de-force in which, reacting to the rhythm of the words read by Siobhan McKenna, Margie dance-mimed to the fluttering sounds. Tragic, comic, thoroughly human, she championed and cursed men's foibles with body semaphore so rapid it blurred.

Chris' OWN PAEAN is a well-crafted solo which underplays his dramatic abilities, concentrating instead on showing him at

his most liquid. Like his sister, he never stops moving. While her movement grows from a need to confront the world's problems or to exorcise her own demons, he appears to dance from an untroubled core.

Opening night's only disappointment came with Taylor's *DUET*. Even Chris' partnering skills could not keep Margie from looking uneasy. Her approach was uncharacteristically timid and it was a relief to see the duo later in Chris' flippant and appropriate *LUVS ALPHABET*. In this piece, they romped, stomped and growled at each other in sibling rivalry that eventually resolved itself in mutual trust and understanding. Goofy and playful, they spelled out letters with their bodies. Cleverly, the choreography incorporated the essence of each dancer's style in the solos: Margie whipped up her rapid-fire semaphore and Chris carved up space, his arms and legs in fluid opposition.

HALIFAX

BY CHRISTOPHER MAJKA

THE INDEPENDANCE SERIES HAS CONSISTENTLY been a forum for the presentation of innovative and exciting dance in Halifax. Under the stewardship of curator Diane Moore, there has been a steady growth of material from the local independent community as well as from a growing selection of artists from other parts of the country and even (this year) abroad. Here is a short perspective on some of the spring performances.

Daniel Soulières and Andrew Harwood have worked together previously and for the first number of this Independence performance, sponsored by Eye Level Gallery, they teamed up to present excerpts from a larger piece called *TRAVESER FRONTIERES*. Since we saw only segments, it was difficult to form an overall impression of the piece. The severe white lighting, the stark concrete rear wall of the Dunn stage and the business-suit costumes of the performers gave the piece a kind of urban, alienated harshness and brutality. This was reinforced by the staccato, sometimes angry, sometimes frustrated quality of the dance. The final duet with Harwood perched repeatedly on Soulières' back, legs and feet had an eerie quality to it, almost as if he were a bird of prey perched on back of his victim.

The second number was Harwood's *SIGNS OF LIFE*. Harwood's influence from his experiences with aikido, gymnastics and contact improvisation is immediately visible in his loping, languid style and his understanding of weight and gravity. Choreographically, he draws much on life experience as was visible in the 1984 piece, *EAU*, derived from the birth of his son. In *SIGNS OF LIFE*, Harwood the father/child seeks to find and affirm the relationship between a son and the child in himself. Pursuing a distant voice through a forest

glade, that contact and relationship continually elude him.

Despite problems with his back, Soulières performed his signature piece, *A PROPOS DU GRAND HOMME*, with verve and energy. It is a curious and enigmatic dance with an ambiguity which suggests a multiplicity of meanings. Dressed in a black cassock with crimson lining, which resembles both a woman's dress and the Georgian national costume, he performs a dance of audacious energy, cryptic symbolism and haunting expressions. The religious images evoke a cleric's inner turmoil juxtaposed with a certain sexual ambiguity. The polyphonic overtones of the music, meanwhile, are reminiscent of the ecclesiastical chants from the region of the Transcaucasian mountains.

Soulières and Harwood presented an intriguing evening of dance but one which was a little spare both visually and emotionally.

MONTREAL'S SYLVAIN EMARD FINDS HIMSELF in the curious quandary of having viewers searching for environmentalist messages in his 18th century dance piece, *OZONE, OZONE*. A couple of years ago when he first composed the piece, ozone was far from a household word and, instead, it was meant as a kind of aerial pun on the benediction, "Hosanna, Hosanna". Chloro-fluorocarbons notwithstanding, *OZONE, OZONE* is sophisticated choreography, skilfully presented by its composer.

Emard has studied with both the founder of corporeal mime, Etienne Decroux, and with the remarkable Czech mime, Ladislav Fialka, and in this piece, he shows that he has assimilated some of the best of their teachings. He uses Decroux's vocabulary of stylized gesture and Fialka's mimetic understanding of the dramatic potential of costume, props, space and timing to create a remarkable dance. He expands the fear and uncertainty of aging



Sylvain Emard in *OZONE, OZONE*

GUY FRÉCHETTE

and death of one man into a historical essay on the fin de siècle of the 18th century and the disappearance of its values and aesthetics into the great whirlpool of time.

