

# Dance in/au Canada Danse



Special Anniversary Issue — The National Ballet  
Kain, Tennant and Jago  
The Choreographic Hopefuls  
Dance on Television

FALL 1976  
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# Editorial

Susan Cohen

Editor / Rédactrice

In this issue *Dance in Canada* celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the National Ballet of Canada. On November 12, 1951, Celia Franca and her dancers stepped on the boards as a company for the first time; exactly 25 years later the company salutes the occasion with a gala opening and a special season at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre. This celebration is a reminder, not just of how far one company has come, but also of how far the field has progressed in that quarter of a century. The National is one example of the excellence, diversity and maturity of dance in Canada.

In a magazine as small as ours, the decisions about what to cover and what to leave out are heartbreaking. We would like to mention all the individuals who contributed to the company, but we have chosen to focus on the strength and promise of today. We look at three ballerinas, among the many who give the National such depth in female principals: Karen Kain (profiled by Toronto writer Nora McCabe), Mary Jago and Veronica Tennant, who shares with us her reading of Juliet in Cranko's classic *Romeo and Juliet*, revived this season. A glimpse of the young choreographic hopefuls — Ann Ditchburn, Constantin Patsalas and James Kudelka — is provided by Penelope Doob. Will these be the individuals who finally challenge the National and define it in the eyes of the world? In a country as vast as ours, television has done wonders in making the National known from St. John to Victoria. The editor of the *National Ballet Newsletter*, Judy Sanderson, has kept a diary of its most recent excursion into the medium. The delightful cartoons in this issue, inspired by the National's repertoire of full-length ballets, come from the pen of Vicki Bertram, a dancer with the company. Last but by no means least, Laretta Thistle, dance critic of the *Ottawa Citizen*, gives us an overview of the company from her perspective as an observer of the dance scene for almost three decades. She has some questions and criticisms of the company. As always, the National Ballet of Canada is a source of controversy. But perhaps you only argue about things for which you care deeply.

In Review this issue looks at the Cultural Olympics, the Dance in Canada conference and the Ballet de Marseilles which toured Canada extensively throughout September and October. And René Picard provides a personal recollection of the late choreographer, James Waring.

One final note. For financial reasons, *Dance in Canada* publishes in the language of origin. As soon as it is financially feasible, we will return to our bilingual format.

Ce numéro de *Danse au Canada* célèbre le vingt-cinquième anniversaire du Ballet National du Canada. Le 12 novembre 1951, Celia Franca et ses danseurs montaient sur les planches pour la première fois à titre de compagnie. Exactement 25 ans plus tard, la compagnie commémore cet événement par une première de grand gala et une saison toute spéciale au Centre O'Keefe de Toronto. Cette célébration n'est pas un simple rappel du chemin parcouru par la compagnie, mais aussi des progrès réalisés dans le domaine de la danse au cours de ce quart de siècle. Le Ballet National est l'un des exemples de l'excellence, de la variété et de la maturité de la danse au Canada.

L'espace restreint de notre revue rend toujours pénible la décision quant au contenu de chaque numéro. Nous aimerions faire mention de tous ceux qui ont collaboré à la compagnie, mais avons choisi de mettre l'accent sur la force et les promesses d'aujourd'hui. Nous jetons un regard sur trois ballerines parmi le grand nombre de celles qui ont donné au Ballet National une renommée si sérieuse chez ses premières danseuses: Karen Kain (dont l'écrivain torontoise Nora McCabe nous trace le profil), Mary Jago et Veronica Tennant qui partage avec nous son évaluation de Juliette dans le *Roméo et Juliette* classique de Cranko qu'on a ranimé cette saison. Penelope Doob jette un coup d'oeil rapide sur les jeunes promesses de la chorégraphie: Ann Ditchburn, Constantin Patsalas et James Kudelka. Ces chorégraphes sont-ils ceux qui défieront le Ballet National et le définiront aux yeux du public international? Dans un pays aussi vaste que le nôtre, la télévision a réussi des merveilles en initiant le public canadien aux talents du Ballet National, de St. John's à Victoria. La rédactrice du *National Ballet Newsletter*, Judy Sanderson, a noté dans son journal de bord, les plus récentes excursions de la compagnie dans le monde des médias. Les amusantes bandes illustrées publiées dans ce numéro ont été inspirées par le répertoire des grands ballets du Ballet National et sont nées sous la plume enchantée de Vicki Bertram, une danseuse de la troupe. Et pour terminer en beauté, Laretta Thistle, critique de danse du *Ottawa Citizen* nous donne une revue de la compagnie en sa qualité d'observatrice de la scène de la danse depuis près de trois décennies. Elle pose des questions et offre des critiques. Comme toujours, le Ballet National du Canada s'avère une source de controverse. Mais peut-être ne se débat-on que pour des causes qui nous tiennent vraiment à coeur!

Dans sa revue, ce numéro examine les Olympiques culturelles, la Conférence de Danse au Canada et le Ballet de Marseilles qui a effectué une longue tournée canadienne en septembre et octobre. Puis René Picard nous raconte ses souvenirs personnels du regretté chorégraphe James Waring.

Une dernière note! Des raisons d'ordre financier oblige *Danse au Canada* à publier les articles dans leur langue d'origine. Dès que nos moyens nous le permettront, nous retournerons à notre format bilingue.



# Dance <sup>in/au</sup> Canada Danse

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Veronica Tennant in the  
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Juliet.

FALL

1976

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The National at 25

## Myth, Fact and Fancy

Lauretta Thistle

The myth about the foundation of the National Ballet in 1951 is that Canada saw the Sadler's Wells company on tour, awoke to the charms of ballet and wanted a company of its own. Ninette de Valois was approached, she sent Celia Franca to the wilderness that was Canada, and the intrepid Miss Franca gave this country its first real experience of ballet. She has even been quoted in the British press as saying that there was nobody here who knew how to make a tutu.

The facts are otherwise.

When the National Ballet was founded Canada had for years been on the touring circuit of such companies as the two Ballet Russes, the Mordkin Ballet and Ballet Theatre. Canada was not the naive country bumpkin it has been painted. It had, in fact, good ballet teachers: Gwen Osborne in Ottawa, who sent Nesta Williams Toumine to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Norah White and Patricia Wilde (sisters) to the

*Solitaire: We'd like to see it now and then*

New York City Ballet. And there was Boris Volkoff, in Toronto, who sent Melissa Hayden to the New York City Ballet.

Most important of all, there was the Winnipeg Ballet (later Royal), which had existed since 1938, first as a semi-professional company, then a professional one, and which had been touring Eastern Canada well before 1951.

What really sparked the foundation of a professional company in Toronto was a combination of the existence of the Winnipeg Ballet and the visits of Sadler's Wells. Toronto could not bear the thought of the prairie city Winnipeg being the centre of ballet in Canada. And the sight of full-evening ballets such as *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* aroused the desire for a company which would also give full-length classics.



Miss Franca has also been quoted as being appalled at the quality of the dancing done in the Canadian ballet festivals (a movement started by the Winnipeg Ballet and later exported to the United States). But it was at the last of these festivals, in Ottawa in 1953, that ballerina Lynn Seymour, from Vancouver, was discovered. The festivals brought together embryo companies literally from Halifax to Vancouver. Many of these companies had (some still have) aspirations to become professional, and there was a great deal of illwill about the tone of the announcements from Toronto, which implied that ballet was at last being brought to Canada.

Even the National's enemies admitted, however, that the choice of the name "National" was a stroke of genius (though New Sadler's Wells would have been more accurate in the early years). It is an odd fact that even today the National is not nearly as "national", in terms of exploiting Canadian creative talent, as the other two big professional companies, the Royal Winnipeg and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

It was an accident of time and space that decided that the new Toronto company should be modelled on Sadler's Wells, which had just begun to tour North America, and which was dazzling everybody. If the National were being founded today, when the Royal Ballet no longer has such pride of place, it might very well be modelled after Stuttgart, or the Dutch National, or the New York City Ballet or American Ballet Theatre.

Being modelled on Sadler's Wells certainly paid off in terms of government grants, however, because Peter Dwyer, head of the Canada Council (founded in 1957) was British, a great admirer of Sadler's Wells, and willing to go along with the National's requests that its subsidies be greater than those given to the other two professional companies (Les Grands Ballets Canadiens came on the scene as a professional company about 1956).

But a funny thing happened along the road to the title of great purveyor of the classics. The National happened to be coming into maturity just at a time when a male revolution was taking place.

The great nineteenth-century romantic and classic ballets (*La Sylphide*, *Giselle*, *Coppélia*, *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*) glorified the female, as the ballets of Balanchine, the great neo-classicist, do even today. This suited the Sadler's Wells company very well, for in its early days it was short of male dancers. And the National Ballet of Toronto went along with Sadler's Wells policy.

But in the 1960s and '70s things

changed. The first visit of the Bolshoi Ballet to London in 1956 opened up a new vista of male dancing. Soon the whole world was cherishing Rudolf Nureyev.

Today's male dancers-turned-choreographers, such as Erik Bruhn and Nureyev, are no longer content to be *porteurs*. When Bruhn created his *Swan Lake* (1967) and Nureyev his *Sleeping Beauty* (1972), they created non-traditional productions, distorting the originals by glorifying the male.

Thus we have the anomaly of the National, supposedly the repository of tradition, educating generations of ballet-goers with a bizarre *Swan Lake* which has Siegfried instead of Odette as the central character and an evil Black Queen, with all the attendant Freudian implications, replacing the magician Rothbart. And in Nureyev's *Sleeping Beauty* the Prince has solos quite unheard of in the original, and the prize dancing role of the Lilac Fairy is reduced to a nothing, a mime role.

One could work up quite a nationalist case that the National, the naive newcomer among classical companies, is being exploited to provide the money (and lots of money, for it is a big spender) to do twisted versions of the classics, so its original ambition to be a classical company is being subverted.

Mind you, these radical productions of the classics march well not only with the mood of the times, but with the commercialism of Hurok Concerts, which won't present the National in New York or Washington without Nureyev to sell tickets. When audiences of the 1970s pay big money to see a male star they expect to see him in more than one short solo.

Maybe the tea leaves indicate that the National should seek out choreographers who give at least equal chance to men. And this brings up the whole subject of the National and choreographers. The charge has often been levelled that the company failed to develop Canadian choreographers or to make use of the recognized choreographers of the world.

It is true that it was slow to ask for Balanchine ballets, though Toronto is such a short flying time from New York. For a long time the National tended to ransack the Sadler's Wells cupboard, even for such threadbare items as *Les Rendezvous* and *The Rake's Progress*, or the Ballet Rambert cupboard for *Death and the Maiden*.

But let's be fair. The company has tried, over the years, more than 70 works, exclusive of full-evening ballets and pas de deux. That's an impressive record over 25 years. The choreographers tried out include Heinz Poll, Heino Heiden, Robert Iscove, David



The Fisherman and his Soul by Grant Strate. A man out of his time?



Adams, Ray Powell, Joey Harris and Brian Macdonald (yes, his *Postscript*, an early work, was in the National's repertory briefly), as well as Antony Tudor, Ninette de Valois and Gerald Arpino. Even the despised ballet festivals provided a work for the National — the late Elizabeth Leese of Montreal, a modern dancer, gave the company *The Lady from the Sea* in 1955-56.

The company has tried, it must be admitted, to develop a Canadian choreographer. There was a period when Grant Strate held the title of resident choreographer, and he produced some respectable ballets, such as *The Fisherman and His Soul* (1956), along with some which vanished quickly, such as *Sequel*, to Webern music, and *Time Cycle*, to music by Lukas Foss. Was he a man out of his time?

Now the project of annual choreographic workshops is gradually bearing fruit, and it is encouraging to see works by Tim Spain (he goes back to 1970), Ann Ditchburn (also from 1970), Constantin Patsalas and others entering the repertory.

To its credit, too, the National was rather fast off the mark in getting a ballet, *Intermezzo*, from Eliot Feld, when that stormy petrel broke loose from American Ballet Theatre and started a company of his own.

Miss Franca has complained in public that she was never able to persuade choreographer Jerome Robbins to give her a ballet. But Alexander Grant had not been in office for more than a few weeks when he announced that he was getting the lyrical Robbins classic *Afternoon of a Faun*.

Good stuff. But *Afternoon of a Faun* uses only two people. Isn't it high time that the National courted Robbins for his supremely beautiful *Dances at a Gathering*, which uses a large ensemble? The Royal Ballet has been doing this work for some years with great success.

The history of the National in commissioning or acquiring short works, then, has been respectable. (Let's pass by in charitable silence the disastrous full-evening Roland Petit work, *Kraanerg*, which has been quietly discarded). But the wastage has also been appalling.

This is not a plea to bring back Don Gillies' *The Remarkable Rocket* or a weak ballet like *Death and the Maiden*, by Andree Howard. But there are other ballets, such as *Solitaire*, by Kenneth MacMillan, we'd like to have a look at now and then. The fact is that the National is not a true repertory company, in the sense that American Ballet Theatre is. It gets short works, shows them for a season or two and then does the equivalent of discarding them.

There are reasons for this. One is that the company has brought up its public to look for full-length ballets. Another is the lack of a permanent home, where short ballets could be kept comfortably in the repertory and where we could drop in now and then to see in what state the company was keeping its Balanchine ballets (*Serenade*, *Concerto Barocco*, *The Four Temperaments*) or its MacMillan ballet.

One misses the chance to compare productions. Take *The Moor's Pavane*, by the late José Limon for instance. Keen ballet fans would like to come back from New York after seeing the ballet there and drop in to the National to see how its interpretation differs (is it more balletic, perhaps?).

We are deprived of such luxuries because the short seasons at the O'Keefe (and the even shorter seasons elsewhere) are pressure-cooker affairs, where the emphasis is on novelty. Far from being a museum or gallery where the contemporary can be viewed along with the classical, the National is a turbulent organization where the classics are on view only periodically and where the shorter works have miserably brief runs. There is a parallel

here with the National Gallery, which does not have space on its walls for its permanent collection.

This is a handicap the National shares with the other two companies, which are also "national" in everything but name, and it shows we have a long way to go in Canada. Dare we hope that the next 25 years will bring us more suitable theatres and ballet seasons of a comfortable length?

When Alexander Grant was being interviewed about taking over the National, he quoted Natalia Makarova as saying, "In my life I have excited many men, but unfortunately none of them has been a choreographer". Is this to be the fate of the National company?

The situation is cloudy. Erik Bruhn, who was resident producer, had declared that he was through with the classics and ready to devote himself to creating original works. Now he has stepped aside to give Mr. Grant a free hand in planning.

But the choreographer is king in this century. Companies are built around an Ashton, a Grigoriev, a Balanchine, a Cranko, a Neumeier. At this point the National's future is nebulous.

The Remarkable Rocket: *Let's not bring it back*





# Karen Kain: Trembling on the Brink

Nora McCabe



*They lounged about like any gaggle of girls. Chattering and giggling about clothes, hairstyles, makeup. Fussing with bits and pieces of costumes in front of the mirrors dotting the walls of the Ontario Place Forum dressing room. Wispy, lithe, curiously innocent.*

*The tiny room bulged with the paraphernalia assembled by four principal dancers in pursuit of their art. Cosmetics and congealing coffee dregs in styrofoam cups littered the makeup counters under the mirrors. Sweated leg and body warmers lay draped on chairs or were carelessly discarded on the floor. Costumes for the various roles —*

*some showing signs of wear and tear — hung forlornly on a portable coat rack.*

*Veronica Tennant, "Tacky" as she's affectionately called in the company, slipped into the room, clad in heavy navy blue warmers that added bulk to her slender frame. With swift, deft movements, she disrobed, changed into street clothes, freshened her makeup and left looking coolly elegant.*

*"Ten minutes," a voice called outside the door.*

*Karen Kain, preoccupied devising a suitable hairdo with the help of Nadia Potts, rummaged around in the pile of*

*Does she understand what makes her special? Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*

*costume jewellery near her cluttered vanity case.*

*"Hey, look at this," she said, holding up a dusty, dilapidated necklace of paste emeralds in rickety settings. "Isn't it tacky? I'll bet Miss Franca wore it when she danced the original Offenbach. Wouldn't you think wardrobe could afford to replace it?"*

*Karen Kain is special: The first Canadian ballerina ever to attain international success without joining a*





Artistry and box-office appeal must grow together. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.

foreign company; the first Canadian ballerina ever to headline a foreign company's Canadian tour as a guest artist. More, she's vindication of the National Ballet School—Celia Franca system.

