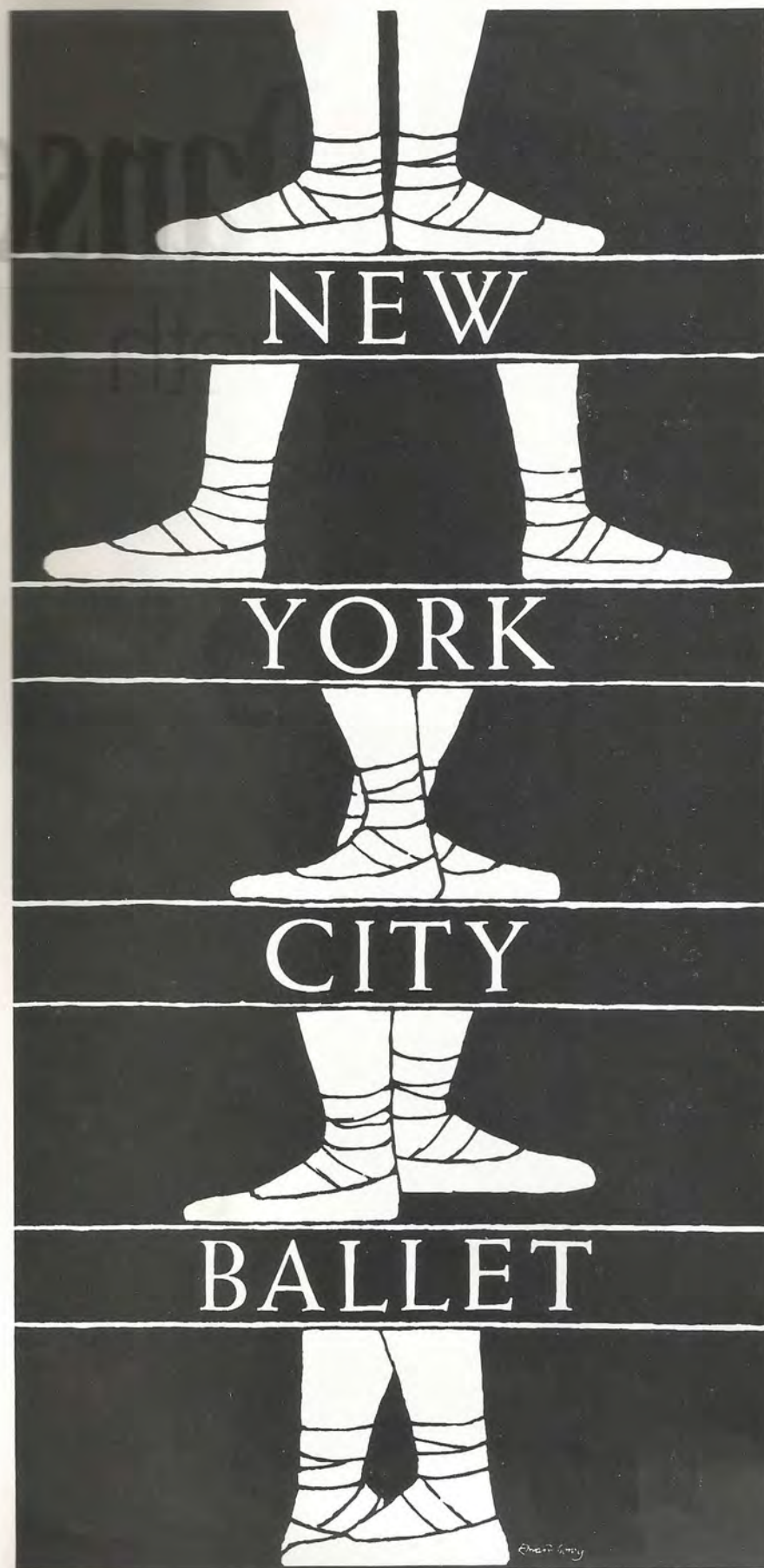


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ISSUE NUMBER 19
SPRING 1979 PRINTEMPS

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Cuban Dance Festival

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Grant Strate

'I dance the things that move my life'

MARGIE GILLIS
Michael Crabb

TRAINING THE DANCER: VII

The Arms in Motion

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The Crunch Cometh

DWINDLING FUNDS FOR BALLET

IN REVIEW

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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COVER: Karen Tessmer and Raymond Smith of the National Ballet of Canada in Sir Frederick Ashton's *The Two Pigeons*, first performed by the company, February 28, 1978. Photograph by Andrew Oxenham.

PHOTO CREDITS

Tom Taylor, p. 6; Ormsby Ford, p. 7; Jack Udashkin, pp. 9, 10; Andrew Oxenham, p. 20; Ben Holzberg, p. 22; Deni Eagland, p. 27; United Artists p. 28.

Dance in Canada is published quarterly in Toronto, Canada by *Dance in Canada Association*.

The publication *Dance in Canada* is included with membership in *Dance in Canada Association*.

Dance in Canada Association is registered as charitable organization number 00441-22-13. Donations are tax deductible.

The views expressed in the articles in this publication are not necessarily those of *Dance in Canada*. The publication is not responsible for the return of unsolicited material unless accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Dance in Canada publishes in the language of origin, English or French. We will be returning to our complete bilingual format whenever funds become available.

Subscription: \$7.50 per year. Single copy \$2.00.

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Back issues of *Dance in Canada* are available in microfilm from Micromedia Limited, Box 502, Station 'S', Toronto, Ontario M5M 4L8.

ISSN 0317-9737

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Danse au Canada est publiée trimestriellement à Toronto, Canada par l'*Association de la Danse au Canada*.

L'*Association de la Danse au Canada* est enregistrée comme organisme bénéficiaire. Le numéro d'enregistrement est 00441-22-13. Les dons faits à l'association seront admis en déduction.

Les membres de l'*Association de la Danse au Canada* recevront d'office le revue *Danse au Canada*.