It was a remarkable performance, punctuated by the music of Mortal Coil, Bach, Dead Can Dance and Om Kalsoum with which Emard created a remarkable synthesis from the disparate elements. Its effectiveness was even more remarkable considering that only a portion of the choreography was performed; although *OZONE*, *OZONE* began as a solo, it is now often danced as a duet by Emard and Louise Bedard, who was not able to come to Halifax.

The various elements of the piece are brought together by the gradual donning of an elaborate 18th century costume created by Marc-André Coulombe. When the lights finally went out on the candelabra held by Emard, the last candle of the 18th century was extinguished by the relentless flood of history.

Emard shared the evening with Toronto dancer/choreographer Benoit Lachambre who presented two works, *LE PTTT CATHOLIQUE*, danced by Lachambre himself, and *ETAL X* danced by Marie-Josée Chartier. In the first piece, Lachambre wrestles with the ghosts of Québécois Catholicism before breaking into a spirited dance to the music of Holger Czukay. In the second work, Chartier dances in and out of a focused square of red light to a multi-textured soundtrack by Tracy Chapman. I can't say that either of the pieces was particularly interesting, conceptually or choreographically.

It was *DOVE E LORENZO? AN ITALIAN WIDOWS WALK*, performed by Chartier and choreographed by Claudia Moore, which provided zest to the first half. Performed with character and pizzazz by Chartier, it has a humorous feel which made it a delight to watch. With some fine choreography and a wry, ironic sense of relationships, the work tapped the dancer's sense of character and projection and found a deep, rich vein of humour.

Renée Rioux is a beautiful young dancer gifted with energy, clean lines and a zest for dance which shines through her every movement. Unfortunately, she lacks the skills to choreograph the bold images she envisions. *RIDING THE HIGH TIDE* begins with Rioux writhing beneath a layer of plastic suffused with dry-ice smoke and illuminated by low-angle blue lights — certainly a dramatic image but not one which is explored to its dramatic potential. In a disconcerting transition, the plastic is pulled noisily off stage and Rioux appears in a bold-patterned costume in which she dances a kind of Arabic modern dance to the strains of Lebanese music. The dance steps are bold, energetic and well-performed but also repetitious and without any thematic, narrative or emotive development. With her strong technical back-

ground, her obvious joy of dance and her bold ideas, Rioux needs only to better understand the elements of composition and choreography to produce exciting dances.

HOME is the latest in a series of Gwen Noah's dance-drama experiments. Noah dances like a woman at war with her body, gravity and even the air around her. The dance is characterized by sudden shifts from stylized stillness into violent, self-destructive action. Her gestures are ones of jarring, limb-dislocating fury. In the still moments there is a quality of introspection which ebbs into indecision and an inability to break out of the cycle. There is also a self-consciousness to her movement and composition. She sees herself reflected in the audience.

The final piece of the program, Lee Saunders' *THE GREAT PUSH PULL*, is subtitled "A universal story about the fear of intimacy". In keeping with Saunders' eclectic taste, it is a mixture of voice, costume, dialogue, comedy, theatre, dance and light. She uses whatever elements are appropriate in quick series sketches or lightning vignettes of relationships and the fears, tensions, duplicities and sensuality associated with intimacy. Emerging enveloped in a multi-layered petticoat pulled over her head and chanting like a suspicious ostrich, she slowly pushes her face out of the textured crinoline to reveal a spikelike ponytail rising straight from the top of her head.

Her shrieks of grief and awkward prostrations elicited a nervous response of laughter from an audience seemingly uncomfortable with the raw intensity of grief and frustration which distorted her voice and movement. Saunders, herself, contributed to this ambiguity through her expressions and elements of stand-up comedy which she injected into the choreography. In the end, though, this profuse mixture of theatric elements seemed to undermine rather than reinforce her choreography, giving the piece a grab-bag feel with none of the elements developed to its full potential.

INTERNATIONAL

BY PAULA CITRON

BILL T. JONES/ARNIE ZANE & CO. GAVE ONE OF the most exhilarating concerts of the season. In works primarily choreographed by Jones, the concert reflected the recent loss of Arnie Zane, Jones' lover and collaborator for 17 years, to AIDS. The fabulous company showed such enthusiasm for dancing, even in darker works like *FORSYTHIA*, that their movement was riveting to the eye.

The most wonderfully inventive work was *D-MAN IN THE WATERS* (1989), dedicated to Company member Demian Acquavella, also suffering from the dread disease. Instead of being a soul-searching memento mori, *D-MAN* is a cheeky spit in the eye of

death. Dressed in quasi-combat fatigues, the dancers hurled themselves around the stage in a triumphant dance celebrating the life force and the will to survive. Jones brilliantly set his work to the youthful string octet by Mendelssohn, written when the composer was only 18. The vibrancy of the music, combined with the exuberance of the dancing, brought the audience to its feet.