On paper, the 25-year-old dancer has the world in her palm: beauty, talent, critical acclaim. Plus that something special that enchants major figures like Nureyev, Bruhn, Petit.

How can she fail?

Meet Kain and you come away puzzled. On stage she is imperial, majestic, seemingly confident that she will dazzle critics and balletomanes alike with her stunning technical precision and emotional vivacity. Off stage she is less mature, less poised.

Sitting discussing her meteoric rise from membership in the National's corps de ballet to budding superstardom — a leap that has her threatening to eclipse veteran National principal Veronica Tennant — Kain seems almost unbelieving of her own success.

So you wonder. Does she understand what makes her special? Has she the will, the artistic drive to propel herself into the rarefied ranks of the twentieth century's legendary primas — Pavlova, Ulanova, Fonteyn and most recently Natalia Makarova.

After talking with her for more than an hour, then watching her rehearse, you're still not sure.

Kain offers no evidence of the steely, unrelenting, calculated drive of Tennant, who this year at age 29 is poised on the brink of her own

international success — thanks to the interest of Fernando Bujones who may yet pull off a deal with the snobby American Ballet Theatre for Tennant to dance *Giselle* there.

By contrast, Kain's success came unsought, a matter more of luck than of planning. Her height alone (5'7") should have made her ineligible for Franca's company.

Singled out by Nureyev in 1972, three years after she joined the company, she leaped from obscurity to fame on his coat tails, along the way attracting Petit's attention enough that he not only invited her to dance with his Ballet de Marseilles but also choreographed two ballets for her.

Asked to assess her growth as an artist, she thought for a moment, then said: "I've just grown up a little. Yeah, I do think . . . Yeah, as little as that may be, I do think I've grown up a bit as an artist.

"I think dancing with other companies really helped me. I've seen the good and the bad things they do and hopefully I've picked up the good. I think I'm old enough to have done that. It's not dangerous to look at outside influences once you've developed style as an individual.

"Performing with other companies gave me the courage to try other things, things like double pirouettes where before I would just do singles. I'll try them now, not just give up."

The longer you talk with Kain the more she emerges as a contradictory blend of assurance and diffidence.

One minute she announces calmly

that her command of ballet's intricate technique makes her a quick study, thus freeing her to concentrate on developing the dramatic content of the role. She credits this to the National's discipline, something foreign companies have made her place great value on.

"Guest starring has made me appreciate my own company because it's good. It's got sort of a purity of style that I really like compared with the mannered style of other companies. The National Ballet emphasizes clean position and clean-looking dancing, although sometimes it makes the position more important than the step itself."

The next minute she displays doubts about her technical ability — the one quality critics unanimously laud. A perfectionist, she faults herself for the slightest flaw.

"I'm still not confident before a performance. It's one thing to talk about what you want to do with your dancing, it's another to go out on stage and do it. I aim to perform to my own satisfaction and I rarely do. I hate a lot of things about my dancing. I hate not to be totally in control of everything I do while still enjoying myself. Afterwards, the performance goes back through my mind like a film — all the awful things I did. I know the things my partner had to save and I don't want him to have to save anything. We should be dancing together. I hate to have to lean on him because that means I'm not in control."

But even if she eventually achieves the full technical control she seeks, greatness may still elude her. Kain still has to prove her acting ability, her dramatic depth — in spite of favourable notices of her *Giselle*.

She's aware of this. "Dancing roles are pretty easy but I really find a challenge in the dramatic roles. I keep changing my ideas about them. I don't want people to have a set idea of what I can do. An artist has to be versatile. I want to try other things. I may be young but if I don't do more roles, I'll never learn them. Sometimes I think people are trying to limit me and I don't want to be limited."

However, as she talks on, it becomes clear that she makes two fundamental mistakes in her thinking about dramatic parts. For example, she says she's more comfortable doing Juliet and *Giselle* than Carmen (a role she dances more with innocent abandon than with sluttish vulgarity). What she doesn't see is that all three are dramatic challenges, not just dancing roles. And she confuses character roles with drama when she says she wants to expand her repertoire to include Lady Capulet.

Adding to Kain's acting problems (at least in her own mind) are her Barbie



Small looks. She not only looks sweet, she is while she can be quite candid, she is never malicious. Testimony to this is her popularity. No one in the company is jealous of her wildfire success.

Petit found her sweetness was inconsistent with his concept of Carmen, she says. "It was hard to find the other side of me, to show it. Carmen's a nasty lady. It was hard to be vulgar enough. Vulgar is the antithesis of a ballerina's image. Also Carmen is a really tough type. So you need to be heavy, weighty. That's hard because ballerinas work for years to look light."

Although she does research on new roles such as *Nana* (the ballet Petit choreographed for her) she still seems more instinctive than intellectual in her interpretation. She may well be running out of time. At 25, she's not that young. How much longer can she rely on the youthful vivaciousness that has been her asset? How long can she be promising?

Kain herself sometimes wonders the same thing. Dancers' lives don't get less promising as they age.

"Dancers examine themselves so much. They're always trying to make themselves perfect. That gives you a complex sometimes. Some days I get very down. I don't like myself at all. I can't look at myself in the mirror. You can lose a step overnight and then take three weeks to regain it because you get so upset it won't come back. It's so discouraging to feel you're not getting

anywhere. Then on a good day, I think it's all worth it; I'll keep at it.

"But I'd like to have a holiday."

A workaholic, who spends most of her off stage time during tours "sitting in my hotel room, biting my nails and worrying about my performances," Kain has worked herself into a frazzle in the past two years.

"I get bored when I'm not doing enough. I enjoy working hard but keeping it up for two years was ridiculous. I've had a lot of minor injuries — not serious, but warnings that I should slow down.

"I was totally exhausted (before her short vacation at the end of the Petit company's Canadian tour). I found it hard to say no to so many exciting offers. But I'm going to try to be a little more selective. I gave everything I had when I was dancing. Then on my days off, I was just a shell trying to get enough energy to prepare for the next performance. I will make sure I have enough time to rest."

Although Kain believes she has gained some useful insights into dancing from her exposure to foreign companies, she is reluctant to offer her own opinions on how things should be done at the National, except in rare instances. She also has no urge to ever move into choreography. She says she's prepared to exercise leadership, when necessary, but when pressed for an example, all she came up with was, "Sometimes, if I feel the lighting is

wrong, I'll say something."

Nevertheless, Karen Kain is the nearest thing to a genuine Canadian celebrity-in-residence. At 25, she's practically a household name.

Riding the crest of ecstatic international reviews, the tall, willowy, blue-eyed brunette has not looked back since the summer of 1973 when she and Frank Augustyn won the gold for best pas de deux at the prestigious Moscow International Ballet Competition.

Solo, or partnered by Rudolf Nureyev, this native of Canada's pollution capital, Hamilton, has mounted stardom's staircase step by step.

Now, with an open invitation to dance any role of her choice with the Royal Ballet, an invitation personally offered by none other than Kenneth MacMillan (not to mention an invitation from the Bolshoi), superstar status seems just another step away.

Or is it?

Whether she draws rave notices in Britain will in part answer the question. Another part of the puzzle will be added if she, on her own, can do for the National Ballet what Nureyev has done, namely, draw dance-saturated New Yorkers to the Met.

But the greatest challenge still remains. Can she grow as an artist to keep pace with her box-office appeal? That is the ultimate test of lasting stardom.

Kain in Coppélia. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.







Norman Campbell, director. Photo: Christopher Darling.

**Tuesday.** In the dimly lit control room of the CBC's Studio 7 on Toronto's Mutual Street, Norman Campbell sits at a long semi-circular desk facing a wall of television monitors. Beside him are the National Ballet's Celia Franca and a quartet of assistants and technicians. They are flanked by two glass-walled areas crammed with audio and lighting equipment. Through a door to the left of the monitors a steep flight of iron steps leads to the set out of sight on the floor below. (From the control room, what happens on the set is visible only on the monitors — one for each camera and a larger one for the view selected by the director. Communications are by means of a sound system.) Since 7 am dancers have been arriving for makeup and wigs; it is now 10 am and the taping of Act I is about to begin.

Keep up the mood." After the second take Rick asks "What was the feeling on that?" Norman: "Oh, excellent. Please tell them that. That was a beautiful take. Thank you everybody."

By now it's noon and time for a break. Down on the studio floor it seems very warm after the air-conditioning — for the equipment, not the people — in the control room. The set is unbelievably cramped but appears spacious on the screen because of the wide-angle lenses of the cameras. There are four of these — three on the floor and one on a platform for high shots. The floor itself is a dancer's nightmare — concrete and very slippery.

Hour after hour the rehearsing and taping process continues, guided by a script written during rehearsals the previous week in the company's St. Lawrence Hall studios. Script assistant Lee Richards, following Norman's instructions, has recorded each shot and its camera number on the precise musical note of the score. Now, as taping proceeds, she calls upcoming shots through a microphone, warning the cameramen to be in position. Norman, hunched forward in his chair, eyes intent on the monitor, hums the music and conducts the unseen orchestra, his finger stabbing the air to cue the switches from one camera to another.

The day goes well and they finish a little before the scheduled 7 pm.

**Wednesday.** Taping is to start with the scene in which Hilarion (Hazaros 'Lazlo' Surmeyan) reveals that Loys the villager is really Albrecht the prince, thus causing Giselle's madness and death. They rehearse it several times with Karen marking her part so that her hair, which has been

## Giselle: The Making of a Television Special

Judy Sanderson

Joanne Nisbet, the ballet mistress, arrives and perches on a stool behind Miss Franca, notebook ready. Norman speaks into a microphone: "Good morning everyone. May we have Karen, Frank, Lazlo, and Vicki on the set please." While waiting, Norman asks to see the inside of the hut. Rick Thompson, studio director: "Do you want some more cobwebs?" Norman: "Yes, it's a little clean." A man with an aerosol can sprays cobwebs on the walls of the hut. The dancers assemble and after a makeup check, take their positions. Norman: "O.K. we'll do a rehearsal without mist. Stand by everyone. . . . Hit music." The pre-recorded sound of the orchestra fills the studio.

The opening village scenes are rehearsed several times; between takes the dancers rest, chat, stretch and are blotted by makeup ladies. After the first pas de deux with Karen Kain (Giselle), Frank Augustyn (Albrecht) removes his shoe. Rick: "Frank's got a big toe sticking out at the moment." Joanne Nisbet makes the first of countless trips downstairs to see how things are. Norman confers with Miss Franca: "How much of a breather do they need?" Joanne comes back: "They'd be fine to do it again if you want." But another pair of shoes has to be dyed for Frank and they decide to press on with the peasants' dance. Rick: "This is Frank's solo which he can't do. Because he's only wearing one and a half shoes he's going to mark (walk through) it." Finally Frank's shoes arrive and they do a take of the pas de deux. Norman wants another one: "Tell them not to lose anything — they've got it going,

loosely pinned, does not come down before everything is ready. There is no time to re-do it more than once or twice. During the first take she goes mad and collapses but her hair does not quite come loose. They fix it and try again. This time everything works. Norman: "Did you see how the light flashed on the hilt of the sword? That was terrific." Next is the mad scene. During a run-through Karen accidentally knocks down Mother (played by Victoria Bertram). "Stop! O.K. let's take it from where she knocks down Mother." The second take is excellent. Giselle's death very moving, and Norman asks to have it re-run so the dancers can see it too. At the end there is a moment of silence in the control room, then a spontaneous burst of applause.

After lunch come the magic tricks, or limbo shots, which are done against a dark background. In one, Nadia Potts as Queen of the Wilis travels on pointe diagonally across the floor; later, her image will be superimposed on a shot of trees so that she will appear to be floating. In another a dancer invisible in black clothes and hood, hoists leading Wili Vanessa Harwood on to his shoulder and flies her across the set toward the camera. One Wili is photographed uncoiling from a reflecting pool consisting of a sheet of silver foil. During the intervals there are lighter moments: a camera focuses on bearded Rick Thompson, clad in T-shirt, jeans and a cap with a headlamp clamped over it, tottering around on tiptoe, in a subversive parody of the Queen of the Wilis.



**Thursday.** The company has today off while the studio is transformed into eerie woods for Act II.

**Friday.** Blocking of Act II. Space is at a premium. In the cramped quarters the cameramen have to manoeuvre around the rocks and trees of the set, leaving room for the dancers, yet staying out of each other's shots. One cameraman gets the right perspective on a scene by standing on Giselle's grave. Later, a large box designed to look like a rocky cliff is dragged in for Hilarion's death scene. Norman chafes at the delay: "If we had a bigger studio we could have had the box in all the time."

It's a long, trying day in the midst of an unseasonable heat wave.

**Saturday.** Only one day to tape all of Act II. They start by inserting the limbo shots taken on Wednesday. Norman: "We have to get a position for Lazlo so Vanessa is not superimposed (superimposed) in a tree . . . she shouldn't look too solid." Switcher Peter Osborne pushes buttons and Vanessa becomes a wraith. To create the illusion of Giselle rising from the grave, one camera focuses on the grave while Giselle's image is superimposed and dissolved in electronically. Rick: "We're putting a fish-line on Nadia's veil so it will come off without getting caught in her wings."

The dancers are slipping, but resin, which helps them grip the floor, leaves marks. Nadia, Vanessa and Mary Lago receive permission to use resin. "Still hung up in the woods," as Norman puts it, by noon they are 45 minutes behind schedule.



During the afternoon, taping of the Wili scenes continues. For run-throughs the girls have scotch tape on their shoes to keep them clean and wear leg-warmers under their tutus. Between takes the overhead lights are turned off in a vain effort to keep down the heat. At 3:25 they're an hour behind schedule and in the control room, fearful of overtime costs, tension is growing. Finally, they're ready to proceed with Karen's solo. But there is not enough room for her exit and she almost collides with a camera; another delay while this is straightened out. It's now 3:50. Norman worriedly asks: "When are we going to catch up?" Every second counts now and during the second pas de deux the control room is hushed, the tension palpable, everyone willing it to work. On the first take Frank's hands slip on one of the big lifts. On the second take, however, everything goes beautifully. Norman leaps



Celia Franca and Nadia Potts in conference. Photo: Christopher Darling.

to his feet. "Congratulations! That was terrific!" He rushes to the head of the stairs and applauds.

Rick reports: "Karen is resting — she's very tired. Frank would like to do his variation twice so you have a choice. Can't guarantee a third." The first take goes extremely well. Norman: "Really good. Let him rest, mop him up a little." Frank stays sprawled on the floor, panting. After viewing a re-run they decide to leave it. By this time it's 6:50, time has been picked up and everyone agrees to skip dinner, take a 10-minute break and press on.

During his final variation Frank erupts into the air and his arms almost disappear out of the top of the picture. The camera pulls back quickly and the cameraman apologizes: "Sorry, Norm. I didn't know he was going to jump so high." Frank obligingly does it again.