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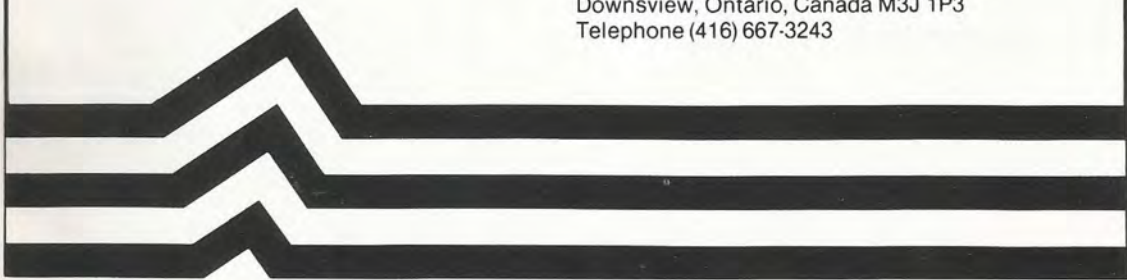
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Hanging Loose in Havana

Lauretta Thistle at the 1978 Cuban Dance Festival

The biennial dance festival in Cuba (last held in 1978, from late October to mid-November), is an event worth keeping your eye on. First, it gets you to a warm climate in what is usually a miserable season for Canada. Second, this is a festival still trying to find its identity.

It's an international festival. It's built around the 30-year-old National Ballet of Cuba, but it does bring in guests, and not just from socialist countries. The Cuban company is not wealthy (it is said to be half a million dollars in debt, in hard currency), so it does not spend large sums importing foreign companies, but rather, brings in soloists, pairs of dancers, choreographers, and some critics and special friends.

Whether Cuba (for that, read Alicia Alonso) is ready yet to open the festival freely to tourists is questionable. Better organization and advance publicity about programmes, and above all, availability of tickets, are prime requisites before the dance world will flock to Cuba.

A group of Quebeckers, booking a tour supposedly built around this festival, were told they could get tickets any night they wanted them, as well as special transportation to and from their beach resort in Megano, about a 30-minute bus ride from Havana. This arrangement did not function very often.

I had gone to Cuba with this tour, prepared to buy my tickets, but within a day realized that it was not going to work, and had to seek out emergency routes to getting press accreditation, and, incidentally, moving into the festival hotel, the 'Havana libre', so that I could keep up with the fast-changing schedule. There were many worthwhile daytime events: rehearsals or classes (Youskevitch gave an excellent class—at only five minutes' notice), press conferences and learned lectures, or seminars, or panel conferences, with contributors such as Walter Terry, Ann Barzel, and South American and European journalists.

When Canadian tourists turned up on their own at the two box offices of the García Lorca Theatre and the Mella, they were told flatly, 'No tickets'.

The Mella box-office attendant suggested that it might be a good idea to hover around the doors at five o'clock, in case any tickets were turned in. Presumably the Canadians were to do this 'on spec', then find the two buses which would take them to their dinner in Megano (paid for in the package tour), then take two buses back to the theatre. Taxis in Megano? The promises range in descending order: ten minutes; five minutes; never.

Cubans who were assigned as interpreters to visiting choreographers or dancers said that they'd not been able to buy tickets for their families. Yet on many nights, ex-

cept when Alonso was dancing, there were empty seats. Various theories were propounded for this—blocks of tickets were given out to party members, to factory workers, or labourers, who then did not turn up.

Press representatives from other countries, who had only press cards, would be assigned to seats by ushers, only to be 'bumped' by a family of Cubans bearing tickets with numbers for those very seats.

So, if you do go to a future Cuban festival, be prepared to hang loose and stay flexible. Don't believe the promotional brochure handed you by the travel agency—half the dancers mentioned won't be there. But be prepared: the curtain usually goes up on time at 8.30 p.m.

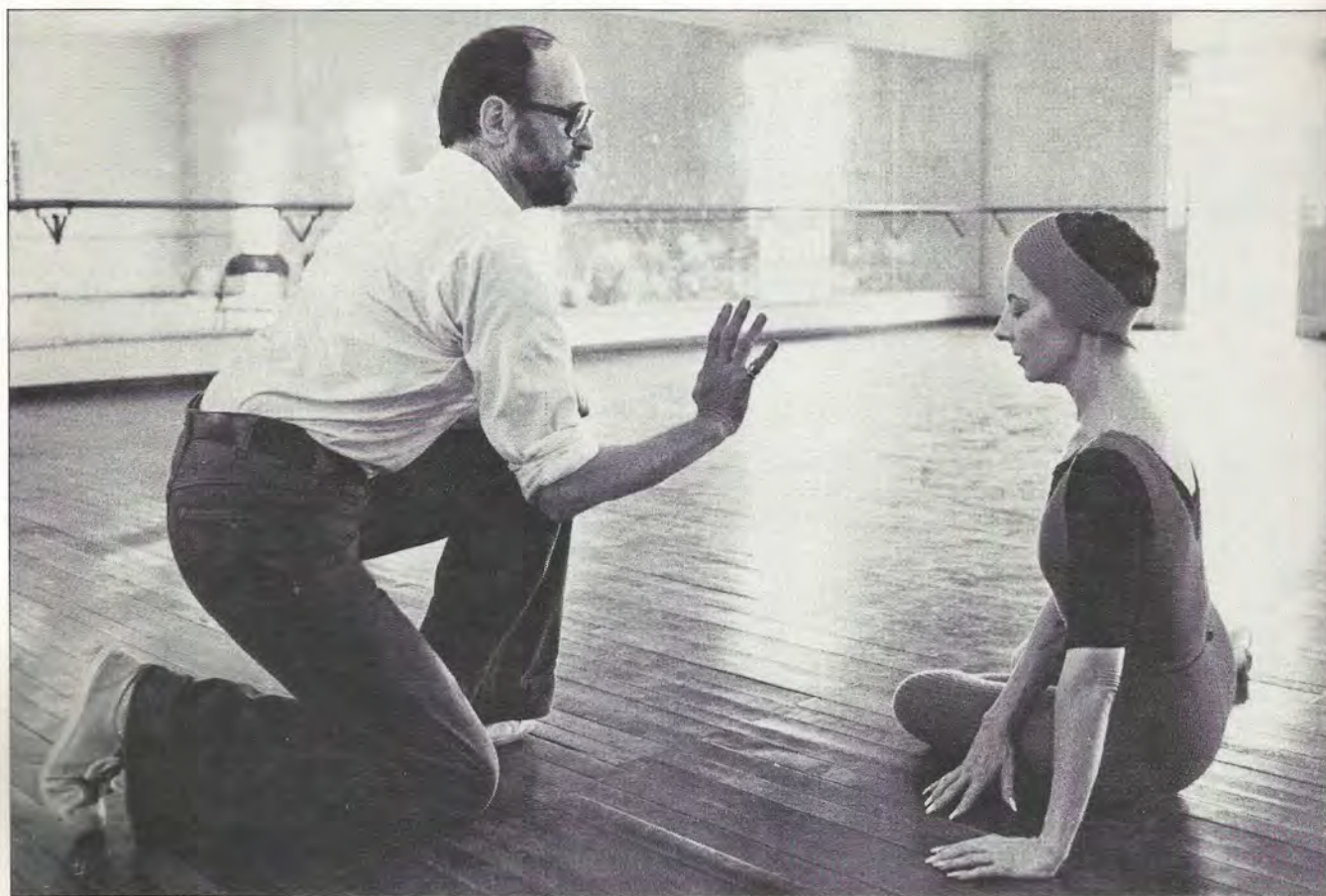
Havana sees its own ballet companies perform all year round—about eight times a month—but with all these visiting artists promised, it is not surprising to see a small black market in tickets flourishing near the box offices.