In *FORSYTHIA*, danced against a background recording of Zane discussing his dreams, Jones and Arthur Aviles communicated the subtle and shifting relationship between the two companions. Particularly eloquent was Aviles' solo. Jones is not afraid to use any movement from any technique or style to convey an image and this eclecticism keeps his choreography fresh. In Aviles, the Company has one of the finest contemporary dancers in New York — sleek and compact, like a guided missile that is right on target.

WITH LAR LUBOVITCH, WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT you get. The choreographer has gone on record saying he has no hidden agenda in his works, no submerged subtext, narrative or thematic line; he hears music and he is inspired to find movement. What you do get with Lubovitch is pure dancing with movement and music so meshed together that they seem inseparable. In his works, Lubovitch not only makes virtuosic demands on his dancers but he also plumbs their musical sensibilities; he does not take himself seriously to the point of self-indulgence, however. His *BEAU DANUBE* is both a wonderful send-up and homage to the waltz.

The most brilliant piece on the program was *CONCERTO SIX TWENTY-TWO*, to music by Mozart. No choreographer around makes a better continuum of entrances and exits; as a result, no segment seems forced or out of place. In this work, he has captured not only the heart of the music but also the nature of the composer himself in the youthful and athletic dancing and as the essential good spirits of the work.

While Lubovitch puts bodies in motion with the most satisfying result, he is also capable of intense emotion. The *adagio* movement features a male pas de deux that is both poignant and romantic at the same time.

Lubovitch's impact lies in his painting of images which produce thought associations on the part of the audience. In the final movement, the audience can find allusions of boy meeting girl, mates horsing around and playing follow the leader and choreographic distortions providing dance parodies.

EIKO & KOMO ARE A HUSBAND AND WIFE Japanese-American dance duo whose savage combination of glacially slow butoh, universal themes and shocking surprise elements put an audience through the

emotional wringer. The duo deals with what they call "concerns" rather than with actual concrete themes, which allows them to be more general in the treatment of a subject. It also allows them to deal with topics that are both small and large at the same time. Their full-evening work, *GRAIN*, depicts everything from the life cycle of rice, to the impact of hunger, to finally the graphic demonstration of the power and control that the holder of grain has over the have-nots. It is a work that is deep and philosophical. And what control these two have; they are so flexible that they can rivet the eye on the endless extension of one big toe. They can also twist and distort their bodies to beyond what seems humanly possible. Their approach to the interplay between movement and content is both profoundly exquisite and disturbing, which makes for a unique dance experience.

THE BROOKLYN-BASED ADAPTORS MOVEMENT Theater, under the direction of Kari Mar-

golis and Tony Brown, attempts to turn universal concerns into accessible pieces of performance art. Their full-length work, *AUTOBAHN*, is a seething and searing commentary on technology careening out of control. They use video, dance, props, music, sound effects, mime, slapstick and countless other multi-media devices to convey their anger and concern.

While they do make their point in very funny ways, nonetheless, the feel of the piece was that it was one long, extended gag. Although the satire is there, it is superficial and lacks any gut-wrenching emotional impact which is what Adaptors would like to happen to the audience. Although the mixed company of actors and dancers are committed performers, in retrospect, Adaptors are an entertaining but lightweight group.

NEW YORK-BASED TERRY CREACH AND STEPHEN Koester specialize in male pas de deux and the exploration of two male bodies reacting together in space. The two were a big