At last, after a re-take of one of the pas de deux, it's over. Norman calls through the loudspeaker: "Terrific, people. Most elegant performance and very moving." He and Miss Franca descend to the set. Applause is heard from below. Technicians and cameramen are now milling around in the control room. There remain only a few last shots of Frank kneeling at the grave, then walking off into the sunrise. As the final notes of music die away Norman issues his last order: "Stop tape. . . Sensational! Thank you everyone. It was a real team job. We have a winner here." It is 8:15 pm.

But for Norman it's not finished yet. Later he will spend a week of eight-hour days editing between 300 and 400 shots to produce the final version.







*Her first dress: on the threshold of becoming a woman. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*

## Juliet — From the Inside

Veronica Tennant and Deborah Burrett



When we performed *Romeo and Juliet* in Montreal just prior to the Olympics, it had been five years since the company last did the ballet. I'd always loved it and felt an affinity with the role. But I wasn't sure how I would feel returning to it; I didn't know if I could repeat an old success.

When I went to the first rehearsals this season, the choreography felt like the most natural thing in the world. It was my body. I had no trouble reconstructing it physically at all. But the most exciting thing was to discover a host of new ideas for the interpretation, ideas about Juliet's youthfulness and vulnerability. My 10 years as a dancer, between first learning the role and now, have given me a perspective on what youth is. I could call on many more ideas, feelings and experiences than in the past. When I first learned the role, I had trouble dealing with the garden scene between the Nurse and Juliet right at the beginning of the ballet. In that, I had to be lighthearted and joking, but all I wanted was to get into the deep, tragic part which I found easier. Now I enjoy using that contrast between my extreme youth and her later development. It makes the comedy so much greater.

When I first learned the ballet, I studied the play in depth. It is extraordinarily beautiful. Shakespeare's Juliet is a complex person even though she is not quite 14. The words she is given, especially in the soliloquies, come from a person who must think very deeply. The play gives you, not just a story, but colour and depth to apply to what you know you want to say in movement and to what you think Cranko wanted you to say.

### Juliet's First Appearance

She enters first just after the fight between the Capulets and the Montagues which ended in several deaths and in the Duke pronouncing that any further violence would cost the families more lives. In contrast to the bitterness and bloodshed that has just been shown, Juliet appears charming, a child with no worries or cares in the world. But she must see these things from her bedroom window, hear them talked about in the halls; certainly her nurse, being the kind of person she is, must talk about them. So Juliet isn't oblivious to the situation. It just hasn't touched her personally — yet.

The scene is very short and Prokofiev paints it exquisitely. She is introduced to the possibility of marrying Paris, not directly, but through the symbolism of being given the dress for her first ball. Her mother gives it to her and as her mother leaves, Juliet holds the dress up, lets it drop and slowly feels her breasts. She is standing on a threshold, she is aware of becoming a woman and she perceives that a change is about to come.

### The Ball

Balls are a natural subject for ballet and Cranko has used the scene for all the obvious and the subtle things that can happen in such a situation. When Juliet first enters and is introduced to Paris as her prospective husband, she is quite pleased with the idea. They dance a pas de deux, but at the end of it, she sees Romeo. She then dances her variation and a triangle develops, with Juliet in the middle. She dances with Romeo and is obviously drawn to him, but she feels she *must* pay attention to Paris. Then she is taken off by Paris and chastised by her parents.

Her different reactions to her suitors can be seen in the dance. With Romeo, all her movements, all the lifts, are soaring, large, very full. With Paris she is charming; her steps are intricate, studied gavotte steps. I imagine that Juliet has practised this over and over for the last four years in preparation for her first ball — except that she has

always done it with the nurse. When she is finally with Paris, at times she forgets that she is really dancing with anyone. She doesn't look at Paris or relate to him very much: she is doing the steps she has prepared so well. But when she dances with Romeo, she is actually dancing *with* him. They are talking to one another in a complete relationship. With Paris, I look at him without really seeing him; I'm also busy watching to see if Tybalt and my mother and father are looking at me. I have to say to my Paris: "Don't let that affect you. You should be looking at me, trying to win my confidence, to woo me."

Juliet is discovered in the pas de deux with Romeo by Tybalt. Then a gavotte interweaves the whole Capulet family, their guests and Mercutio, Benvolio and Romeo in a formal dance with all the different relationships coming up against one another, but revealed only in glances and subtle movements.

### The Balcony Scene

Prokofiev's absolute genius here is probably what gives the ballet its greatness. Most ballet scores have no depths to plumb, but Prokofiev's makes me think every time about the power of love and the depth of Juliet's commitment.

The ball has completely changed her. She went to it an obedient child who was about to get married; she emerged a rebel. So the balcony scene is one of total capitulation to love. In it she renounces all ties with her family and all ties with conformity to the dictates of her time.

The balcony scene should never be so smooth, so automatic, that it looks like it has been done before — because what is happening to Juliet has *never* happened before. It's like a thunderbolt. Yet, Juliet was not that naive. She was Italian, living in a hot-blooded country during the Renaissance when sensuality was not hidden. Cranko, for example, more than hints at an affair between Lady Capulet and Tybalt, and Juliet was not oblivious to that. Of course, the nurse's language is very bawdy too. What I'm saying is that Juliet had a budding sensuality and is ready for love when the balcony scene comes.

### Friar Laurence's Cell: The Marriage Scene

The choreography here is very straightforward: Friar Laurence is on stage; Juliet enters, showing a little hesitation, wondering if Romeo will show up; then Romeo enters with the nurse, the marriage is performed, and they leave together.

There are little things I like to put into this scene. When I see Friar Laurence, I try to show that I am really happy to share this news with him. He has been my confessor and close friend since I was a child. With him, I don't have to worry about family politics and can therefore share this wonderful secret. All of this is in contrast to the situation at home where Juliet bows down to her parents' will.

I like to do things with Romeo too. For example, when the prayer book is lifted away from us, I like our hands still to be clasped. We understand the meaning of this moment: we are now really joined.

Because the scene is very short, sometimes I feel almost cheated. Although it is a very important moment in the story, in the ballet it sometimes gets lost, sandwiched between the gypsy street dancing and the serious fights. I have to make myself concentrate on what I really want to achieve at that point, to convey the serious import of their act.

### The Bedroom Scene

This pas de deux really shows the tragedy: two lovers, their marriage consummated, having to part, not knowing





*The ball: She doesn't relate to Paris. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*

*Even the nurse doesn't understand. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*





whether they will ever see each other again. Cranko brilliantly repeats movements from the balcony scene and they are so tragic when you see them done now so differently. This is my favourite pas de deux in the ballet. At this point, you must know how much Romeo means to Juliet; you must know *then* that she would kill herself. She has slept with the man she loves and he is leaving. She is *terribly vulnerable*, but also *very strong*.

I first saw this pas de deux as full of tragedy and passion. I would throw myself into it with so much energy that it became comparable to the ecstasy of the balcony scene. Then it occurred to me that there were times when Juliet should become more limp and spent in her emotion. Now I like to find moments in which you can transmit the depth of her passion by doing almost nothing. For example, I might hold an arabesque and then let it collapse.

### The Family Scene

Romeo leaves and the nurse enters to prepare Juliet for her mother's coming. She is told categorically she must marry Paris. The tragedy here is that Juliet loses the only person she has been able to confide in, the nurse. Her relationship with her parents has always been very formal. But when the nurse turns against her, when Juliet realizes that even the nurse had never understood her love, then she is very much alone. At one point, after being thrown to the floor by her mother, Juliet is crying hysterically and the nurse tries to coddle her, to re-establish their old familiar relationship. But Juliet backs away from her and rejects her. That moment is so important, I want it to be cutting.

When Juliet is left alone on stage, all I have to do is walk slowly forward, pick up the cape, walk across with it and then run around the stage twice, on the way to Friar Laurence. But there is *so much* to get across at this point, all the things running through Juliet's mind: "My God, how will I get through this? Everyone I has deserted me. How could my nurse betray me? Can Friar Laurence help?" And again, I've found that instead of trying to get these ideas across actively (using gestures that would show great sadness), sometimes it is better to do absolutely nothing — although 'nothing' is not really what I mean. Whenever you've been sobbing hysterically, afterwards there's a total emptiness within, a collapse when even your muscles go slack, that can convey the depth of her sorrow better than strong gestures.

The idea comes to go to Friar Laurence and I run around the stage, run off and then run on again from the other side. I have run through the streets of Verona to his cell. Some wonderful things have happened in that scene. I am supposed to run, turn, see him and run to him, but once I misjudged the wing I was running to, came face to face with the skull on his pulpit, then turned and ran to him. I've used that since. Mind you, not always. But that is how interpretations mature over the years. These little things happen; you use some, discard some, and the role gains so much richness and depth.

### The Potion Scene

In this scene, Cranko has Paris kiss Juliet. I like to tear the back of my shawl. I submit to his embrace, but the audience can see the repulsion, that I'm not giving myself at all. He exits slowly and I always ask my Paris to make it *agonizingly* slow, so that the audience can feel, with me, that he's taking so damn long to leave when all I'm thinking of is the potion hidden under the coverlet.

The potion scene itself is not really danced, but enacted. Cranko asks you to do exactly what Juliet must have done — stand up, sit down, stand again, pace, etc. — to show her indecision. She's thinking: "What if . . . what if?" She



*The potion scene: suicide is inevitable. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*

even calls to the nurse, but she no sooner comes on, than Juliet pushes her away.

At this point, events have been terribly compressed, years passing in a single day. But the change had taken place in Juliet in the bedroom scene. At that point, her suicide is inevitable — you know she would do anything. Then she wakes up, finds herself in the tomb and discovers Romeo. The moment I love in the ballet is when she finds his knife. I raise my head very slowly, look at the audience and try to convey the total inevitability of my next action. Juliet thinks she is making the decision then to kill herself. But really, the decision was made long ago.



# From Hand-Me-Downs to Haute Couture

Penelope B.R. Doob

The happiest moments in ballet are often the fruit of cross-pollination: a dancer inspires a choreographer to create a ballet that incarnates both the dancer's known graces and those potentialities previously sensed only by the choreographer, and the dancer transforms and refines the choreographer's work through his own peculiar sensibility. Would Karsavina, Fonteyn, and Seymour have become such great dancers without Fokine, Ashton and MacMillan? And can we imagine those choreographers without their leading ballerinas?

Canada's National Ballet has done very well in most respects, but it hasn't fostered this kind of dancer-choreographer collaboration; it hasn't yet developed or attached to itself a major choreographer even though its dancers should have lured one long since. In its 20-year history, the Diaghilev Ballet had Fokine, Nijinsky, Nijinska, Massine and Balanchine; in its first 25 years, the Royal Ballet had De Valois, Ashton, Helpmann, Howard, Cranko and MacMillan; and similarly impressive lists could be compiled for American Ballet Theatre, the New York City Ballet, and so on and on. In contrast, the National has had few company choreographers (Celia Franca, David Adams, and Grant Strate are exceptions, but — for whatever reason — their ballets haven't remained in the repertoire) and has attracted few to create new works especially for the company. I don't want to undervalue the classics — every ballet company needs them, every dancer needs them — but it's amazing that the National has become a major company without having had any masterpieces of its very own, and that its dancers have grown so splendid in a wardrobe of hand-me-downs that haven't always been haute couture to start with. If they're to grow still grander, they desperately need their own choreographers.

As it happens, the choreographers may finally have arrived. The National now has three young artists of great accomplishment and dazzling promise — Ann Ditchburn, James Kudelka, and Constantin Patsalas. I can only guess what it was like around the Ballet Club when Marie Rambert was nurturing the early works of Frederick Ashton, Andrée Howard and Antony Tudor, but I know that the atmosphere in the St. Lawrence Hall these days is electric. And artistic director Alexander Grant seems more than willing to play Rambert to his constellation of choreographers: one of his first acts in the company was to place Ditchburn's *Kisses*, Kudelka's *A Party* and Patsalas' *Black Angels* in the repertoire for the eastern tour, and he feels that the choreographic workshops that have produced such ballets may well be the most important factor in the company's development.

What surprises everyone about the three is that each has evolved his own distinctive style — a rare virtue, especially in dancemakers as young as these. "They're creative rather than re-creative choreographers," according to Grant. "Normally it takes years for a choreographer to find an individual language that's distinct from the classroom vocabulary and from other

choreographers' work, yet these three have done it; their styles are already well defined." And it's interesting to speculate whether these choreographers' individuality may have thrived precisely because they've not been exposed to the continuing influence of a major choreographer; comparative isolation isn't always a disadvantage.

Ditchburn, the best known and most experienced of the group, made her first ballet in 1967, her last year at the National Ballet School. During her first five years in the company, she created five more works, including *Brown Earth*, taken into the repertoire in 1970. Two years later, on a Canada Council grant, she took a year's leave of absence to expand her range as choreographer and dancer; after making *Elouise* for Ballet Horizons in Vancouver, she travelled to England, where she took company class with the Royal Ballet, studied jazz at the Dance Centre, and watched Glen Tetley, Jerome Robbins and Kenneth MacMillan setting works on the Royal. She also created *Kisses*, a thoroughly delightful ballet, for the Royal's choreographic workshop. Since then, her works have gained increasing exposure: *Kisses* was shown at the London Festival Ballet's workshop and entered the repertoire of the National Ballet in 1975, and a filmed version of the *Emily* section has been seen widely. In the past 18 months, she has made ballets for the Shaw Festival (*Nuts and Raisins*), for Ballet Ys (*Nelligan*), and for the CBC's Hagood Hardy special (*Winter Savory*), and she is now immersed in *Mad Shadows*, based on Marie-Claire Blais' novel *La Belle Bête* and commissioned for the opening of the National's February season in Toronto.

Ann Ditchburn. Photo: Beverly Rockett.





Obviously Ditchburn is prolific — 15 ballets in nine years, an extraordinary number for a full-time dancer. She is also an extremely versatile, and hence necessarily somewhat uneven, choreographer. In that she's dedicated to finding "new choreographic ideas, new angles that inspire me to do different things in a different way," her style is hard to pin down. Mary Jago, a dancer whose considerable gifts Ditchburn has exploited brilliantly, defines Ditchburn's work as "very eclectic — there's a little bit of Graham, a little bit of Paul Taylor, quite a lot of jazz, and of course a classical basis for it all." More specifically, Ditchburn's style is often energetic and athletic but delightfully insouciant — her dancers do acrobatic leaps and lifts that would be staggeringly impressive in a Bolshoi ballet, but in her work they're ever so slightly tongue-in-cheek; the mood is often that of rock or jazz dancing — "cool," humorous, nonchalantly exhibitionist. Loose-limbed, turned-in movements, slouches and struts, are grafted onto balletic technique; the angle of a head or an arm transforms a classical pose into something witty, just wrong enough to be an implicit comment on the traditional style and yet attractive in itself as well. Ditchburn-dancing has a lot more movement in the torso than one finds in the classical style and demands a range of flexibility unexplored in normal ballet training, so her dancers sometimes find learning her steps frustrating. But once her casts have mastered the moves, they love doing them; Vanessa Harwood, the second girl in the *Emily* section of *Kisses*, treasures the moments she can "just get out there and move in all those terrific new ways."

*Kisses*: *Movement ever so slightly tongue-in-cheek*. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.



From this description, one might guess that Ditchburn's ballets often show a flair for comedy, that she uses her music (usually from twentieth-century composers and often very jazzy) with sensitivity and wit, that there's a buoyant flow to her enchainements, that her works are full of an infectious *joie de vivre* — all true. One might also think that she'd be as free and easy in constructing a work as the spirit of the finished product, but one would be wrong on that count.