What the visitor sees (I was there for the first week), is, first, a fair sampling of the Cuban repertory. Thus, you could watch three performances of an interesting production of *Giselle*, and the *Carmen* created to the Bizet-Schredrin score. Alonso herself dances in both of these. You can see Alonso choreography in *Genesis*, an elaborate but rather distasteful depiction of the reproductive process, amid masses of shimmering plastic streamers; and you can see Antonio Gades' *Blood Wedding*, which is hardly ballet, but a fairly tense drama, (except for a final duel which goes on too long) involving Spanish-style movement and mime.

But what of the visiting artists, and the premieres? Since it's not made easy for tourists to witness the festival, we can perhaps assume that the main object of the festival is to keep Cubans abreast of developments abroad. But you have to keep in mind that many of the promised choreographers and dancers did not appear.

Some of the guests brought conventional showpieces. There was the opportunity to see two different European couples tackling the *Don Quixote Pas de Deux*; and though the Hungarians have no long tradition in classical ballet, Ildiko Ponter and Gebor Hevehazy proved to have more style than their Roumanian counterparts. If you were lucky, you could see a couple of Cuba's principal soloists, Josefina Mendez and Andres Williams, performing the same work with still more style.

But the visitors didn't limit themselves to pot-boilers. I dropped around to the Mella Theatre one morning and found Maina Gielgud (who's danced with Béjart, the Royal and the Festival Ballets, and is now free-lancing) wearing a peacock skirt and working on a solo, *Orgullo (Pride)*, created by Dame Ninette de Valois for herself



Brian Macdonald with Alicia Alonso

when she was with the Diaghilev ballet. How on earth did this obscure item get to Cuba? Well, it seems that in 1977 the new Spoleto Festival of Charleston, South Carolina, was scouring the earth for dance pieces using Scriabin music. Someone remembered this solo, and de Valois taught it to Miss Gielgud. So one festival feeds another.

Gielgud also did a Béjart solo, *Forma e linea*, to music by Pierre Henry, and she and her partner Jonathan Kelly were to dance the *Black Swan Pas de Deux*.

What did the Cubans see of American ballet? Well, early in the festival, Judith Jamison danced her famous solo *Cry*. Jerome Robbins sent his ballet *In the Night*, to Chopin nocturnes. During the first week, Eleanor d'Antuono of American Ballet Theatre gave a fine performance of *Kinderscenen*, by Paul Mejia, with the Schumann music played on stage.

Of the world premieres from Latin American choreographers, I saw half of a pedestrian solo choreographed by Ivan Tenorio using the most popular of the Villa-Lobos *Bachianas Brasileiras*; (only half of it because I was in a box far to the side; perhaps the other half was extraordinary!).

Gloria Contreras, of Mexico, contributed *Gravitational*, an uneventful group dance to an undistinguished electronic score of squeaks and hisses. The reaction was cool. Cuban audiences, one deduces, are mature and sophisticated enough to be confident about their likes and dislikes.

Hilda Riveros, a Chilean choreographer, had more than one work scheduled. The one I caught at a rehearsal, *Positron*, used a pounding, percussive score, and the

almost-unison movement assigned to the two Cuban dancers, Mirta García and Caridad Martinex, was presumably supposed to be crisp and aggressive. The bodies and temperaments of the two girls were, however, so different that it was like looking at two different solos simultaneously. García's thin, lean body made the movement look more classical, while Martinez's well-rounded body and more phlegmatic temperament gave quite a different slant on the work. Question: was this ambiguity deliberate, and really the point of the work?

Very little really experimental work from Europe was on display in that part of the festival I saw. True, there was a touch of Alwin Nikolais in the plastic womb that appeared in the Finnish choreographer Margareta von Bahr's ballet, *El Milgrado de la Vida* (*The Miracle of Life*). It was disconcerting, however, to see that the beautiful blonde twins, Ritta and Soile Heinonen, who eventually emerged, were wearing toe-shoes. What an uncomfortable pregnancy, with wooden blocks pounding your abdomen for the final four months! Surely this was a ballet for bare feet.

The other ballet, *Dobles Realmente*, again by von Bahr for the Heinonen twins, was mildly funny at first, when the twin who was supposed to be doing mirror image work, behind the bar, mischievously rebelled. But the centre work which followed was not demanding enough to show off their virtuosity, beyond proving what good extensions they have.

I saw them dance these ballets twice and began to wonder about the oppressive psychological effect of always dancing as twins. I was reminded of Elisabeth Kuebler-Ross, who, when about 15 years old, substituted

for her twin sister on a date. She had been briefed on how far her sister had allowed the boyfriend to go, but when she realized the boy didn't know she was a different person she was so disturbed she left home.

Of the new ballets set on the Cuban company, one of the most impressive was *Rara Avis*, by Cuba's own Alberto Mendez. It uses rather hackneyed music by Handel (even the celebrated *Largo*) and it has no plot, except that a different bird (ballerina with headdress) is used for each of the three movements, and a large or small male corps accompanies each one.