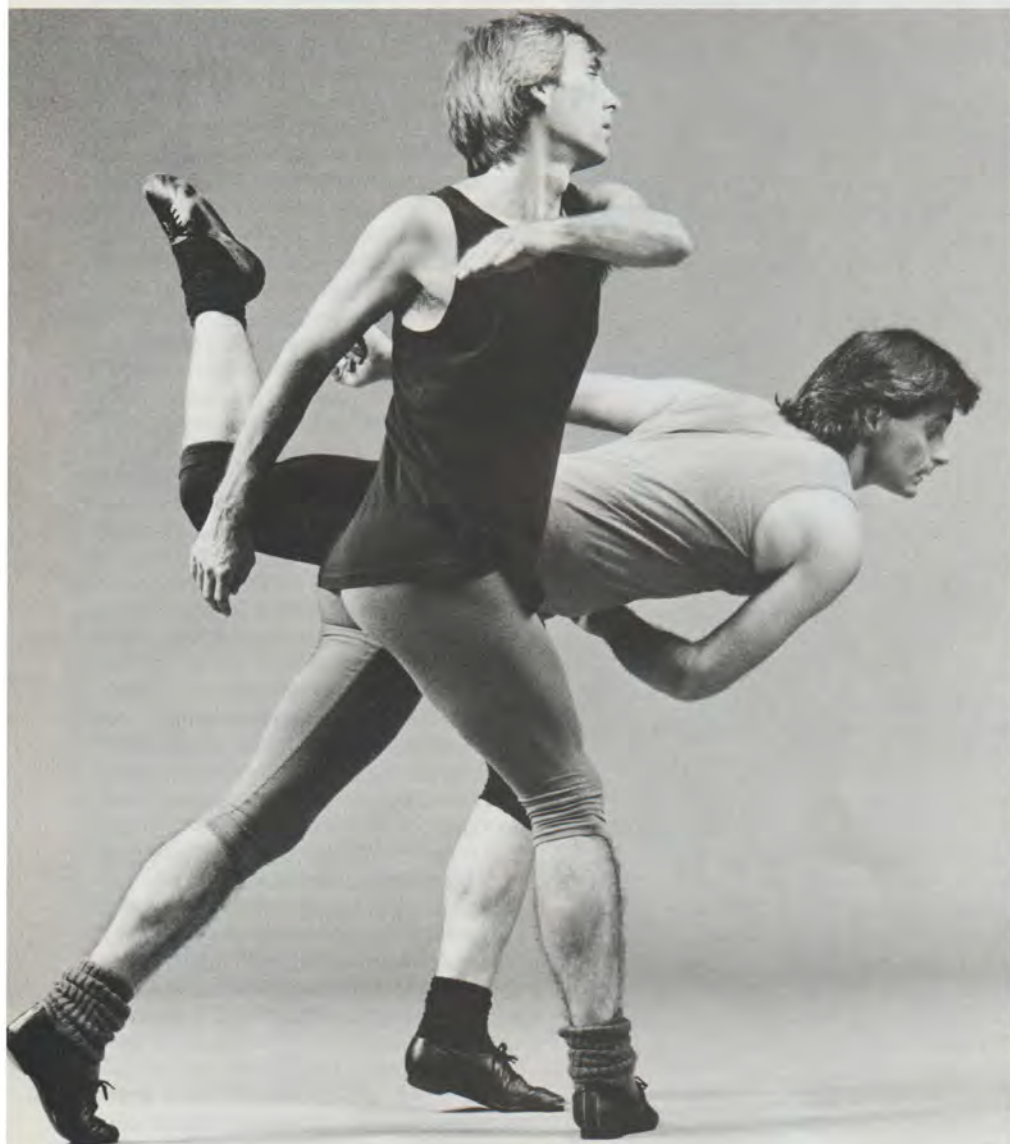
hit with Toronto audiences. In works choreographed by Bill T. Jones, Jane Comfort and themselves, the two men proved their talent for movement is as diverse as it is inventive. They are athletic and sensitive at the same time. They also present an interesting contrast physically; Creach is compact and solid, while Koester, slimmer and more elegant, provides a good foil for the former's brashness. Their concert was both refreshing and enjoyable.

THE SHANGHAI BALLET'S REVOLUTIONARY WORK (revolutionary meaning pertaining to the Communist revolution and not innovation), entitled *THE WHITE HAired GIRL*, proves that ballet can be used to convey a political message. No swan maidens, dryads or naiads in this work! The hair of the girl in question turns white because of the horrors to which she is subjected at the hands of the running capitalist and imperialist dogs. She spends time alone in the mountains until she joins the Eighth Route Army and finds political enlightenment. Yet the ballet, set to a surprisingly haunting, collectively written score, uses a convincing mix of gymnastics, folk and classical vocabulary, for the bad guys, the good guys and the girl respectively; it is an interesting yet moving, curio.

THE SECOND ERIK BRUHN COMPETITION produced more surprises off the stage than on. Both winners, the National Ballet of Canada's Stephen Legate and the Royal Danish Ballet's Silja Wendrup-Schandorff, were popular and worthy choices, yet the shocking withdrawal at the eleventh hour by American Ballet Theater (ABT), citing they had no one in the 19 to 23 age category to send to the competition, was an insult to the memory of the late Erik Bruhn whose will set up the competition to showcase budding talent in the four companies with which he was most closely associated.