A ballet like *Kisses* shows her skill in creating well-defined relationships and moods; here, she explores five varieties of courtship culminating in a kiss and ranging from a comical hate-love boy-girl relationship through passionate young love, coolly frank sensuality and a skittish joyful female friendship, to a frantically sexy encounter. The order is by no means accidental; when I mentioned the possibility of ending the work with *Emily*, the potentially lesbian section, she countered, "That wouldn't follow in the right way; it would become too feminist a statement. In a way, I think the ballet develops from childhood through a girl's fantasies — the Ibert section — to a bad relationship that makes her start a relationship with a woman, which turns into an affair with a man. It's an emotional progression. *Emily* may be my best work, but it can't come at the end." *Mad Shadows* will, of course, be a story-ballet, and Ditchburn is continually refining the scenario to discover the best possible structure and plot.

This conscious crafting extends to her method of making the dance itself. Although some details may come by chance, in a sense — she discovers the inventive and difficult lifts that characterize her work by hurling herself around the studio in the general direction of a partner — she's very definite about what she wants and insists that her dancers provide it. Lynn Seymour, for whom *Kisses* was originally made, found her much more demanding than MacMillan, who habitually leaves a good deal of the creativity to his artists, reserving selectivity to himself. In this respect Ditchburn is much like Jerome Robbins, a choreographer she resembles also in her humour, her eclecticism and her quest for novelty. And, like Robbins, she's unpredictable in her versatility.

James Kudelka, at 21 the youngest of the National's choreographers, is an equally careful craftsman, but in style and subject he's much more conservative than either Ditchburn or Patsalas; he belongs to that wonderful English story-ballet tradition of Ashton, Tudor, MacMillan and Cranko. I don't mean to imply any imitation — he's seen very little by the first three, although he acknowledges profound admiration for Cranko: "When I was ten, I was on stage in *Romeo and Juliet*, and I didn't miss a second — I was glued to the action! Cranko's work has been a big influence on me; it's so atmospheric — beautiful movement fitting the music so perfectly and yet saying something important at the same time, working you up so you can't help becoming involved. That's what I try to do in my own work."

Kudelka has made six ballets since, at 14, he created the pas de deux *Encounter* for the National Ballet School. His second work, *Sonata* (1973), earned him the Jean A. Chalmers Award for Choreography, and he has been improving steadily ever since. His strengths lie partly in the sensitive evocation of mood, partly in the perceptive analysis of complex relationships and their narrative development, which he expresses through a subtle and restrained classical vocabulary. Some choreographers, like Ditchburn, specialize in discovering new movements; others tend rather to combine old movements in attractive new ways. Like Ashton, Kudelka falls into the second category; he's a traditionalist in the best sense of the word.



Kudelka also resembles Ashton in his remarkable musicality, and both usually work from the music to the scenario: "I always have lots of ideas for possible scores; what's hard is finding the right scenarios, finding reasons for the dances, because I don't want to start pushing out movement without meaning." His latest ballet, *A Party*, began when he happened to play Britten's *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* while he was working on a completely different score. From the music came the characters — the boisterous bachelor played by John Aubrey was first — and from the characters, the situation, "one of those bad parties, the ones you wish you'd never gone to."

Unlike Ditchburn, who always knows just what she wants, Kudelka is inclined to work with an open mind, leaving room for the fortuitous accident that "sometimes comes out looking better than anything you make up, so long as you know which accident to use." Steps and scenario develop gradually; with *A Party*, "I didn't make up the steps beforehand; I'd just go into the studio and figure them out. Then, if there were problems, we'd work on them. You can't really set a dance on yourself — it may be fine for the way your body moves, but it won't work for the dancers, so you have to make adjustments." So too with the plot: "When I began to create the ballet in November 1975, it was about bad parties, but when we started intensive rehearsals in the spring, I found that I'd changed the whole conception so it was really a ballet about the hostess. That's partly because of Veronica Tennant — she's such a strong figure that you're drawn to her on stage." In this case, Kudelka's receptivity to the accidental has given Tennant one of her most interesting roles.

*Apples*, commissioned by the Camerata chamber ensemble in 1975, was similarly graced by chance — and by Kudelka's knack of knowing when he's run into a good thing. Originally it was to be a pure movement piece and then he decided it would be better to use the Niagara setting to create a chic 1890s picture. The designer, Jack King, thought the music suggested a farm family outing and sketched his costumes accordingly. Impressed by the drawings, Kudelka decided to capitalize on both ideas, and so *Apples* is about the accidental meeting of a sophisticated city family and a farm family.

Thoughtful and intelligent, Kudelka seems to know almost intuitively just what subjects he should choose for his ballets: "I have to do ballets about things I know. *Apples* involved a country picnic, and I grew up in the country. As for *A Party*, I've been to lots of parties almost as horrible as that one. I have to keep on having

experiences I can use for ballets, because in every work I try to draw on absolutely everything I've learned up to that moment." Working with what you know facilitates finding just the right gesture for each psychological nuance — something that Kudelka does very well.

It's not surprising that Kudelka's dancers love working with him. Once again like Ashton or Cranko, he delights in exploring possibilities in them that no one else may have expected — making Cynthia Lucas look elegant and lyrical rather than crisp and bubbly in *A Party*, for instance. If Ditchburn brings out new kinds of movement in her dancers, Kudelka brings out new dramatic strengths in his — both contributions of the greatest importance in any dance company.

Constantin Patsalas is also as concerned with helping his dancers realize their potentialities as he is with creating a novel and coherent work of art: "I don't want dancers to move in my pieces the way I've seen them move in other pieces; I want them to go beyond, to find something in themselves they didn't think they had." He achieves this end partly, like Ditchburn, through inventing new kinds of movement, and partly through demanding intense concentration and focus in performance. If it's hard for a dancer to convey emotions forcefully in a story ballet, how much harder it must be to create a strong impression in an abstract work! Yet this is what Patsalas

*A Party: A bad party you wish you'd never gone to. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*



James Kudelka.







Black Angels: From a different tradition. Photo: Sandra Evan-Jones.

requires: "For most people, dance is pretty movement — floating for the girls, and so on. Now that's only one possible quality of movement, and it can get rather boring and stereotyped. I think it should be possible to move in every conceivable way, and the qualities of movement are determined by speed — whether a movement is slow or fast; by dynamics — strong or soft; by whether the movement is central or peripheral. If you can do all those things in a given style, you have tremendous variety. And one approach to getting that variety from your dancers is to create roles even in abstract choreography, bringing parallels from nature that help a dancer get what you want. I may say, 'Forget about emotions — simply imagine the quality of water falling on the rocks,' or 'imagine a water plant.' These qualities have to speak in abstract works or the dance will become boring."

Patsalas' style as exemplified in the two works in the National's repertoire — *Inventions* (1973) and *Black Angels* (1976) — is in many ways the most clearly defined of the three. The movement is vital, strong and athletic; the line is unwaveringly pure as it ranges from the geometrically hard-edged to the curved and sensuous, and one is struck both by arresting poses — the antler-like lift as Nadia Potts and Frank Augustyn enter for their pas de deux in *Black Angels* — and by unusual enchainements — in Potts' solo, the 180° arabesque penché, hands on the floor, from which her supporting leg rises on pointe; both legs contract towards the body and then extend, and finally she contracts again into a ball on the floor only to explode into an arching, expansive pirouette in arabesque. The music too is striking: although he has choreographed Canadian Opera Company productions of *Carmen* and *La Traviata*, he prefers compelling but difficult scores by composers like George Crumb and Miloslav Kabelac. Lighting and costuming, which he designs himself, also define his style: brilliant pools of contrastingly coloured lights create an other-worldly effect, and stark body-stockings intensify the clarity of the dancers' line.



Constantin Patsalas

As one might guess, Patsalas comes from a different balletic tradition than Ditchburn and Kudelka. Trained at Kurt Jooss' school in Germany, he studied Jooss' own Central European expressionist technique, Messerer's Bolshoi technique and English versions of Legat and Cecchetti technique. From this mélange, his own style has emerged: "As a choreographer, you must learn all the styles you can; only then do you find your own choreographic language." He also began to study dance comparatively late, at 17, and finds that "there is sometimes an advantage in starting so late if you want to be creative in dance, because from the very start your mind is involved, you question everything."

Certainly Patsalas' own intellectual history has coloured his style. For several years he studied chemistry in Germany, and this, he feels, "made my mind work. Now I see parallels between organic and inorganic nature in the laboratory, in life and in my dances. I like my works to be clear, and the dynamics and structures have to be right; everything must develop organically." His ballets do indeed have a highly complex structure expressed by leitmotif poses, recurrent pairings and enchainements, and rhythmic structures easy to recognize but impossible to discuss. And the beauty of natural science informs his work: I find myself imagining that I'm witnessing rituals of some remote species, or the inexorable formation of crystals deep in the earth or the shifting patterns of an atomic nucleus. This is heady stuff, theatrically potent, aesthetically entrancing, intellectually challenging. If Ditchburn and Kudelka engage us because of their humanity, Patsalas excites by his transcendence of humanity, his exploration of pure form and almost mathematical process. We may not understand what we're seeing, but we're gripped by its beauty and alien logic.

Patsalas' long interest in philosophy seems also to have influenced his ballets. Although he appreciates many choreographers' concern with topical human problems or with psychology, that's not his subject: "In my own work, I prefer to speak about bigger things than problems of the moment; I try to deal with universals, with good and evil, with statements about the universe. I try to go to the roots, to deal with things that are timeless however they appear in specific instances around us." An impossible task, perhaps; and yet, for me at least, Patsalas succeeds.

On its twenty-fifth birthday the National Ballet has much to celebrate, but I think it's singularly blessed in three areas: it has, at last, three inventive and thoughtful young choreographers dealing with different material in different styles; it has brilliant dancers to inspire them, to perform their works with deserved enthusiasm, and to be transformed themselves in the process; and it has a director passionately concerned to ensure the fullest artistic development of both choreographers and dancers.





Mary Jago in *Sleeping Beauty*: Crisp and sparkling style. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.

## Profile:

# Mary Jago

Susan Cohen

For years Mary Jago was a promising dancer. Steadily advancing through the ranks from corps member to principal, she never gave a bad performance. She was competent, thoroughly professional, always reliable.

Then after six years at the National Ballet, she became something more, something rare, a dancer who finally went beyond craft to artistry, who embodied certain roles so completely, so extraordinarily, that from then on in your mind you could see no one else but Mary Jago in them — Desdemona in *The Moor's Pavane*, the Lady in White in *Don Juan* and woman, with all her different sexual feelings, in *Kisses*.

Her story is not the fairytale account of some of the National's ballerinas — no dancing Juliet at 19, no gold medal from Russia at 22. But her slow rise at the company, the accumulation of credits and the expansion of her range, is in its own quiet way as thrilling and dramatic as the sudden leaps into stardom.

It is a story that could easily have gone either way, as Erik Bruhn has said. "Years ago, I wondered whether Mary Jago would be eternally promising, whether she would be able to risk something on stage. Then three or four years ago, I saw it happen. She took the risk and blossomed. It was not just that she could do the steps, but that she suddenly began coming through as a human being."

If it has taken a while for Mary Jago to reach that stage, perhaps it's because she came to Canada to put behind what seemed to be a mediocre career and start over.

Her mother tried to curb her tomboy tendencies as the only girl in a family of boys in Sussex, England by pushing her into dance classes, "to learn to be a girl around girls." It's an old dance cliché. The local teacher spotted talent. The number of classes taken and exams passed crept up slowly and suddenly the teacher had nothing more to give the pupil.

On to the Royal Ballet School at 16 — she stayed three years. "I wasn't sure even then if I'd be a dancer. The principal told me I would never make it as a classical dancer," but with typical Jago pluck, "That made me bound and determined that I would. I wasn't what she wanted for the company, but that's wrong — there are so many companies and so many styles."

After spending less than a year in the opera ballet in London, her only stage experience to that point, she (and two colleagues) were invited to join the National Ballet when the company's ballet master and mistress, Joanne and David Scott, visited England and saw her taking class.



"I wasn't getting anywhere at home, so I decided to start fresh," recalls the dancer, looking back to that point in 1966 when at 20 she attached herself to a company she hardly knew in a country about which she knew less.

She came with no preconceptions, not even definite goals in mind. "I was starting at the bottom, relatively green as they say. All I knew was that I wanted to work as hard as I could, dance as well and as much as I could and go as far as I could. It didn't necessarily mean being a principal dancer. I would have been happy being a soloist."

"Those first years with the company were crucial. I found out the problems, the technical abilities needed, the tensions that go with performing. I found out the guts one needed as a dancer to stand on one's own and make it through performances. To get out on stage and realize the responsibility is on your shoulders, that as a corps member, a soloist or principal, it's up to you — that I found very frightening when I first came. I think in those first few years, it was a toss-up whether I would make it through or not."

Two years in the corps learning to be on stage. Then two more as a soloist, polishing technique. In 1970 she was made a principal and began to concentrate on the quality of movement. On stage, the light, crisp and neat style she developed (although she's 5'6", tall for a ballerina, she seems smaller on and off stage) led to a niche in soubrette roles — the polka girl in *Solitaire* or the Neopolitan dance in *Swan Lake* are examples. Within the company, she seemed to be typecast.

When a company works in isolation for a long time as the National has, typecasting is easily possible. It takes an outside influence with a fresh view of old faces in the company to see qualities in dancers no one expects. That happened to Mary Jago. Choreographers or producers came to the company, noticed her, challenged her to display qualities she hadn't even suspected she'd possessed. They broke the Mary Jago mould and in the process created a dancer of great versatility.

"John Neumeier came out to Winnipeg to see the company do *Swan Lake*. I was doing the Neopolitan. That's a bright, sparkling role, laughing, dashing and running all over the stage. Yet he took one look at me and cast me as the Lady in White in *Don Juan*. People see something in me and I don't know what it is," says Jago.

But Neumeier must have glimpsed and capitalized on the quiet quality that the maturing Jago has brought to roles. She works from a great stillness of centre and with a capacity for inner concentration and focus. As the Lady in

White (1974), the phantom nemesis of Don Juan's life, she is a wraith, a presence at once floating on the air, yet implacable and unmoving. That double-edged quality undoubtedly came from Neumeier's instructions to her.

"He was a very changeable person, from day to day. He told me exactly what he wanted for the interpretation when we first set it: I was to be distant, ethereal. Then the second time he came back he completely changed it. He said, 'You're very real, Mary.' To try to find the quality of the role, I tried to think about Biblical days, about how the angels were received by the humans on earth, to visualize what it must be like to face one."

Perhaps it is not an emotionally demanding role, but the dancing and especially the partnering were incredibly difficult. "When we first learned it, I had never been in so much pain. In the mornings, I could hardly raise my right arm. It's from gripping so hard, because most of the time I use only one arm to hold on to his shoulder or dangle upside down and hold myself rigid for so long."

Both the effervescence and the serenity of Mary Jago were exploited by Erik Bruhn in his re-working of the

nineteenth-century French comic ballet, *Coppélia* (1975). He cast her in two roles — Prayer, a remarkably calm, tranquil solo, one of the highlights of the second act, and also Swanhilda, the lead, only her second full-length role in the National's repertoire (she also does *Nutcracker*).

"As Prayer, she is an inner dancer, *not* introverted, but possessing a quiet, inner belief and inner power", Bruhn notes. "As Swanhilda, she's more exhibitionistic. I based my *Coppélia* on the Danish version and the girls I'd seen do it in my childhood. Mary comes closest to that conception — although she wasn't trained in Denmark and has never seen the Danes do it. She has the essence of my ideal Swanhilda. To my belief, of all the Swanhildas, Mary sustained the role best, with no let-up from beginning to end."

On stage, her Swanhilda is good-humoured, buoyant and alert. Bruhn acknowledges that, but adds: "She also gives of herself. In the old Danish versions, the Swanhilda used to make everyone feel welcome, as though she'd invited the audience to her home to take part. She was warm and human. Somehow Mary has integrated that humanity with her dancing and acting."