The first ballerina, Cristina Alvarez, seems to need protection (though sometimes the situation aspires to the abstraction of Ashton's *Monotones*). The second, Mirta García, whose music uses a perky *positiv* organ solo, is pert and vivacious. This movement was the favourite with the audience. I preferred the third, when Rosario Suarez, in plumed headdress, dominated a large group of men, and was carried off with her body held in a beautiful triumphant curve. The turmoil and strife are implied, rather than spelled out, and we're not encouraged to think of anything as crude as Amazonian subjugation of men. The regality of Suarez banishes banality, and Mendez knows how to use masses of bodies to good effect.

The Canadian contribution to the festival was large and has been well publicized. Montreal choreographer Fernand Nault provided solos and a pas de deux, and he was well served by Sylvie Kinal-Chevalier and Jacques Drapeau. Annette av Paul and David La Hay, also of Montreal, danced the balcony pas de deux from Brian Macdonald's *Romeo and Juliet*, with the Shakespearean text read in English.

Macdonald also created two new works for the Cubans, a pas de deux, *Remembrances*, (music: Tchaikovsky - Arensky), danced on opening night by Alicia Alonso and her partner Jorge Esquivel, and a work for the company, *Prologue*. I missed *Remembrances*, but I am told it was a loving tribute to Alonso's achievements with perhaps a veiled hint that she stop dancing. Apparently she danced it well: but nobody believes she will quit!

As for *Prologue*, which I saw only at a rehearsal, it is a distillation of the Othello story and differs from the José Limon pas de quatre in that it uses a large corps, including Alonso's grandson, Ivan. The Desdemona, Amparo Brito (wife of Jorge Esquivel) is enchanting. Andres Williams, the Othello, is right for the role in that he is big, black and burly, but at the rehearsal stage was still having to develop

more subtlety and nuance in projecting his affection. This ballet will probably be brought by the Cuban company to the Met in New York, to Washington and, possibly, to Toronto this spring.

The major events of the festival were the political statement made opening night, and the evening when Alonso danced the 35th anniversary performance, to the day, of her first *Giselle*.

The political statement stressed the achievements of 30 years' work, establishing the ballet in Cuba. However, certain facts in Cuban ballet history appear to be ignored. As Chicago critic Ann Barzel reminded us in a lecture, Fanny Elssler danced *Giselle* and *La Sylphide* in a Havana theatre during the 1840s - on the same spot where the Theatre García Lorca now stands. While the official history of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba begins with the founding of the Ballet Alicia Alonso in 1948, it is worth recalling what Vancouver writer Leland Windreich has recorded concerning a Vancouver dancer, Pat Meyers. As Alexandra Denisova she danced with de Basil's Ballet Russe, taught in Cuba from 1941 to 1944, was briefly married to Alberto Alonso and was prima ballerina of a Havana-based company for whom she restaged several of Fokine's ballets.

The *Giselle* anniversary performance was composed of two carefully choreographed parts: first the ballet - then the curtain calls. After several minutes of conventional curtain calls, the parade of former partners began. First, Igor Youskevitch, with kisses and flowers. Then Azari Plisetski, who was not only Alonso's partner, but a valuable teacher for the company. Finally, that master showman, Anton Dolin, who taught Alonso the role and was her first partner, (in Ballet Theatre). He brought a laurel wreath, placed it on her brow, and knelt gracefully before her.

Then came the showers of rose petals from the heavens. When Alonso moved downstage for a solo call, her partner Esquivel scooped up a double handful of the petals and showered her head with them. The audience roared.

It all lasted for 25 minutes, according to the official newspaper *Gramma* (my watch said 20 minutes, but who am I to argue?). And Fidel (as *Gramma* affectionately refers to Castro) applauded for the whole time, then went backstage for a round of photo calls. It was at once bizarre and strangely touching. The Cubans certainly cannot be faulted for wanting a sense of theatrical occasion.



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Grant Strate

The Unders

As Canadian dance activity continues in new directions and dancers continue to probe the time is well nigh for dance people to look at the plight of the spectator, so a flood of creative exploration. All artists are understood. They feel abused when they are on fallow ground, as they so often are. It implies a sender and a receiver and a concept from one to the other. The audience has a responsibility to comprehend but this responsibility is not greater than that of the artist as sender to convey his concept clearly. Effective understanding of a dance requires audience commitment. The making of an effective dance requires sensitivity to the human condition.

Whenever we see a dance performance we carry with us all of our past experience and a present expectation of what we are about to see. Our past experience is the knowledge we have gained about dance. If we are dance people, that knowledge is considerable but oftentimes our technical concerns cloud aesthetic understanding. We might know a great deal about how to dance and very little of why we dance or how an audience appreciates the dance. On the other hand non-dance people are often victims of shibboleths and misconceptions about the nature of dance and its potential as a communicative force.

If at random, we were to poll 50 people from the streets of any large Canadian city we would probably find that in the public mind theatrical dance breaks down into television and film show dancing, accessible jazz dancing and snobby effeminate ballet dancing. From some people we might get a fourth category of dance; pseudo-intellectual modern dance.

For those people who respond to quick impressions, and that includes most people, superficial flashes and images attach to these four categories and, once these attachments are established, expectations of particular dance performances are determined by them, often to disastrous effect.

From exposure to snippets of dancing on television, in film and as a part of Broadway musicals and sometimes even from dance divertissements at the opera, people associate show dancing with light entertainment, a secondary diversion to the main action.

Jazz dancing is regarded as closely akin to show dancing

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might be seeing images of Loie Fuller dancing in a number of modern dance with profundity and obscurity.

Now the truth is that categories in art, as in life, never quite fit. We can only at best speak in general terms. Every time we attempt to label a dance or a form of dance it eludes us. Yet it is a part of human nature to want to find the right pigeonhole for every one of our experiences.

Assuming that the result of our poll of 50 city folk was as I just described it, how can their expectations, based on fleeting impressions and experiences, cope with the reality

Susan Macpherson



Grant Strate

The Open Eye

Understanding Dance

As Canadian dance activity continues to shoot off in all directions and dancers continue to propagate like amoeba, the time is well nigh for dance people to take a hard-nosed look at the plight of the spectator, so often awash in this flood of creative exploration. All artists are anxious to be understood. They feel abused when their best efforts fall on fallow ground, as they so often do. Communication implies a sender and a receiver and a vehicle that carries a concept from one to the other. The audience as receiver has a responsibility to comprehend but this responsibility is not greater than that of the artist as sender to convey his concept clearly. Effective understanding of a dance requires audience commitment. The making of an effective dance requires sensitivity to the human condition.