It was interesting how the companies, themselves, found ways to bend the rules. For example, the Danes used Balanchine's *AGON* for their classical pas de deux and a specially choreographed piece by Anja Laerkesen, in the style of Bournoville, for its contemporary work. The Royal Ballet couple chose, for their contemporary work, an excerpt from *ALLEGRI DIVERS* by David Bintley, which was very classically oriented. These choices led to comments from the international and local critics assembled that there should be a prescribed classical pas de deux that all the couples perform and that the contemporary work must be truly contemporary in style and sensibility.

To avoid the ABT fiasco in the future, there are rumours that the competition will be opened to other interested companies. This may not be the express wish of Bruhn, but will at least ensure having companies who really care about giving their dancers international exposure.



VIRGINIA LIBERATORE

Stephen Koester (front) and Terry Creach in their Canadian debut with three works presented by DANCEWORKS

CHATTER

PEOPLE, PEOPLE



William Orlowski in the Limelight Dinner Theatre production of SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

► In June, the **National Tap Dance Company of Canada** performed with the Hong Kong Symphony at the Coliseum in Hong Kong. The performances included **William Orlowski** and **Steve Dymond's** BRANDENBURG CONCERTO and 42ND STREET, **Brian Macdonald's** TAPELMUSIK and **John Stanzel's** YOU NAME IT. Over the summer, Company artistic director **William Orlowski** starred in the Limelight Dinner Theatre production of SINGIN' IN THE RAIN.

► Les Grands Ballets Canadiens' **Karen Brown** was recently in Hong Kong at the invitation of Netherlands Dans Theatre choreographer **Nacho Duato** to finish setting JARDI TANCAT on the Hong Kong Ballet.



Karen Brown



Dulcinée Langfelder in LA VOISINE choreographed by Dulcinée Langfelder



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► The 3rd FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE NOUVELLE DANSE will be held in Montreal from September 19 to October 1. Japan will be represented by **Kazuo Ohno**, Muteki Sha with choreographer **Natsu Nakajima** and dancer **Yukio Waguri**, **Saburo Teshigawara** and his company, Karas and the duo of **Jocelyne Montpetit** and **Minoru Hideshima**. Germany will be represented by **Susanne Linke** and **Urs Dietrich**. From Belgium comes *Ultima Vez*, led by **Wim Vandekeybus** and from Holland, **Angelika Oei**. France will be represented by Groupe Emile Dubois and Compagnie Bagouet and the United States by **Dana Reitz** and **Susan Marshall & Company**.

Along with these international headliners, Canada will be represented by **Paul-André Fortier**, **Jennifer Mascall**, O Vertigo Danse, led by **Ginette Laurin**, **Jean-Pierre Perreault**, Dancemakers, led by **Bill James**, **Hélène Blackburn**, Création Isis (**Jo Lechay** and **Eugene Lion**), **Daniel Léveillé**, **Dulcinée Langfelder** and **Pierre-Paul Savoie**.

A series of performances is planned featuring the works by upcoming young Canadian choreographers **Brouhaha**, **Carole Bergeron**, **Hélène Langevin**, **Gary Kurtz** and **Zone Animée**.

► LE DON DES ETOILES held at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre featured over 30 international ballet stars including: the National Ballet of Canada's **Karen Kain**, the Paris Opera's **Elisabeth Platel** and **Manuel Legris**, the Bolshoi Ballet's **Irek Mukhamedev** and **Nina Ananiashvili**, the Boston Ballet's **Fernando Bujones**, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's **Evelyn Hart**, and the Kirov Ballet of Leningrad's **Farouk Rouzimatov** and **Altynai Asylmkouratova**. The evening was sponsored by **Wang Canada Limited** for **Variety Club Village**.

► Following the sold-out performance of *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY* by the Kirov Ballet of Leningrad in Montreal's Place des Arts last June, Dance in Canada Association vice-president **Jean de Brabant** hosted a gala fund-raising evening, sponsored by **Pratt & Whitney**, to set-up a bursary for young Canadian dancers.

Guests at the elegant post-performance supper with Russian theme, included: **Evgueni Kotchetkov**, the USSR consul general, **Andrew Antippas**, the United States consul general and **Senator Guy Charbonneau**, the speaker of the senate and artists of the Kirov Ballet.

► **Louis Robitaille** and **Anik Bissonnette**, former principal dancers with Ballet Eddy Toustaint de Montréal, have joined Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

► **Evelyn Hart**, principal dancer with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, received an honorary degree at the University of Manitoba's 110th spring convocation. In lieu of a speech, Hart gave a short performance of *THE DYING SWAN*. **Kathleen M. Richardson** who has provided vital and sustaining support to the performing arts in Winnipeg, particularly the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, also received an honorary degree.