*Jago and Nureyev in Don Juan: Implacable, haunting presence. Photo: Andrew Oxenham.*





Bruhn's confidence in Jago is returned in full measure. She feels strongly that Bruhn and Rudolf Nureyev are mentors, that both have prodded and encouraged her in recent years and have played the most important part in her recent development. They've talked to her at length about her dancing, given her confidence and backing when she needed it.

Confidence, says Jago, is something she lacked terribly for a long time at the company. It still shows a bit in her personal life. Life must be under control, as neat, as tidy, as organized as her locker. A time for everything and everything in its time.

"Physical stamina is important," says Jago. "But there's also a stamina of mind. In those early years, I did not have the willpower to push myself past the hurdles. I would go so far and then I'd just give in. If you go out to do something, like pirouettes, that are not your forte and think you can't do it, you won't. But when you watch other people go out thinking, 'I'll do it if it kills me,' you learn you can."

Now in classes, rehearsals and in performance, Jago pushes herself to go further. She works flat out all the time. It is written on her face in the gritty line of determination that is her mouth and the frown of concentration on her brow as she pushes back the sweated strands of hair. It is a lesson she has learned from influences at the company, from Kain and Tennant, but especially from Nureyev.

"Rudi makes incredible demands on himself. He wills himself to do things. No matter how much pain, his dedication is unbelievable. I wonder how he can do it, but I admire him for forcing himself to do what he has to do. There's never any question — if he wants to do it, somehow he will. It's that positive attitude that he brought to this company."

She learned that first-hand. Nureyev had come to Toronto to set his *Sleeping Beauty* for the first time. Among other things, Jago was dancing the Bluebird. The rehearsals were exhausting, demanding and time-consuming. Then, a week before the premiere, Nureyev announced to Jago he'd selected her to do the José Limón piece, *The Moor's Pavane*, with him. The first night they rehearsed all evening. On tour, they rehearsed before performances and during intermissions.

Jago's Desdemona (1973) in this dance adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello* is a warm, loving and tender English flower. Even Limón, who flew up to Boston to rehearse it personally, nicknamed her "Anglo-Saxon Mary" and "English Rosemary" in an attempt to polish her interpretation and individuality in the role. Jago treasures

memories of working with "that marvellous man." He died just a few months later.

The style of *The Moor's Pavane* is foreign to her ballet background, but the willingness to explore different movement styles, to push her own personal horizons as far as possible, is another trait she shares with Nureyev. "In *Kraanerg* (1969), Roland Petit gave us floor barres somewhat similar to what Toronto Dance Theatre does. That was my eye-opener to a lot of modern movement. I liked it and saw no reason why you couldn't be a good classical dancer and adapt to another style. Open your eyes, your brain, listen, watch and learn from everything."

Ann Ditchburn remembered Jago in *Kraanerg* and that prompted her to cast her in *Kisses* when her ballet entered the repertoire in 1975. It was a new Jago who emerged, sexy, wickedly flirtatious, charmingly child-like, and sensual, in these five different pas de deux each ending with a kiss.

Not only was it hard to be openly sexy on stage, but the dancing that Ditchburn created was also extremely difficult: "In classical ballet, everything moves in unison usually. An arm will go with a hand and legs and the body; it all happens together. But Annie has the most incredible way of making everything work backwards. She can

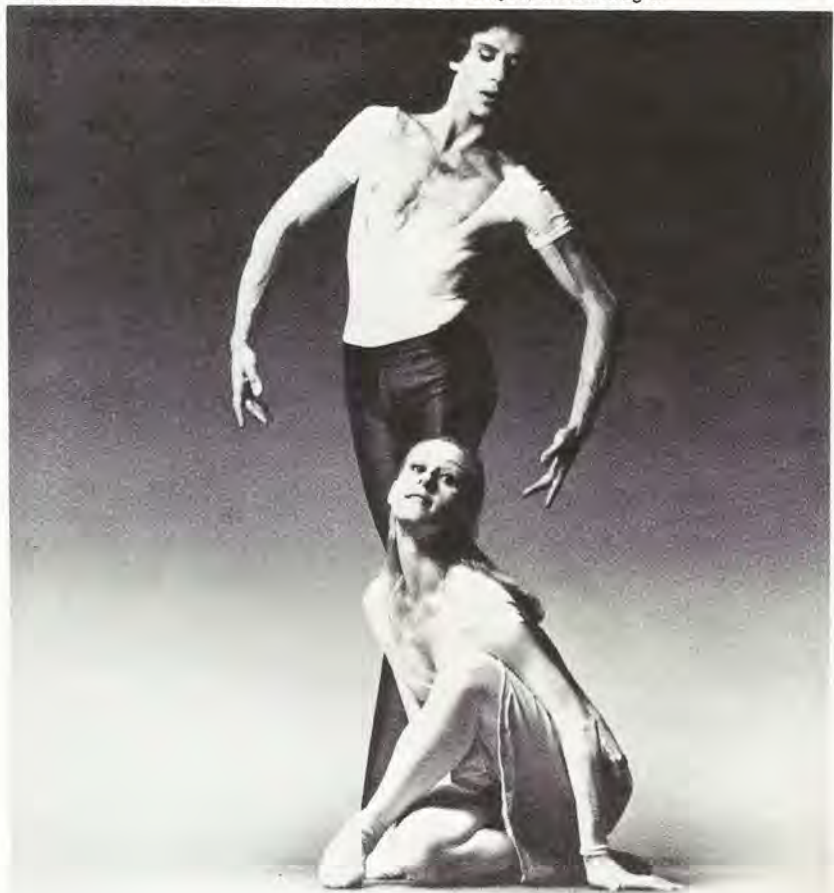
move a leg, make it the most sensuous thing, without moving anything else in the body. She can start from the bottom, move a leg, slowly ripple movement all the way up through the body and then have it come out at the top. It is very simple, but it took me forever to get and it only came with a lot of patience on Annie's part.

"I don't like being limited. You have to fight being a soubrette or taking only ethereal roles. You have to do things you've never done before. That's why I worked so hard on Annie's ballet."

Mary Jago has learned to take risks, to search for herself in each role, each interpretation. "It's very healthy to put your own style into a role. Many of us at the company do the same role, but none should ever be the same — because none of us has the same personality, or philosophy or body. Individual style is something that comes with your training and years of experience. If you allow yourself to be beaten down, you're never going to make it."

Mary Jago has become as distinctive as Karen Kain or Veronica Tennant. She has her own followers and the Mary Jago fan club is growing — proof that the audience recognizes her new belief in herself and her new assertiveness on stage.

Jago and Tomas Schramek in *Kisses*: A new style, a new Jago.





# In Review

## Le Programme "Arts et Culture" des Olympiques The Cultural Olympics

Montreal

July-July

Montréal n'a jamais réuni autant de compagnies et de styles de danses qu'en juillet dernier. En effet, le Programme "Arts et Culture" mis sur pied par le COJO (Comité organisateur des Jeux Olympiques) a fait une place d'honneur à la danse.

Du 1er au 30 juillet (27 jours plus précisément) trois salles (à Montréal) et une en province (la salle Maurice O'Bready de l'Université de Sherbrooke) ont accueilli les troupes d'ici et d'autres provinces canadiennes.

Pour la plupart des troupes, les salles étaient remplies à moitié de leur capacité (ou un peu plus) pour les soirs de première du moins. Selon Monsieur Uriel Luft (l'impresario de la danse) "les organisateurs s'y sont pris trop tard pour mettre sur pied un programme aussi important. La publicité n'a pas été planifiée comme elle aurait dû l'être. En plus, toutes les énergies étaient dirigées vers le sport. Il n'y a que la chaîne américaine ABC (American Broadcasting Corporation) qui, pour ainsi dire, s'est intéressée de près aux activités culturelles, et à la danse en particulier. Les autres, Radio-Canada plus précisément, ont littéralement ignoré cet événement artistique sans précédent."

Pour la danse moderne, quatre grandes troupes se sont succédé sur le plateau. Pour souligner cette occasion très spéciale, le Groupe de la Place Royale a présenté ses *Nouveaux Espaces*, une chorégraphie signée Peter Boneham et Jean-Pierre Perreault. Cette dernière oeuvre inscrite à leur répertoire traduit une approche sensuelle, émotive de la danse. Les mouvements jouent constamment avec les lois de la gravité et avec l'énergie. Ce n'est pas tant la perfection du geste qui compte mais sa prégnance. De nouveaux espaces de plus en plus intéressants pour cette troupe qui fête, cet automne, son dixième anniversaire de naissance.

De son côté, le Groupe Nouvelle Aire a présenté, en première mondiale, *Jeux de Je* de Martine Epoque (la directrice de la troupe). Cette oeuvre exécutée par trois danseuses veut exprimer la difficulté de l'Homme de s'accepter tel qu'il est. Une oeuvre tourmentée et profondément déchirée entre deux tendances: la violence et la tendresse.

Pour sa part, le Toronto Dance Theatre s'est illustré par sa toute dernière création intitulée *Quartet* de David Earle. Un ballet en trois mouvements fort intéressant tant au point de vue structural qu'utilisation de l'espace.

Le Anna Wyman Dance Theatre s'est distingué par une présentation visuelle fort originale et par une étude très intéressante des formes.

Les trois grandes troupes canadiennes ont aussi participé à cette grande fête de la scène et... de l'arène.

Le Royal Winnipeg Ballet, en particulier, a su démontrer qu'il est toujours à la fine pointe de la danse. Le classique et le moderne font bon ménage et le style chorégraphique de cette troupe est à la fois imaginatif et singulier.

Les Grands Ballets y sont allés sous le signe de l'olympisme pendant les deux semaines qu'ils ont tenu l'affiche à l'Expo-Théâtre. *Marathon*, une oeuvre spécialement créée par Brian Macdonald pour souligner la tenue des jeux olympiques à Montréal, la ville hôte, n'a pas donné les résultats escomptés (et par le public et par le chorégraphe qui a rencontré des difficultés, spécialement au niveau de la musique). Les mouvements étaient assez répétitifs dans l'ensemble et la présentation visuelle était un peu trop uniforme (tout est baigné dans le bleu).

Le Ballet National s'est fait conservateur, comme toujours en nous présentant une super-production: le *Roméo et Juliette*, d'après la version de John Cranko.

Ensemble, deux spectacles (*Danse I* et *Danse II*) forment un pot-pourri de danse moderne, d'acrobaties et d'essais de toutes sortes.

De tous les participants, j'ai retenu le Regina Modern Dance Workshop (de la Saskatchewan). Il s'est signalé par une imitation, d'ailleurs fort caricaturale et fort intelligente, dans *Bus Depot Auctions* où les danseurs s'appliquent à prolonger des gestes et des attitudes au point d'en faire une satire. Une jeune troupe à surveiller de près!

Le Tournesol Contemporary Dance (c'est-à-dire Carole et Ernst Eder) forment un couple de danseurs bien rompus à la danse. Et ils sont surtout très agréables à regarder. Leur approche était la suivante: étudier les mouvements du corps en relation avec des objets avec lesquels il entre en contact. Deux danseurs dont il convient de suivre l'évolution.

D'autre part, les Contemporary Dancers de Winnipeg n'ont pas laissé leur place. Rachel Browne (qui est venue seule pour représenter ce groupe) est l'un des piliers de la danse moderne au Canada. Elle s'adonne à la danse avec beaucoup de maturité et de sérieux dans le traitement des thèmes qu'elle explore.

Pour ce qui est du ballet-jazz, le programme a été assez décevant dans l'ensemble.

Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal ont présenté une *Fleur de Lit* pas encore épanouie. En effet, la chorégraphie de Eva von Gencsy était vraiment à la remorque de la musique et de

l'argument (de Marcel Dubé) et manquait nettement de cohérence. Souhaitons que cette *Fleur* fleurisse après que ce ballet soit remanié pour la saison prochaine...

Quant à La Compagnie de Danse Eddy Toussaint, c'est la seule troupe qui ait fait salle comble lors de la première. A part certaines reprises de l'année, Eddy Toussaint (un canadien d'origine haïtienne) a présenté un nouveau ballet qui est un conte haïtien d'Antonio Jean, tiré de la mythologie vaudou. Une oeuvre intéressante mais qui manquait un peu de fini sur le plan technique. Mais Monsieur Toussaint saura y remédier en temps et lieu.

L'Entre-Six (une troupe de néo-classique de Montréal) a su satisfaire son audience, comme d'habitude. Le chorégraphe Laurence Gradus, est l'un de nos créateurs les plus humoristique et génial.

Pour conclure, les Ksan Dancers nous ont ramenés cent ans en arrière avec l'investiture d'un chef gitksan, et nous ont fait participer à un rituel. Et fait connaître une civilisation presque éteinte.

Un marathon que les Montréalais ne sont pas prêts d'oublier.

Suzanne Asselin

## Dance in Canada Conference '76 Halifax

August 7-9

The same unpretentious democratic spirit that infused the daytime sessions characterized the evening's performances as well — everything and everyone was included, from housewives performing belly dances to Varna winners, from local step dancers to the best ballet and modern. It's become a cliché to call these evenings marathons but the point can't be overemphasized: by my count, there were 25 dances the first night, 17 the second and 13 on the third evening. The problem is that in such a setting the best groups, surrounded by the worthless, lose their impact, like diamonds thrown together with rhinestones (it's a real physical jolt to go from Judith Marcuse's richly suggestive *Four Working Songs* to some poorly executed Mexican dances); and the amateur groups are included in a context that raises unfair expectations in the audience (those groups simply should not be judged on the same critical basis as the rest). In this case, because no one assessed the companies beforehand, the inept (Diane Black and Mardaav, the Wallin Formation Dancers and the Valley Dance Experience, the latter a group so embarrassing I actually removed my glasses so I would be unable to see them) and the brilliant shared the bill, with no evident thought given to suitability, pacing or even juxtaposition. It's about time the democracy of Dance in Canada was curbed.

Nevertheless the smorgasbord did prove the maturity and diversity of the Canadian scene as old friends from previous conferences showed current pieces, new



artists were brought to our attention and special occasions were saluted with style.

Let's take old friends first. Each of the best Canadian choreographers at the conference possesses a distinctive voice — Entre Six's Lawrence Gradus has a knack for lyrical, harmonious and serene movement (in *Nonetto*, everything moves clearly and logically around a central axis); Judy Jarvis shines at comic caricatures in *Clouds* and *Three Women*; Maria Formolo, from the Regina Modern Dance Works, shows that movement derives from environment (whether the urban surroundings that produce anomie and occasionally aimless aggression as in *Bus Depot Auctions* which she created with Belinda Weitzel or a self-contained and self-created environment defined by the elastic ribbons manipulated by the dancers in *Rainbow*); while Patricia Beatty, one of Toronto Dance Theatre's three artistic directors, works in and transcends the Graham mould in her powerfully dramatic metaphor, *Against Sleep*, defying the attraction of suicide.

It was good to see personal styles emerging from some of the younger choreographers too. Louise Garfield and Carolyn Shaffer presented their unique, witty cartoons, very brief and very pointed, for the first time at a Dance in Canada conference. In *R.A.P.E.D.*, Odette Davis created a broad farce with devastating social implications.

The special occasions belonged to Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. First, their Varna silver medalist Sylvie Kinal-Chevalier showed off the verve, assurance and technique that placed the 16-year-old at the top of competition with Fernand Nault's *Incoherence* (he also took choreography honours). Then four of the company's best young women soloists demonstrated how Les Grands is flourishing in a piece called *Four Working Songs* from their last workshop. Choreographer Judith Marcuse (she won the 1976 Chalmers Award for this) has created a dance about how work — on the assembly line or in the community — affects us as social beings. Perhaps a shade too literal, *Four Working Songs* is also eerie, austere and at the same time, warmly compassionate and brilliantly effective.