Whenever we see a dance performance we carry with us all of our past experience and a present expectation of what we are about to see. Our past experience is the knowledge we have gained about dance. If we are dance people, that knowledge is considerable but oftentimes our technical concerns cloud aesthetic understanding. We might know a great deal about how to dance and very little of why we dance or how an audience appreciates the dance. On the other hand non-dance people are often victims of shibboleths and misconceptions about the nature of dance and its potential as a communicative force.

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From exposure to snippets of dancing on television, in film and as a part of Broadway musicals and sometimes even from dance divertissements at the opera, people associate show dancing with light entertainment, a secondary diversion to the main action.

Jazz dancing is regarded as closely akin to show dancing

with more emphasis on youthful erotic appeal and infectious rhythms.

Classical ballet suffers from a thousand myths no doubt occasioned by its long tradition and relative inaccessibility. The laymen tends to think of ballet, with its lush nineteenth century music, its pointe shoes, pink tutus and suspect male dancers, as an entertainment for the upper strata of society.

For those who think at all about modern dance, there might be fleeting images of Isadora Duncan *au naturel* or of Loie Fuller's voluminous fabrics. Many will connect modern dance with profundity and obscurity.

Now the truth is that categories in art, as in life, never quite fit. We can only at best speak in general terms. Every time we attempt to label a dance or a form of dance it eludes us. Yet it is a part of human nature to want to find the right pigeonhole for every one of our experiences.

Assuming that the result of our poll of 50 city folk was as I just described it, how can their expectations, based on fleeting impressions and experiences, cope with the reality

Susan Macpherson



To make an art symbol, the creator must transpose functional material (in the case of dance, the body) into non-functional statements and these statements are not

They are art statements. I have no deeply into the theory of art; many have dealt with this subject. I will only let anyone who wishes to create an art by compulsion or by calculation, does so if he wishes to communicate. More than a concept or idea is not rational within our words and cannot be explained in any way that if it is possible to articulate our thoughts there is no need then to create the art. Art and communication are important to the success of this communication depends on the artists' objective skill, developed over



When we approach dance we tend to see it as a spontaneous activity; joyous, intuitive. Many dance people who should know about dance in this way as if all the talk about making dances is blown in a quick, spontaneous release of energy. This is not the case and leads members of the audience to expect in order to receive ultimate aesthetic pleasure have nothing more to do than park themselves and let the sea of dance impressions wash over them. In no other field of the arts, except the theatre, do we assume that audiences have a natural understanding of the concepts of the

artists. Some work and some preparation is required of audiences for dance. Without a nucleus of knowledgeable and concerned people I doubt that Shakespeare, Ibsen, Michelangelo, Stravinsky and Picasso would enjoy their exalted positions in the hierarchy of the arts. Why would it be different for dance?

I'm not trying to make a case for an intellectual approach to understanding dance. That would be just as unproductive as the spontaneous emotion theory just mentioned. The best we can do is to try to face up to our natural response mechanisms.

That means shedding many of our preconceptions in order to approach dance with all our faculties healthy and functioning. We must not turn off our minds in favour of our instincts or vice versa. We all have a kinesthetic sense. John Martin, the great apologist for modern dance, speaks of 'inner mimicry' in his book *Introduction to the Dance*. This term applies to our inherent ability to respond to shapes, spaces and movement by our own kinesthetic or body memory. When a dancer moves in a particular way with clear purpose and controlled skill, our inner being has the capacity to imitate that movement and to understand its inner concept. This understanding remains on a subconscious level.

Throughout its brief history, theatrical dance has been given little aesthetic status in relation to the other arts. Many share the idea that dance is part of a composite art, that dance shares with music, story, scenery, costumes and lighting to comprise the theatrical event. Further I expect some would agree that dance has a responsibility to serve by interpreting the music or the story. There is not space now to argue effectively against this traditional stance except to say that none of the other arts ride on the coat tails of another art and that dance must become more

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Jazz dance is mixed with classical ballet and modern dance in hundreds of permutations and combinations. Modern dance has directly influenced the repertoires of most major ballet companies in the world and modern dancers take ballet classes. Classical ballet is often danced off pointe and I recently saw a whole evening of modern dance performed in shoes. We see steaming hot erotic ballet pas de deux and comic modern dance.

It also seems to me that all forms of theatrical dance are striving for a purer, greater abstraction. I regard this as a growing up of our field and heartily applaud.

The great German philosopher and writer, Goethe, once said that all art is trying to attain the same degree of abstraction as is found in music. Let's think about that for a minute. Goethe meant that the sounds that are created in music are found *only* in music and have no other function. Contemporary composers might quarrel with this premise but for the most part throughout history it has been true. Music is the only art form where the materials that comprise the music have no other function. A painter uses paints that might be used to paint a doll or a house as well as a masterpiece. A playwright creates a synthetic world out of the impersonation of real people in real situations. The artist who sculpted the famous David also crafted buildings out of similar marble. Choreographers design from living human material, the body, the mind and the skill of the dancer. The dancer uses the same mind and body to walk down the street, to play tennis or swim, to negotiate the myriad daily tasks he or she encounters.



Le Groupe de la Place Royale

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To make an art symbol, the creator must transpose functional material (in the case of dance, the body) into non-functional statements and these statements are not natural statements. They are art statements. I have no intention of going deeply into the theory of art; many excellent writers have dealt with this subject. I will only offer the theory that anyone who wishes to create an art symbol, whether by compulsion or by calculation, does so because he has a concept he wishes to communicate. More than likely this concept or idea is not rational within our usual meaning of this word and cannot be explained in words. We often say that if it is possible to articulate our concepts in words there is no need then to create the art symbol. So intention and communication are important to the art act. The success of this communication depends very much on the artists' objective skill, developed over long years of study.

Unfortunately, when we approach dance we tend to think we are witnessing a spontaneous activity; joyous, ephemeral and transitory. Many dance people who should know better speak about dance in this way as if all the work which is put into making dances is blown in a quick, sometimes glorious spontaneous release of energy. This is a great misconception and leads members of the audience to the idea that in order to receive ultimate aesthetic satisfaction they have nothing more to do than park themselves in a seat and let the sea of dance impressions wash over them. In no other field of the arts, except the entertainment industry, do we assume that audiences have no responsibility toward understanding the concepts of the artists. Some work and some preparation is required of audiences for dance. Without a nucleus of knowledgeable and concerned people I doubt that Shakespeare, Ibsen, Michelangelo, Stravinsky and Picasso would enjoy their exalted positions in the hierarchy of the arts. Why would it be different for dance?