► **Jacques Vézina** and **Azim Ruda** hosted a fund-raising dinner for the Dancer Transition Centre in Toronto. The authentic Indian cuisine, prepared by Ruda, was enjoyed by guests, including Transition Centre president **Karen Kain**, actor **Ross Petty**, Dance in Canada executive director **Steve Dymond** and executive assistant **Patty Margolese**.

► In September, **Marie Chouinard** is scheduled to perform her last three choreographic works: *STAB (SPACE, TIME AND BEYOND)*, *BIOPHILIA* and *L'APRES-MIDI D'UN FAUNE* at the Monument National in Montreal.

► **Edouard Lock's** *LA LA LA Human Steps* is on the final leg of a North American and European tour featuring *NEW DEMONS*. In September, 1988 the Company danced with rock star **David Bowie** on *WRAP AROUND THE WORLD*, a WNET/New York presentation which was broadcast to six countries around the world.

► New Dance Horizons Inc. presented *TEMPORARY COMPANY* last April at the New Performing Arts Centre in Regina. The program included works by **Jo Leslie**, **Connie Moker-Wernikowski** and **Dianne Fraser**,



DAVID STUBERT

Cynthia Lucas

Robin Poitras and cellist **Erich Kory** and artist **Don Stein**. Last May, New Dance Horizons Inc. presented **Paul-André Fortier** at the New Performing Arts Centre.

► After 17 years as a dancer with the National Ballet of Canada, first soloist **Cynthia Lucas**, at the invitation of artistic director **Reid Anderson**, joined the Company's artistic staff as assistant ballet mistress. During her career, **Lucas** established herself as a dancer of both dramatic and comic ability winning praise for her portrayal of Catherine Sloper in **James Kudelka's** WASHINGTON SQUARE, Isabelle-Marie in **Ann Ditchburn's** MAD SHADOWS, Olga in **John Cranko's** ONEGIN, Titania in **Sir Frederick Ashton's** THE DREAM, Swanilda in **Erik Bruhn's** COPPELIA, Balencienne in **Ronald Hynd's** THE MERRY WIDOW, and the Sweet Young Thing in **Glen Tetley's** LA RONDE.

► **Betty Oliphant**, who founded the National Ballet School in 1959, officially stepped down as artistic director and ballet principal last June. She will continue to teach while moving on to a new area of responsibility. **Mavis Staines**, a graduate of the School and former soloist with the National Ballet of Canada and the Dutch National Ballet, is the new artistic director. Staines has been teaching at the School since 1982 and has been the associate artistic director since 1984.

Mora I. Oxley has been appointed to the position of academic principal of the National Ballet School. She has been the School's academic vice-principal since 1984.



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Christopher House

► **Christopher House** has been awarded the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Choreography for **ARTEMIS MADRIGALS** which premiered in Toronto Dance Theatre's 1988 November season. This is the third time that a Toronto Dance Theatre choreographer has been honoured with a Dora in four years (House won the first Dora in 1986 and Company artistic director, David Earle was awarded a Dora in 1987).

► Late in August, the Victoria Arts Collaborative, **Constantine Darling** artistic director, presented an evening of dance featuring **Sacha Belinsky** and **Yvan Michaud**, **Homer Hans Bryant**, the **Anna Wyman Dance Theatre Company**, and the **Judith Marcuse Dance Theatre Company**.

► Recently, the Judith Marcuse Dance Company staged **BALLET AND THE BAND** at the Commodore

Ballroom featuring new choreography by both **Judith Marcuse** and **Randy Glynn**. This year, the Company will present a world premiere by Toronto Dance Theatre's resident choreographer **Christopher House**.

► JumpStart's **CORY CORY**, the multi-disciplinary work created by **Lee Eisler** and **Nelson Gray**, premiered at Seattle's **NEW WORKS FESTIVAL**. JumpStart was the first Canadian company invited to perform at the Festival. Eisler and Gray are currently creating a computer-interactive performance-opera, **DA FORT**, scheduled to premiere in Vancouver in 1990.

► Co-artistic directors **Robert Greenwood** and **Dana Luebke** of Sun.Ergos, Calgary's two-man theatre dance company, presented seven performances of **LEGENDS, TALES FOR THE BUFFALO HUNTER** at the **EDMONTON FRINGE FESTIVAL**.