In their individuality and skill, Menaka Thakkar and Daniel Williams Grossman were undoubtedly the conference's highlights. Thakkar, unfairly relegated to the small opening night stage (and audience), is a brilliant exponent of Indian dance, conveying a wealth of drama and feeling through her expressive eyes. If Thakkar follows a particular tradition, Williams is the most idiosyncratic performer around. His *Higher* was a phenomenal, killingly slow display of gymnastic balance up and down, around, under, through and on top of ladders and chairs. You'd swear the whole thing was a levitation trick engineered by a magician! If Grossman exalts the dancer as athlete, Thakkar is all about artistry. Both in their own way are remarkable exemplars of the diverse strands that make up dance in Canada. And that's what this conference was about.

Susan Cohen

## Ballet de Marseilles On Tour

September 7-October 20

Karen Kain made her Canadian debut with the role that won Paris' heart last year. In fact, she performed *Carmen* (by French choreographer Roland Petit) some 22 times during this cross-Canada (Quebec City to Victoria) tour by Petit's company, the Ballet de Marseilles. Few other Canadians can match her impact as a box-office draw. The tour was somewhat less significant artistically. I, for one, was puzzled by the original reception of the French critics.

This 28-year-old ballet, exclusively identified (until Kain) with Petit's scintillating wife Zizi Jeanmaire, is stylistically and dramatically confused. One minute, Petit mocks Spanish movement; then the next he asks us to take seriously dances and dancers within that same pseudo-Spanish style. Only strong personalities can project from that kind of choreographic muddle. While technically assured and possessed of sparkling foot-work, Kain is about as dangerous as Doris Day, as one newspaper critic pointed out. The role is simply not suited to her particular personality gifts. Kain lacks sluttishly sensual credibility; we never believe that the innocently amoral gamine she portrays could laugh at murder, be fatally seductive and generally wreak havoc as Petit's cigarette girl does in his ballet, set to a woefully truncated version of Bizet's suite.

More disappointing was Petit's choreography, not just in *Carmen* but also in *L'Arlesienne* and *Pink Floyd*, the repertoire most Canadian cities saw. He reminded me of a teacher of simple mathematics let loose on a xerox copier. His choreography is all lines, circles, squares and balanced equations, multiplied and mass-produced. His works are done at a fever pitch emotionally and the choreography seems so busy it looks palsied at times.

So we're left with the question: what drove Parisian critics wild? Some speculations enter the mind. First, France has never been strong choreographically. Judging by Béjart and Paris Opera ballets, French dance emphasizes theatricality, obvious symbolism, scenic design and paraphernalia, everything else but choreography. And the ballerina tradition in France is also very different from our North American experience. Female dancers in that country are sturdy technicians, but they lack the refreshingly sweet femininity and grace that Kain (or in her time in Paris, former Royal Winnipeg principal Christine Hennessey and curiously New York City Ballet star Suzanne Farrell) has. Perhaps it was that quality that drove the critics to such gushing superlatives over a performance that on this side of the ocean seems competent, nothing more.

Susan Cohen

## Salut à Jimmy Waring

1922-1975

La première fois que j'ai rencontré Jimmy Waring j'ai eu un petit frisson dans le dos et, je

n'ai pu m'empêcher de penser: "Qui peut bien être ce numéro?"

Donnant l'impression d'un être simple, gentil et bien élevé, cette impression était vite mise en déroute. Non que Jimmy fut grossier et insupportable, loin de là mais, quel être excentrique et déroutant. Au fond quel être riche et personnel.

Par la suite j'ai compris qu'au cours de sa vie, Jimmy en avait intriqué plusieurs soit par son travail de chorégraphe, de professeur, d'avant-gardiste de la danse américaine, ou de créateur de costumes, ou tout simplement d'artiste. A travers le mince nuage du souvenir, je réalise que d'une manière calme et subversive Jimmy aura contribué à m'ouvrir les yeux sur le monde de l'art me forçant à remettre en cause catégories et définitions. A y bien penser n'est-ce pas là l'un des grands rôles de l'artiste.

Ce texte se veut un simple hommage à un homme que j'ai eu la chance de connaître en 1972, alors qu'il séjournait chez-moi à Montréal, à l'occasion d'un contrat professionnel au Groupe de la Place Royale. A ce moment Jimmy revenait de Winnipeg où il avait enseigné à créer des chorégraphies pour la Compagnie des Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers.

Ma chambre d'amis n'était pas aménagée, elle n'offrait qu'un petit lit et une grande fenêtre à travers laquelle, à cette époque de l'année, on entrevoit le centre-ville. J'ignore si Jimmy remarqua l'inconfort de son installation, il ne m'en parla jamais. Grand, mince, le visage ascétique Jimmy ne parlait qu'à voix basse, dessinant son discours d'une main ouverte invitant au doute, à la mesure; son sourire tout en profondeur n'illuminait que rarement ses joues lui conservant cet air sceptique, un peu face à tout. Gestes ou paroles, Jimmy réussissait à vous faire douter de vos valeurs les plus sûres-et ce sans aucune agressivité, simplement par le fait de son être, simplement par ses propos, ses idées, son travail, sa vie. Plus tard je compris que son art provoqua la même surprise dans le monde de la danse américaine.

Dès ses premiers jours à Montréal Jimmy adorait fureter dans le secteur de la rue Saint-Laurent une fois son cours donné. Rentrant à la maison avec ses trouvailles; vieilles fleurs de soie, anciennes dentelles rebrodées, revues de mode des années 1900, il accumulait son "bazar"... ce n'est que plus tard que je compris que Jimmy Waring était le père de la "nostalgie", un expert en ballet et un chorégraphe révolutionnaire en danse.

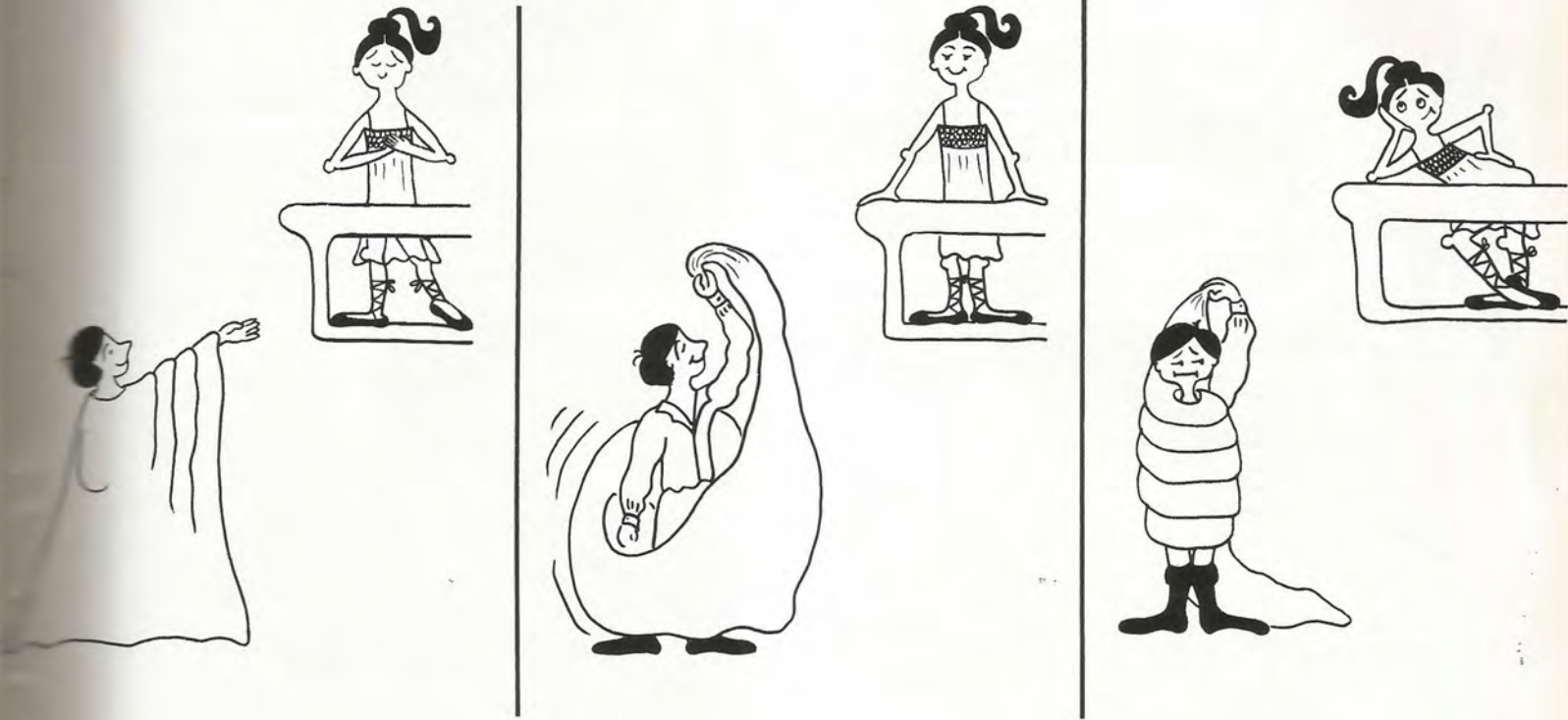
La mode en danse Jimmy ne l'aura jamais connue, il la précédait, l'anticipait, l'aménait. La recherche en danse Jimmy n'en parlait pas puisqu'il la vivait, au jour le jour de son travail, de sa création... à un moment où un groupe de jeunes américains cherchait les voies nouvelles de l'expression dansée, vers les années fin 1950 début 1960.

En 1974 je participais au American Dance Festival tenu au Connecticut College où je retrouvai Jimmy. Il enseignait le ballet; un soir un groupe de ses élèves présenta une série de solos aux sons d'un orchestre silencieux dirigé par Bill Littler de Toronto. Il se pourrait fort qu'au cours de sa vie d'artiste Jimmy ne fut jamais décontenancé; cependant il aura toujours été seul. L'impression qui se dégageait de cette série de solos dansés par

Continued on page 35



# Romeo and Juliet Balcony Scene



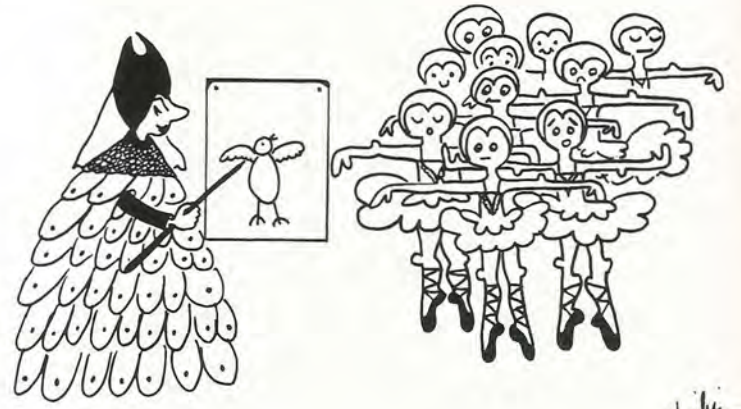
From the Pen of Vicki Bertram







Giselle "He said that he loved me and now I find out he's a duke and engaged to this countess Bathilde!"



*Uchi*

Swan Lake (Black Queen's Flying School)



The Sleeping Beauty ("Rose Adagio")

La Sylphide





# Noticeboard



Sylvie Kinal-Chevalier in Nault's *Incoherence*.

## Double Coup for Les Grands

•••• Les Grands Ballets Canadiens scored a double coup at the Eighth International *Ballet Competition in Varna*, Bulgaria this year: Sylvie Kinal-Chevalier captured the silver medal in the women's junior division and LGBC choreographer Fernand Nault won the choreography prize for his modern ballet, *Incoherence*, which Kinal-Chevalier danced. At 16, the youngest member of the company (and a graduate of the professional program), Kinal-Chevalier also performed several classical variations. She is actually the third Canadian to place at Varna. Former National Ballet principal Martine van Hamel took the gold in 1966 and current NBC principal Nadia Potts stood fourth in the senior women's section in 1970. LGBC founder Ludmilla Chiriaeff was a member of the prestigious Varna jury this year.

## Moscow Beckons

•••• The quadriennial *Moscow Ballet Competition* is on again in 1977. That's the same contest in which Karen Kain and Frank Augustyn spun gold for their pas de deux performance in 1973. If you're interested in taking part, write to the Dance in Canada office for further information and applications.

## CORD Conference

•••• The Committee on Research in Dance (CORD), the international multidisciplinary organization for dance research, holds its *fifth biennial conference* in Philadelphia (Nov. 11-14). Among those

appearing in the program is York University's Sandra Caverly who is preparing a book on Bournonville schools in Benesh notation.

## Speaking About Ballet . . .

•••• In conjunction with its 25th anniversary, the National Ballet has organized a big *International dance conference* (Nov. 15, 16). The theme? *Ballet: Classical and Contemporary - the next 25 years*. Among the Canadians slated to take part are Toronto critic William Littler, NBC's Veronica Tennant, CBC producer Norman Campbell and the Canada Council's Timothy Porteous.

## DIC Conference '76

•••• *Dance in Canada Conference '76* was the largest to date — more than 400 attended in Halifax in August. Among 25 companies presenting works were Les Grands, the Royal Winnipeg, Toronto Dance Theatre, Regina Modern Dance Works, the Contemporary Dancers of Winnipeg, Dancemakers, Entre-Six, the Newfoundland Dance Theatre and Nouvelle Aire. There were also performances of highland dancing (world champion Linda Rankin), East Indian (Menaka Thakkar), ballroom and Mexican. The seminars drew several important guests: *Toronto Star* critic William Littler chaired the critics' panel; the artistic directors of most Canadian modern and ballet companies spoke at forums on artistic policy; noted dance therapist Julianna Lau led sessions in her field; Dr. David Drum lectured on dancers' injuries and their prevention; and British choreographer Geraldine Stephenson (she did the dances for the BBC television serials *War and Peace* and *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*) demonstrated historical dance forms and gave delightful talks on the trials and tribulations of choreography for the small screen. If you're sorry to have missed this conference, the next is in Winnipeg next August •••• Charles Lussier, *director of the Canada Council*, chose the conference to introduce himself to the dance community and tried to allay some of the worries of dancers about Council's attitudes •••• The *new board of directors* of Dance in Canada, elected at the annual membership meeting in Halifax, has some new and some old faces: Murray Farr (chairman), Iris Garland (vice-chairman), Brian Macdonald (vice-chairman), Dr. Roger Jones (treasurer), Robert Greenwood (secretary), Lawrence Adams, Mary-Elizabeth Bayer, Gerry Eldred, Maria Formolo and Lyse George. Grant Strate is on the board ex-officio.

## Company Tidbits

•••• *Les Grands* has added to its corps, bringing the total number of dancers to 53 this year. The company will show the second act of *Swan Lake* this fall, first stage in a proposed reconstruction of the original 1895 version. LGBC will be the second company in Canada to have the full-length *Swan Lake* in its repertoire (NBC does the Erik Bruhn version). LGBC will be retiring its *Nutcracker* this season, an unusual step since it is a proven money-maker. It has also announced plans to travel far afield next summer — South America •••• *Le Groupe de la Place Royal* is trying a bit of collaborative choreography: *Les Nouveaux Espaces*, in the rep this season, is by both Peter Boneham and Jean-Pierre Perreault, Le Groupe's artistic directors •••• *Entre-Six*, now on a hectic touring schedule, heads south for an exciting New York City premiere at the Riverside Church (Dec. 13-19). The six become 12 soon when the directors form an apprentice group to supplement the main company in cases of illness or injury. Grant Strate, on sabbatical from York this term, taught and choreographed a new work for Entre-Six in September •••• *Nouvelle Aire's* artistic director Martine Epoque returned from a sabbatical at the University of Michigan where she studied and worked. She's been invited to go back to choreograph there every year. Nouvelle Aire is continuing its workshop series and is concentrating on new pieces to be presented during the winter and spring seasons.