I'm not trying to make a case for an intellectual approach to understanding dance. That would be just as unproductive as the spontaneous emotion theory just mentioned. The best we can do is to try to face up to our natural response mechanisms.

That means shedding many of our preconceptions in order to approach dance with all our faculties healthy and functioning. We must not turn off our minds in favour of our instincts or vice versa. We all have a kinesthetic sense. John Martin, the great apologist for modern dance, speaks of 'inner mimicry' in his book *Introduction to the Dance*. This term applies to our inherent ability to respond to shapes, spaces and movement by our own kinesthetic or body memory. When a dancer moves in a particular way with clear purpose and controlled skill, our inner being has the capacity to imitate that movement and to understand its inner concept. This understanding remains on a subconscious level.

Throughout its brief history, theatrical dance has been given little aesthetic status in relation to the other arts. Many share the idea that dance is part of a composite art, that dance shares with music, story, scenery, costumes and lighting to comprise the theatrical event. Further I expect some would agree that dance has a responsibility to serve by interpreting the music or the story. There is not space now to argue effectively against this traditional stance except to say that none of the other arts ride on the coat tails of another art and that dance must become more

independent of music, narrative, and other related elements to become fully mature. That takes us back to Goethe's statement about abstraction.

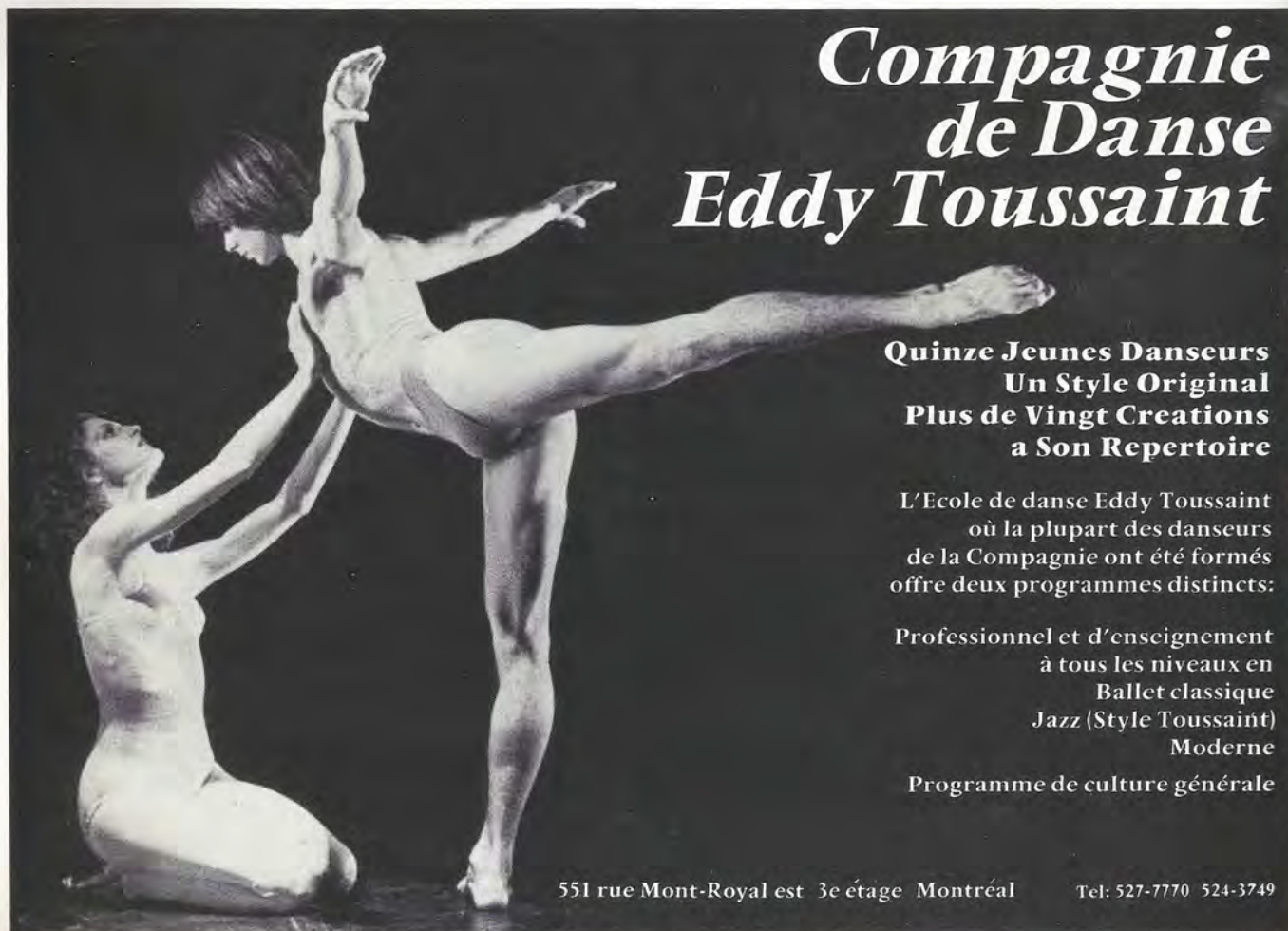
To gain the most satisfaction from dance we must not only keep our inner response mechanisms freely open, we must also regard any particular dance in the context of its conventions. Taste and aesthetic preference are not absolute qualities. They vary considerably within different historical periods and geographic locations. Therefore, the classical dances of India appear strange to us on first viewing but become enriching when we learn something of the conventions of this dance language. Classical ballet mime can appear ridiculous to those who have never encountered this convention before. Even the great Pavlova suffers the buffeting of time. When films of her dancing are shown to a novice audience which does not appreciate the conventions of Pavlova's day, the reaction is painfully irreverent.

There are certain dance qualities usually incontrovertibly acceptable on all levels. Virtuosity is a sure winner if used intelligently. For the most part audiences enjoy feats of strength, stretch and endurance which place the dancer above the man in the street. Grace, clarity of form, logical development, honesty of concept, pleasurable surprises; these are all elements which keep channels of communication open. If the communication of concept is effective the observer experiences an emotional response and this emotion is a necessary part of the whole creative process. But we must think of emotion in its broad context here; as a feeling state.