► Based at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Education, PRIME Mentors of Canada, coordinated by its founder **Conchita Tan-Willman**, psychology professor and **Claude Brodeur**, chairman of the educational psychology department, transfers the classic idea of mentoring from the marketplace to the classroom.

PRIME (positive, responsible, interested, multi-talented, exemplary) Mentors centres on employing and developing the creative potential of youth — not involved in a school program for the gifted — using seniors in the capacity of mentors. Students must be 9 to 18 years old (grades 4 to 12) to qualify and are matched with a mentor who has similar interest to their own. Once students are matched on a one-to-one basis with mentors, they will become involved in a joint project which will be completed in a minimum of 6 weeks and will involve at least 2 hours weekly during or after school.

Similar to a master-apprentice arrangement, this program has a dual thrust. Gifted retired seniors are invited to use their know-how to stimulate the youth participating in the program. The result is a creative symbiosis: seniors use their talent to help the young express and develop creative talents while also keeping up with their talents. Senior citizens' experiences and expertise nurtures, more fully, youths' potential and bridges past and present ideas and dreams.

At this time, 30 mentors have been trained for the program, which involves a three to four hour session of talks. The **Hon. Jeanne Sauve** and the **Hon. Lincoln Alexander** are distinguished honorary patrons of PRIME Mentors of Canada.

In 1988 the PRIME Mentors program was established in Metropolitan Toronto schools and there are plans to adapt the program to other communities across Canada.

► National Ballet School teacher-training program graduate **Bev Aitchison** is the new ballet mistress for the Judith Marcuse Dance Company. Also joining the company are dancers **Linda Arkelian**, **Learie McNicolls** and **Robert Blumbek**.



Pilar Miguel, PRIME Mentors of Canada

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Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet, a world-recognized touring company of 26 dancers, invites applications for the position of Artistic Director.

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BACK PAGE

JARVIS RECONSTRUCTION

I don't like theatres. The psychological, participatory interaction that you have to go through is no longer magic for me. They want to control you in theatres — they turn the lights out and you have to sit still and come and go when they want. There is no fridge available, no peanut butter sandwiches, no talking, no coffee, no smoking ... no civilization! ...

ANDREW GREENHAM



(Above) Gina Lori Riley in Judy Jarvis' production of *CLOUDS* (Below) Judy Jarvis in *CLOUDS* (Right) Gina Lori Riley in the Gina Lori Riley Enterprises' reconstruction of Judy Jarvis' *JUST BEFORE AND IN BETWEEN*

My anxiety concerning theatrical presentations was in full swing with my impending attendance at the Gina Lori Riley Dance Enterprises' (GLRDE) performances of the JUDY JARVIS DANCE COLLECTION at the du Maurier Theatre in Toronto in May, 1989. I am most familiar with Judy Jarvis' middle period, 1972 to 1980. I knew her pretty well, saw lots of performances and video taped many of them. I never figured her out. She was an enigma, didn't really fit in anywhere. Jarvis had an enormous intellect, but selected the most pedestrian of situations and movements to tangle into her choreography.

I had seen *JUST BEFORE AND IN BETWEEN* many times 15 years ago and recalled subtle ironies which Jarvis had injected into this strange piece. A mummy-like body lay on a hospital-type

bed and not a lot happens. I guessed that filling the time available when you are dying is an odd experience. There is no music. Out walks this person wearing a white donkey's head, next a person with a white stag's head. What an absurd image, what the hell was Jarvis thinking about when she did this?

... Ah! an intermission that is far too short — Back to my chair ...

SONG OF THE WINE, an apparition of dining, has to be one of the most elegantly gross commentaries on our self-esteem. What is vivid and almost hurtful are the carefully chosen, timed and repeatable elements begging the question of what makes less become more. This work has (as do all the others) noth-

ing to do with Judy Jarvis, it has to do with us. One of Jarvis's great abilities, and something rare in choreography, was to create work which is reflective and stands alone.

I SOLD YOU/YOU SOLD ME ostensibly smacks of obvious political statement — economic disparity, politicians as social engineers, etc. — not so! It is a study in the gestures of winning ways. Through this short, jagged choreography comes a clear analysis of the movements and the recycling of simple gestures that is the key to making the world work the way you want.

A bench mark of Jarvis' works, *THREE WOMEN* features *Blacklack*, the amusing, scary, frustrating and devious old woman who makes you give up your seat on the bus; the heaving-busted Nora, that mysterious and intriguing and often thought pathetic must-be-a-whore individual we just cannot understand; and, B, the shopping-mall honey, never missing a thing, always at her most annoying and passing self.