•••• *Ballet Ys* is on a swing through the Maritimes and Quebec right now. The company is almost all new faces. The rep includes two holdovers from last year — Ann Ditchburn's *Nelligan* and Robert Desrosier's *Desert* — as well as three new works •••• *Dancemakers* will be performing during the big modern dance festival in Toronto this fall and then hits the road for a four-week tour of provincial correctional institutions (mainly low-security institutions for youths and women). Judith Marcuse, the 1976 Chalmers winner, will choreograph for the company this season •••• The *National Ballet's* big 25th anniversary celebration will have Celia Franca, NBC founder, portraying Lady Capulet, in the opening night of *Romeo and Juliet* and in a special Sunday matinee. Also appearing at that matinee are Lillian Jarvis (Juliet) and Yves Cousineau (whose Tybalt will never be surpassed).



• • • • The **Royal Winnipeg Ballet** took off early in October for the first of three fast-moving tours, designed to earn the company's way out of debt. RWB is currently trekking around the western U.S. (Nov. 5-29). The repertoire is a showcase of creativity: new works by Oscar Araiz (*Mahler 4 - Eternity is Now* and *Magnificat*) and by RWB dancer Salvatore Aiello (*Solas*). *Magnificat* is a sumptuous affair involving most of RWB's 25 dancers, a symphony orchestra and full choir with soloists • • • • **Contemporary Dancers of Winnipeg** artistic director Rachel Browne created *Interiors*, based on the poetry of Dorothy Livesay, for premiere on October 29. Jim Donahue, the folksinger who composed the score, sang his songs live opening night. An exciting guest artist, Israeli dance soloist Ze'eva Cohen, will perform *Mothers of Israel* during the CDW Winnipeg season (Jan. 13-15) • • • • **The Regina Modern Dance Works** (formerly Workshop) has taken up a series of community residencies throughout Saskatchewan, sponsored by the Norman MacKenzie Gallery Community Programs Travelling Exhibitions. The company's gaining experience in unusual locations — it was one of a number of dance groups to provide half-time entertainment during a recent Saskatchewan Rough Riders football game. They took the field by storm, dancing Peter Boneham's *Dry Run*. Marianne Livant, the company's founder and co-artistic director, will choreograph her

Les Nouveaux Espaces: Collaborative choreography from Place Royale. Photo: Michel Fontaine.



version of *Peter and the Wolf* for December. RMDW held a series of cross-cultural dance exchange events this fall • • • • Brydon Paige, ballet master of LGBC, has replaced Jeremy Leslie-Spinks as artistic director of the **Alberta Ballet Company** • • • • The **Alberta Contemporary Dance Theatre** completed an adventurous trek through the war-torn Middle East — Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Massada, Nicosia, Cairo, Tel Aviv; they crossed the Suez Canal on a mined pontoon bridge — as part of the 1976 Western Canada Revue. Audiences included the UN peacekeeping forces, ambassadors and consuls. The company is now preparing for its opening season in November at Grant MacEwan Community College, in a series of experimental concerts with dances inspired by sculptures by Edmonton artists. ACDT artistic director Jacqueline Ogg is working and studying in California, London and Paris this year • • • • Ernst and Carol Eder (Vancouver's *Tournesol*) are in residency for the year at the University of Alberta drama department and Grant MacEwan Community College. The two will also appear with ACDT in a new work for that company in January.

• • • • The **Paula Ross Dancers** have converted their Vancouver studio into an impromptu theatre space. PRD tours northern B.C. at the end of the month • • • • Co-directors of **Mountain Dance Theatre**, Mauryne Allan and Freddie Long, are giving workshops for physical education teachers at the Burnaby Arts Centre • • • • **The Anna Wyman Dance Theatre** went to Contact '76, the Ontario Arts Council's annual showcase for artists and sponsors (other groups — Toronto Dance Theatre, Entre-Six, Danny Grossman, Ballet Ys) October 16 • • • • **Pacific Ballet Theatre** has added Joel Simkin, Gaile Petursson and Pat Bond, all from the

RWB scholarship class, to its ranks • • • • **Prism Dance Theatre** is giving workshops and performances throughout B.C. Co-artistic director Gisa Cole spent the summer studying with Merce Cunningham and Viola Farber. The company received a second project grant of \$7,500 from the Canada Council to hire a business manager for the season.

### Kain to Dance at Bolshoi

• • • • Karen Kain and Frank Augustyn will dance *Giselle* at the Bolshoi in January, 1977. To our knowledge, they are the first guest stars invited to dance with Moscow's prestigious company.

### Dancers: The New Film Stars

• • • • It was inevitable that the incredible popularity of dance would be immortalized on celluloid. **Mikhail Baryshnikov is making his film debut** in *The Turning Point*, a film about the dance world starring Shirley MacLaine and Anne Bancroft. Also appearing is ABT ballerina Martine van Hamel. The film's producer is Herbert Ross who is himself married to the legendary dancer Nora Kaye. Meanwhile Rudolf Nureyev portrays the cult figure Rudolph Valentino in the screen version of his life directed by Ken Russell. Russell, you may remember, did a marvellous television biography of Isadora Duncan.

### Les Girls on Tour

• • • • After its very successful engagement in Toronto last year, **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo** makes a return appearance for five performances at Seneca College's Minkler Auditorium (Nov. 24-28). The "girls" — an all-male group of ballerinas — perform hysterical parodies of *The Firebird*, *Don Quixote*, *Concerto Barocco* and others.

### Toronto's Modern Dance Festival

• • • • The Toronto community gets together for the **first modern dance festival** in that city (Nov. 16-Dec. 19) at Toronto Workshop Productions. Toronto Dance Theatre, Dancemakers, Kathryn Brown, Danny Grossman, the Judy Jarvis Dance and Theatre Company and Margaret Dragu's cabaret-style event, *Pickup*, will share the program. The opening night (Nov. 16) is a benefit for Dance in Canada Association. Just before that (Nov. 14), the brilliant young Indian dancer, Menaka Thakkar, gives a special performance at the same theatre.

### We've Moved Again

• • • • **Dance in Canada Association has moved**, although the phone number (416-368-4793) remains the same. Please address all inquiries and correspondence to our new location at 3 Church Street, Suite 401, Toronto, Ontario, M5E 1M2.

### Dance on the Airwaves

• • • • Don't forget to listen to the **new regular Sunday program (CBC-FM at 3 pm) The Dance**. It began November 7 with a



retrospective look at the National and continues with Brian Macdonald talking about his reconstruction of *Swan Lake* (Nov. 14). Upcoming topics: profiles of the Royal Winnipeg, Dutch National Ballet choreographer Rudi van Dantzig and former Graham dancer Bertram Ross. Must listening for dance fans.

### Television special

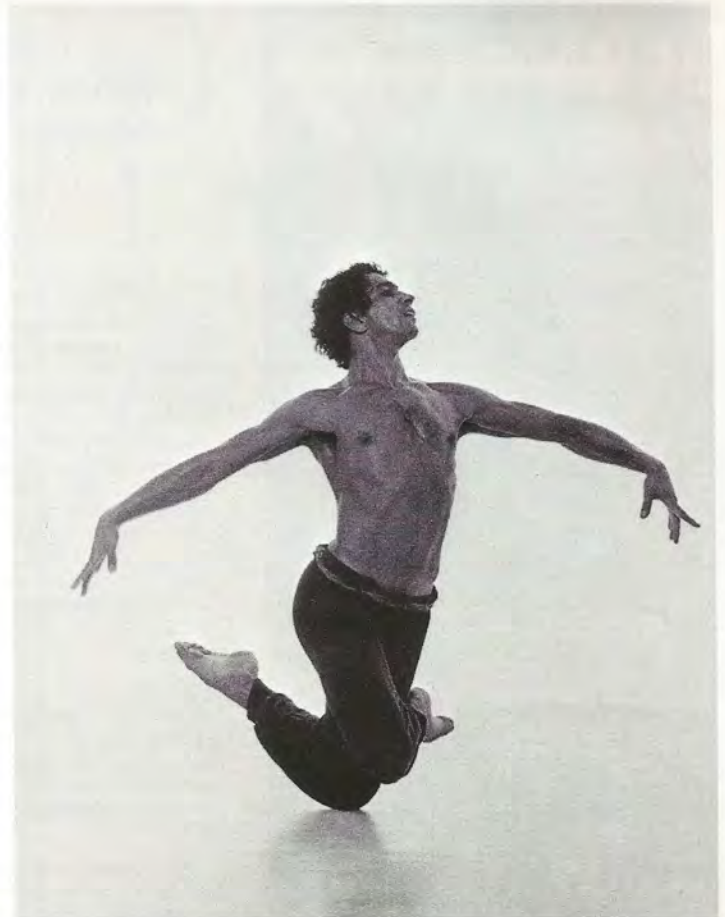
••••• The CBC aired its **television adaptation of *Giselle*** on Nov. 10, preceded by a half-hour special on the company's birthday.

### Awards and Appointments

••••• The latest addition to the roster of **winners of the Chalmers Award In Choreography** is Montreal-born Judith Marcuse. She's performed with Les Grands Ballets, the Royal Ballet and most recently with Ballet Rambert. For the latter company, she created two works, *baby* (1975) and *Four Working Songs* (1976), which was re-staged at the LGBC spring workshop. It was shown by some excellent LGBC dancers at Dance in Canada Conference '76 just after Marcuse received her \$2,000 cheque from last year's winner, Lawrence Gradus ••••• Margaret Dale replaces Grant Strate as **chairman of York University's dance department**. Dale was a soloist with the Royal Ballet for 17 years and then became a senior producer, specializing in dance films, during 22 years with the BBC in England ••••• Violette Verdy, ageless star of the New York City Ballet, returns to her native country to become **director of the Paris Opera Ballet** as of January. Verdy danced in the premiere of John Neumeier's *Nutcracker* for the Royal Winnipeg.

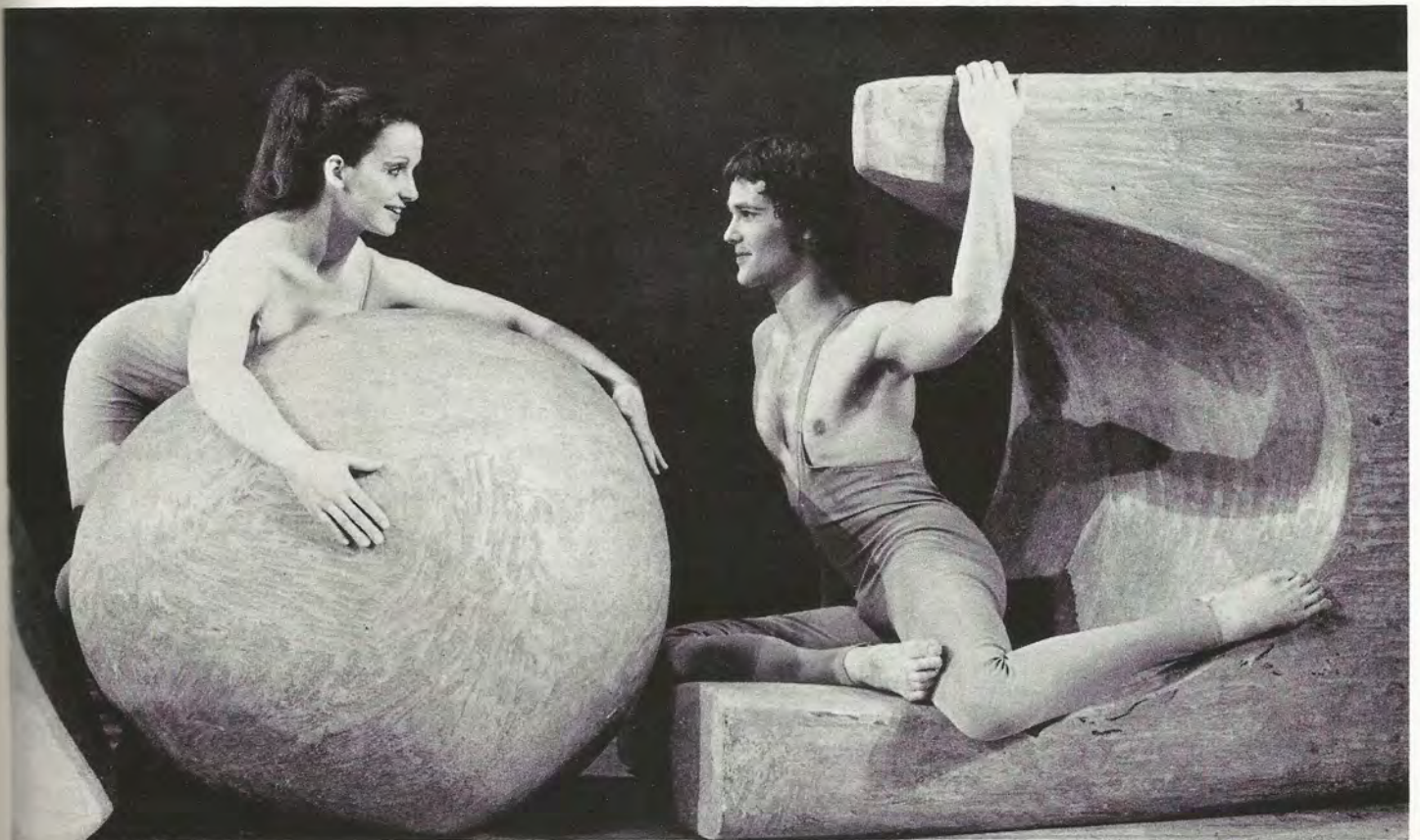
### Foreign Imports

••••• The **Karin Kain-Roland Petit connection** was strengthened in the recent Canadian tour by Petit's Ballet de Marseilles: seven weeks from Quebec City to Vancouver, with Kain headlining in *Carmen*, the Petit ballet in which she first took Paris. The tour was an official cultural exchange between France and Canada, supported to the tune of \$60,000 by the Touring Office of the Canada Council and \$350,000 by France itself ••••• The **Dutch National Ballet** is winding up a return tour of Canada — week-long stands in Toronto (Oct. 19-23) and Winnipeg (Nov. 2-9); in between stops in Kingston, Ottawa and Montreal. The company plays a week in New York as the Dutch gift to the American bicentennial. By the way, two of the DNB choreographers now have works in the National Ballet's repertoire: Rudi van Dantzig's *Monument for a Dead Boy* and Hans van Manen's *Four Schumann Pieces*.



RWB dancer Salvatore Aiello: His work enters the company repertoire.

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## Letters from the Field

To the Editor:

Dancemakers were informed by me in May of this year that all rights of performance of my choreography were withdrawn until new contracts could be negotiated, defining casting procedures, rehearsal requirements and publicity approval. Any performances of my work since, especially of *Arrival of All Time* have been held against my wishes and under promise of legal consequences. The performance in Halifax at the Dance in Canada conference of the latter, in particular, was not cast to my recommendation nor rehearsed by me and went into performance without my consent or involvement in any way.

As the creator of a work, I am really angered by the lack of thought shown by the company in including a piece in performance against my wishes. The creation of a work in Canada does not immediately make it public property, even though it appears to be considered this way.

At present I am unable to continue the legal action to prevent the company making use of *Arrival* and other works because I am in England. But, since I am certain Dancemakers will continue to perform the pieces until court judgement is brought against them, I want it recognized publicly that I am in no manner connected with the company, do not consent to the use of my work without my involvement in rehearsals or casting decisions and am against the continued performing of my choreography by Dancemakers.