The dance field will be the richer and the future for dancers brighter when audiences expect to be meaningfully changed by dance performances. When the large and growing public for dance looks for deeper values than novelty, erotic appeal and visual diversion it will begin to understand the full capacity of this expressive form to improve the quality of our lives.

Dance people also share responsibility for a more informed constituency with higher expectations. Our craft is intended to free and increase our potential for expression; to take us beyond technique. More intelligent attention should be paid to our reasons for dancing. Better trained bodies and greater physical discipline should serve our aesthetic purposes – the communication of concepts, be they comic or profound, romantic or mathematic.

Based on a presentation to the Dance in Canada Conference, Vancouver, August, 1978.



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Michael Crabb



"I DANCE THE THINGS THAT MOVE MY LIFE" - MARGIE GILLIS

Margie Gillis exploded onto the Canadian dance scene in the summer of 1977. It was in Winnipeg, during one of those marathon evening performances traditionally appended to the annual Dance in Canada Conference as a sort of penance for the sins of the day. There she was, all alone on a big stage dancing out her anguished soul with a force which sent the audience reeling. She was young, raw, unspoiled – a seemingly natural dancer, or to be more correct, as Kati Vita has suggested, 'a body possessed by the need to dance'.

Although it was that Winnipeg appearance in 1977 which brought Margie Gillis widespread attention, she had in fact been around and dancing for several years: to convicts, old people, children – whoever was willing to watch.

She was born in Montreal, 26 years ago this July, but spent her early years in Oregon until the family returned to Canada in 1960. Her parents were Olympic skiers. A younger brother plays professional hockey for the Vancouver Canucks. A cousin, John Eaves, was World Champion freestyle skier last year and the year before that. Her family's home is festooned with trophies. Although she herself is an enthusiastic gymnast and is currently movement coach of the Canadian National Freestyle Ski Team, like her older brother Christopher, (a leading dancer with the Paul Taylor company), she eventually chose dance as the physical and emotional outlet for the athletic energy which seems to be a congenital trait of her family.

Like many other girls, she was sent to ballet classes because she had a natural facility for moving to music. The classes went well until the family's return to Montreal.

There she found the process intensely frustrating and disturbing. 'We were told to smile a lot and to hold everything in. I simply freaked out. I used to run home from class screaming. It was not a form of movement that was healthy for me'.

So, from the age of 12 and for the next six years, Margie Gillis stepped outside the formal world of dance classes and became her own teacher, exploring forms of expression through movement unfettered by the strictures of classical ballet discipline.

Her problem however was more than one of not being suited to ballet. Margie Gillis was, by her own avowal, 'insane'. 'I was afraid of people. I said little and didn't laugh for years and years. I nearly ended up in an asylum. I must have been a great worry to my parents'.

Margie Gillis survived to discover a way out when her dancer-brother introduced her to modern dance of whose existence she had somehow managed to remain unaware until she was 18. She found a fresh avenue of expression and began to want to communicate her feelings about life.

'My dance is very personal. Sometimes it's like tearing open my stomach and saying "See". I feel that by going inside myself I can touch that same space in others so that we can go beyond, to where we're all just one energy. I guess all my shows are really about love. There's still not enough love in the world. There's too much greed, people starve, they hide what they feel from themselves and others. People are scared of emotional pain'.

There is a guileless naivety about the way Margie Gillis talks of her work. It's almost like a voice from the sixties when everyone was supposed to experience themselves and love everyone else – usually in communes or at rock



Learning How To Die

festivals. But from Gillis' mouth it still has the ring of truth. While the children of the Counter-Culture are now buying condominiums in Florida and eating TV dinners, she exists as a self-evolved reminder of the passionate humanity which believes in the possibility of spiritual improvement through the search for truth.

Margie Gillis went to New York to study modern dance, with May O'Donnell and with the Limon company. In the technique of José Limon she discovered a set of body tensions which were much like her own. Yet, through the process of training, she did not attempt to impose on her body any specific technique. 'Technique is a tool important for clarity of communication but it should be a means, not an end. I do have a sort of technique. I work from inside out to bring my body to neutral – then I can start adding whatever I want. I used to think there was a gaping black emptiness behind me and I kept trying to get back into it. I had a great abandon in my dancing'. She still has it.

Since 1973, she has performed across Canada and in New York, sometimes with others, even in the work of other choreographers, but usually solo, dancing her own things. She sees Canada as her base and is inspired by its dance activity. 'The work is so raw here: it's really attempting to go somewhere'.

Audiences react to Margie Gillis. There is no alternative. You cannot remain passive. This owes less to the choreography, which after a while often seems in itself repetitive, than it does to her manner of dancing. Her body is strong yet flexible. She has a gift for dramatically swift changes of direction and pace. She is daring and takes risks. Her long brown hair is usually left to hang freely but leaps into action as soon as she moves. It becomes an extension of the dance, trailing behind her and providing an echo of the movement she has just made. She confronts her audience with blazing eyes which at times are almost demonic. Sometimes her hands claw the air in despair or are softened into gestures of great tenderness. She uses music (mostly popular and often with lyrics) in a very literal way and approaches poetry with a similar directness of interpretation. In some dancers this would appear immature and simplistic: for Margie Gillis it almost invariably works.

The innocence and conviction of Margie Gillis' dancing, her apparent willingness to align herself with human suffering at a universal level, can become a strain on the audience. People have not only been moved by a work such

as *Waltzing Matilda* but disturbed too. It touches nerves and sensitivities we might sooner forget we had. It is virtually impossible to switch off the emotions and to watch Margie Gillis' dancing as abstract movement. Beautiful as that movement often is, especially the use of the arms to achieve a sense of lightness and the great bounding jumps with which she greedily gobbles up space, the inner motivation always hits home.

Margie Gillis seems destined, at least for the immediate future, to remain a solo performer. Not for Gillis a company dancing her own choreography ('I don't feel I have the right to put words in other people's mouths'), nor appearance in too much of someone else's choreography ('to do someone else's work you have to empty yourself to let someone else enter').