I must praise GLRDE for their performance and for providing me the opportunity to finally position Judy Jarvis in my mind as perhaps one of the 20th century's great choreographers.

What became clear to me was the fact that Jarvis' great skill was to take what is around all of us, distil it and from this raw stuff, construct, with the exact amount of theatre craft, dance craft and smarts, a complex and successful experience for us. She was one of the very few choreographers who used the everyday to amaze us. She was a bard. Her works stands outside of her. It is called art.

... Even the Greeks who invented theatre, used to pack a lunch when they went to one of Homer's shows and it was quite alright to talk and scratch. What has the world come to?



CILLA WON THEISSMAN

ANDREW GREENHAM

BY LAWRENCE ADAMS

DANCE

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CARMEN with Maya Plisetskaya

The Bolshoi Ballet's prima ballerina, Maya Plisetskaya, is the star of this lyrical film of excerpts from several of her most famous roles. The centerpiece of the film is the ballet of CARMEN, a spectacularly choreographed and orchestrated version of George Bizet's famous opera.

This is a genuinely cinematic treatment of ballet and dancers and not merely a filming of a stage production. Choreography by Vladimir Vasiliev, Alberto Alonso and others is featured along with spectacular conducting by composer Rodion Shchedrin.

Colour, 73 minutes \$59.95

SPARTACUS featuring Vladimir Vasiliev

SPARTACUS is the Bolshoi doing what the Bolshoi does best: interpreting contemporary works whose thematic origins are classic. Vladimir Vasiliev, "a dancer of unshakable heroic optimism, exceptional virtuosity, and irresistible dynamism" (Horst Koegler), is perfect as SPARTACUS. Anna Kisselgoff, dance critic of *The New York Times*, writes "With its phalanxes confronting the camera head-on and its slow-motion shots of Mr. Vasiliev soaring through the sky, the film takes its chances. It is also one of the best dance films ever made."

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An evening with the ROYAL BALLET

This program immortalizes a gala evening of classical ballet featuring the legendary team of RUDOLF NUREYEV and DAME MARGOT FONTEYN. Britain's Royal Ballet is one of the world's most celebrated dance companies, thrilling us for over 30 years with a legacy of stunning performances.

Frederick Ashton's choreography is brilliantly executed throughout. This is one evening ballet lovers will enjoy over and over again.

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SWAN LAKE featuring Maya Plisetskaya

Swan Lake tells the timeless tale of redemption through love. It is probably the best-known, best-loved of all the classical ballets, and, for the prima ballerina who dances the dual role of Odette and Odile, the supreme test of the dancer's craft.

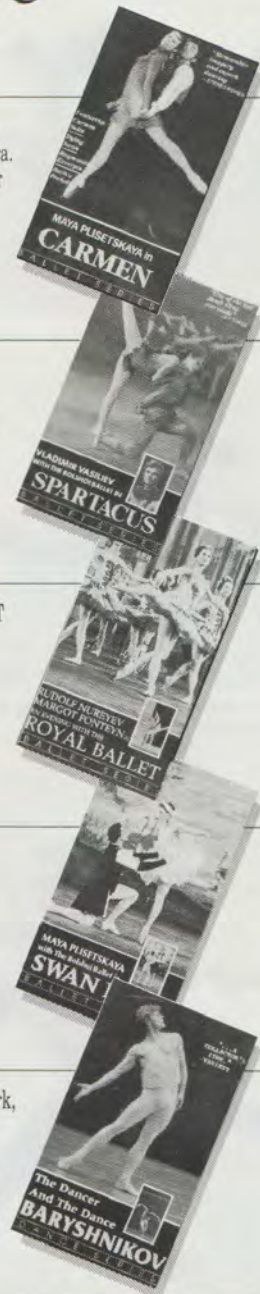
Maya Plisetskaya's melting lyricism and superlative technique make her one of the greatest exponents of the dual role. This production, filmed live at the Bolshoi Theatre, captures a great ballerina in her prime in an eternal classic.

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At last! A profile of MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV. Shirley MacLaine narrates this exclusive, intimate profile of Baryshnikov's life and work, the first he has ever allowed. Baryshnikov discusses his early training in Russia, rising to stardom, and his attitudes toward the dancer and the dance. It follows him as he exercises, coaches young colleagues, and rehearses a new ballet called "CONFIGURATIONS". The whole ballet is performed in the program by members of the American Ballet Theatre with Marianna Tcherkassky partnering Baryshnikov in a delightful, moving pas-de-deux.

Colour, 82 minutes \$39.95



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