I would be grateful if my sentiments in this matter were made known to members of Dance in Canada. I don't feel that I want my choreography to be used as a valuable commodity in the pursuit of funding, booking or related gains by this company.

Anna Blewchamp  
London, England

*Dancemakers replies: Dancemakers had its lawyer review its contract with Anna Blewchamp concerning Arrival of All Time (working title V.W.) and other creations. He advised Ms. Blewchamp by letter (June 10, 1976) as follows: "It is our opinion that the letter signed by both Dancemakers and yourself concerning, amongst other works, V.W., constitutes a valid and binding contract between Dancemakers and yourself under which Dancemakers has the right to perform your work at such times as they wish. Dancemakers will be performing Arrival of All Time at the Cultural Olympics in Montreal on July 19 to July 24, inclusive."*

To the Editor:

This is a tardy but nevertheless enthusiastic

response to Dance in Canada Conference '76 held in Halifax in August of this year.

The seminars, classes and workshops were of the utmost value and I was particularly glad to see so many areas of dance represented. I would sincerely hope that all areas of dance and related arts continue to be explored and expanded upon within the conference setting.

One suggestion, however. There is a great need to streamline the evening performances which have become marathons for participants and audience alike. Undoubtedly a touchy area because Dance in Canada should not be put in the position of making value judgements; i.e., you may perform, you may not.

Perhaps in the future, theatres could be open, like the workshops, and performances could be ongoing. It could be a doubly enriching experience if the performance situations were casual enough to allow the opportunity to exchange ideas among performers, choreographers and audience. Then the conference would become not only a documentation of 'the best of what we've done' but also a sounding board for new ideas and ventures.

By its very nature, the performance of dance is the most obvious aspect of the art. Yet there is little feedback among the participants. But Dance in Canada has the potential to fill this great need.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say that I feel *Dance in Canada* magazine is an invaluable resource to the dance community, if for no other reason than that it offers a tangible identity to Canadian dance.

Sallie Lyons  
Rinmon Company  
Toronto

To the Editor:

Along with hundreds of other Canadian dancers, I spent several days in Montreal performing as part of the Arts and Culture program of the Olympics and had one of the most exhilarating and moving experiences I have ever had as a dancer in Canada. For the first time I felt the existence of a strong, vital and enormous dance community: hundreds of us from different companies across the country were staying at the same time in the same hotel — people who have seen each other dance and finally had a chance to spend a little time together, talk, laugh, find out what a lot we share . . . and, also for the first time, I felt that we were all being recognized, even celebrated, as artists. What an extraordinary elation this produced in us.

I don't remember ever being driven about before in official vehicles with chauffeurs and guides, from the hotel (which was unusually luxurious) to rehearsals, to the theatre, to receptions. Treatment like that, just once in a while, says to us: "Yes, you are valued. Yes, you are unique. Your work, your art, your presence is not going unnoticed. Canada is also proud of her artists." This is not normally apparent. Heaven knows, more often than not, most of the country seems to treat us with suspicion or distaste, if they notice us at all. It is usually almost embarrassing to admit to being a dancer here.



CAPEZIO

Dancing Since 1887



What a joy it was for me to be treated with the respect and generosity I felt in Montreal — and you may be sure my feelings are shared by many, many other dancers in very different dance companies.

It seems to me important, especially in view of the criticism that has been directed at the Arts and Culture program, that its very positive effects not go unremarked.

I personally am very grateful to those people who had the vision to honour and celebrate Canadian dance in this way. If in the future such celebrations recur periodically, dance in this country cannot help but grow richer and stronger and prouder.

Susan Macpherson  
Toronto Dance Theatre

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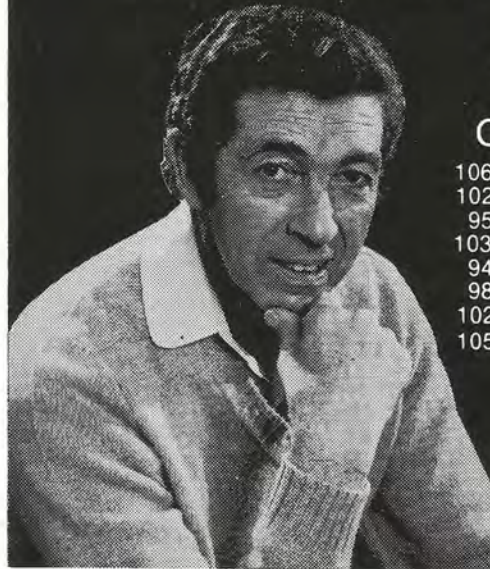
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## nureyev

### The Nureyev Image

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des étudiants après quelques semaines de cours était celle de l'expression franche de diverses personnalités. N'est-ce pas maintenant l'histoire de la danse américaine qui nous enseigne que Jimmy, avant même l'existence du Judson Dance Theater, soit à travers la fondation du "Dance Associates" offrit la possibilité à tant de jeunes de s'exprimer: signalons seulement Paul Taylor, Yvonne Rainer, Deborah Hay... tout comme au Connecticut. Je réalise avec l'expérience que les artistes importants jouent toujours le rôle de catalyseur. Jimmy fut un artiste fort au point de ne jamais craindre la compétition... même à New-York. Il n'est pas toujours facile de souligner où Jimmy a influencé, qu'est-ce qu'il a apporté en propre, mais une réponse spontanée s'est offerte peu après sa mort; des grands de la danse moderne américaine ont organisé au Judson Church une soirée spectacle en souvenir de Jimmy. C'était leur témoignage. Jimmy n'aura jamais fait les manchettes artistiques même s'il travailla beaucoup et souvent avec des artistes très connus; à sa manière il s'était élevé justement au-dessus du babillage et de la reconnaissance des pseudo-connaisseurs. Il précéda, il ouvrait des portes, des voies. Dans l'histoire serrée de la danse américaine il assurait une transition indispensable. Si peu le savent. Un soir de l'été dernier sous un ciel grec au million d'étoiles je sirotais un verre de brandy Metayas en compagnie de quelques amis, soudain je me rappelai que c'était

Jimmy qui m'avait fait connaître ce brandy lors de son séjour à Montréal, le discours se porta sur lui, sur son souvenir. Il se dégagea de ces propos un grand sentiment d'affection.

René Picard

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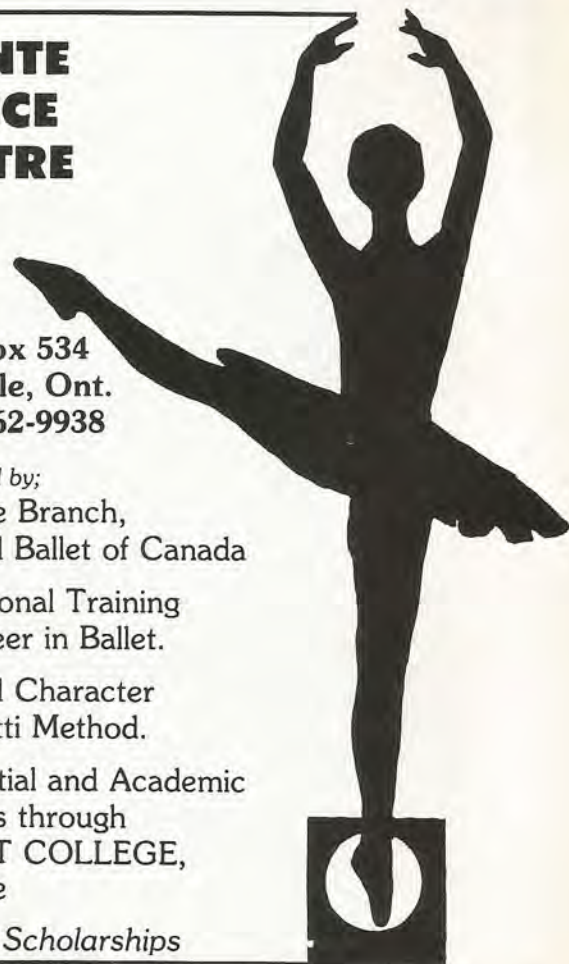
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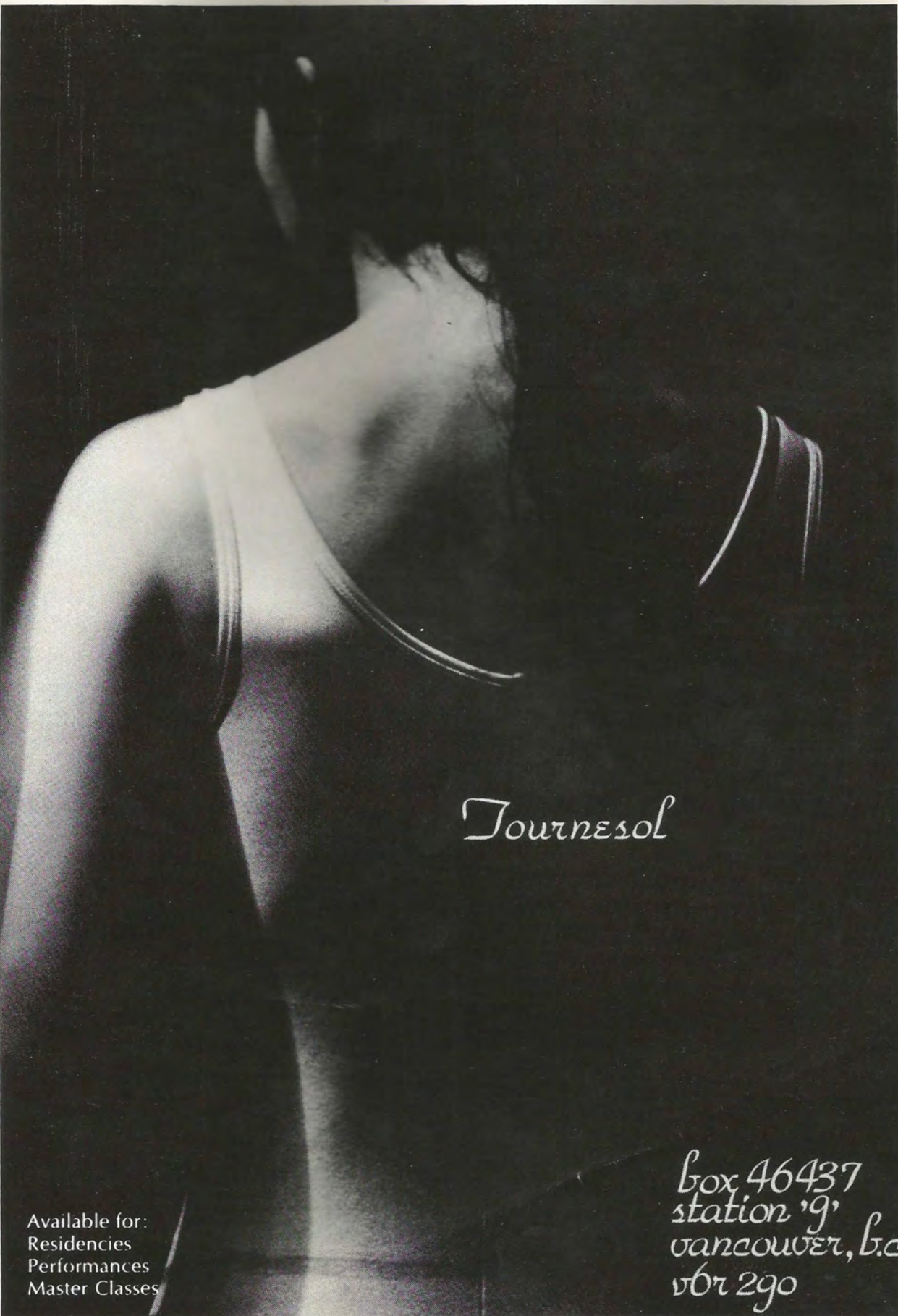


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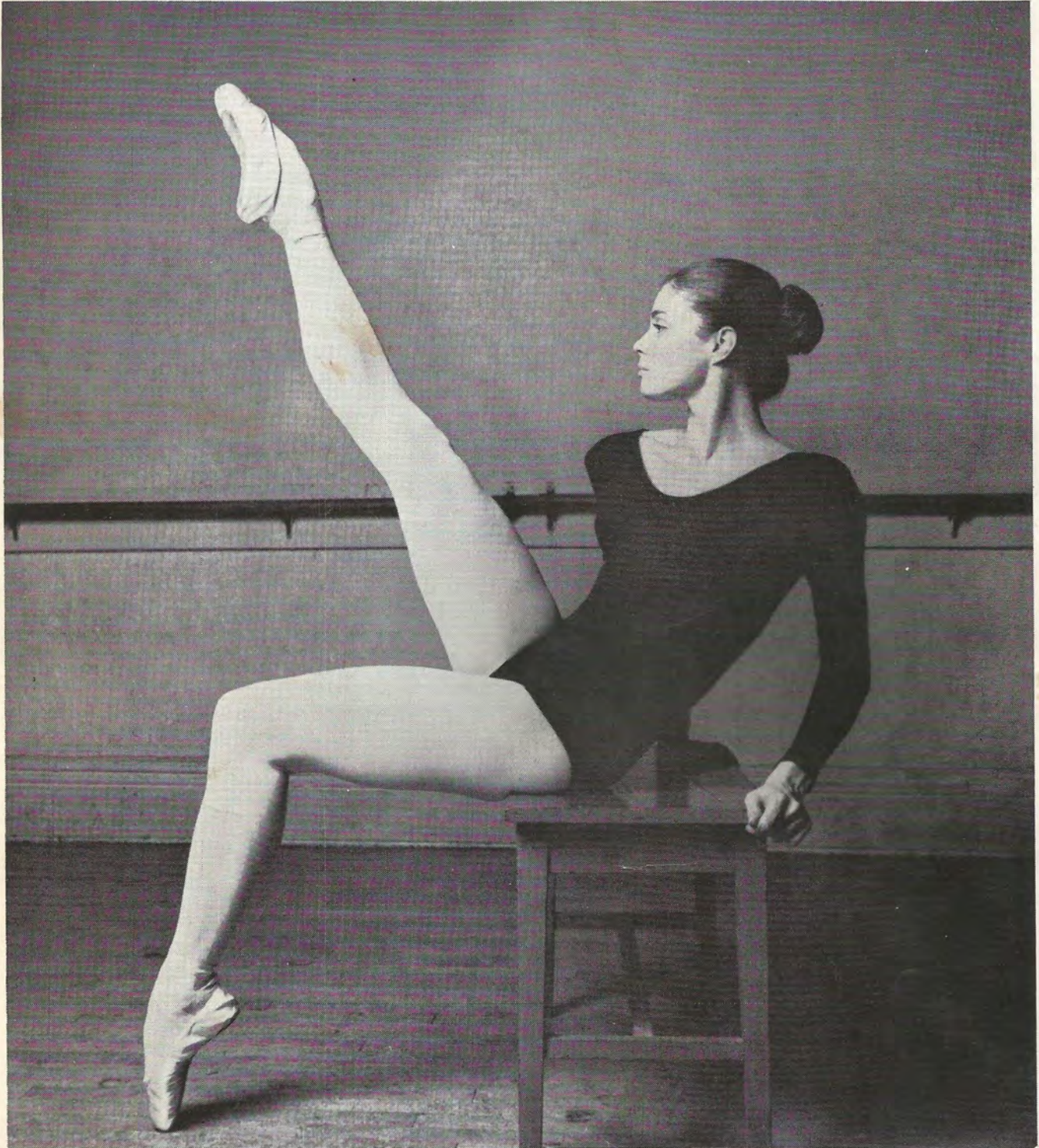
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