Having experienced her own 'personal transformation', she sees the world and the people in it as a whole 'treasure chest' – one to which she wants to both take and give. Her opinions are strong but she is not dogmatic. The overall impression is one of vulnerability, openness, and deep concern for human values.

'I don't think I'm right and everybody else is wrong. I don't feel I've cornered the world market in expression. I think I do have something to say – but I don't have everything to say'.

This is the first of a new series of personality profiles about notable figures in Canadian dance. If you have suggestions for people you would like to read about in these columns, let us know.

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Rhonda Ryman
 Training the Dancer
 VII

The Arms in Motion

In her last article, Rhonda Ryman explained the structure of the arm and shoulder girdle. Here she discusses what happens when the arms move.

Movements of the Shoulder Girdle and Arm

The arm-shoulder girdle unit can be thought of as a linked system in which movements occur at three fulcrums: the shoulder joint, the acromioclavicular joint and the sternoclavicular joint. In everyday movements these joint actions naturally overlap. Dance training, however, focuses on isolating each and retraining their coordination, for aesthetic reasons. The arms can move forward and sideways about 60 degrees by rotation of the humeral head in the socket of the scapula, without visibly involving the shoulder girdle. Greater range of movement, however, must involve the shoulder girdle with the fulcrum being, first, the joint between the shoulder blade and collarbone, then, the articulation between the collarbone and breastbone, (see Diagram 1). In order to sense both the isolated and the cooperative action of the arm and shoulder girdle, work in pairs and try the following exercises.

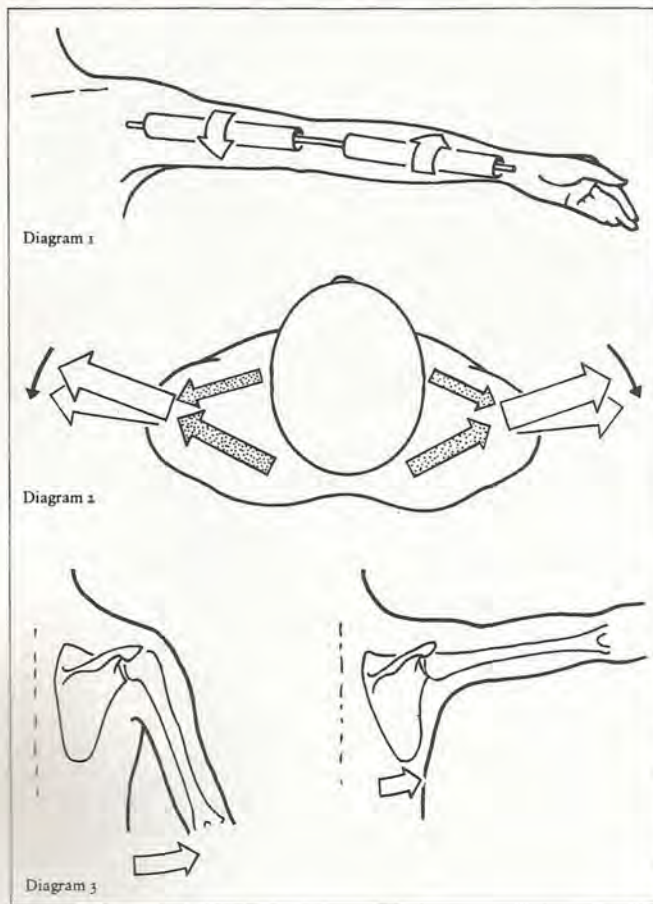
Person A stands or sits on a stool, thinking of images for good body alignment and, especially, efficient rib-cage-shoulder girdle alignment. Person B positions himself behind and places his right palm over Person A's right shoulder blade, the heel of the hand pointed downward over the apex of the blade. His left index finger contacts the outermost surface of Person A's right collarbone, and his middle finger rests just below on the knob-like coracoid process. Person A then attempts to move his arm solely at the shoulder joint, without disturbing the collarbone or shoulder blade. Let the shoulder girdle hang freely in good balance, without fixing the blades. Think of the images discussed in the last issue (Winter 78/79). Sense just how much movement can occur and in which directions. In particular, try to rotate the whole arm inward without displacing the shoulder girdle forward. This will cause the collarbone to press forward against Person B's fingers, and the apex of the shoulder blade to press back against the heel of his hand. Isolated rotation at this joint can be compared to the action of turning the legs inward and

outward within the hip socket, without disturbing hip placement. To sense this, apply the image of bottle caps discussed in a previous issue (Fall 1978). The action of rotating the humerus inward solely at the shoulder joint is critical to the aesthetics of classical ballet, since it causes the elbow to face outward in fifth *en bas*, fifth *en avant*, fifth *en haut*, and their composite positions, and to face backward in second position. This rotation produces a curved line of the arm but, when not isolated at the shoulder joints, is often associated with a hunching forward in the shoulders and tension in the front of the neck.

In order to sense the correct arm placement in second position, continue the previous exercise as follows. Using the images of bottle caps or spiral coils, Person A repeatedly rotates the arm inward and outward, simultaneously opening that arm slightly further outward with each rotation until the arm is not quite parallel to the ground. End with the arms rotated inward, so that the thumb points down and back. The elbow should be pointed back, slightly curved, not 'locked', and positioned just in front of the shoulder joint. Person B should sense no disturbance in the shoulder girdle. Finally, the forearm twists forward without disturbing the elbow, so that the wrist faces front. Wrist and fingers are slightly relaxed, completing the long curve of the arm.

In order to sense the opposite twists in the upper and lower arm, imagine the arm as a long rubber tube with two segments projecting outward from the shoulder, (see Diagram 1). One segment extends from the shoulder to the elbow, and one extends from the elbow to the finger tips. Watch the closer segment rotate inward, so that the elbow moves backward and slightly upward. Watch the farther segment rotate outward so that the wrist moves forward. Be sure to keep the elbow and wrist slightly relaxed.

To sense the integration of the shoulder girdle and the arm in this position, use the image of the arrows, (see Diagram 2). Watch the two arrows (the collarbone and spine of the shoulder blade) feed obliquely into the third.



Imagine a current of water or electricity surging along both arms and out along the third to its very end. Try this image again, with both arms in second position and imagine the current running up a central arrow (the vertebral column) and flowing outward through the fingertips. The image can be further modified by picturing the flow continuing up the neck and out the top of the back of the head.

There is considerable variation in the exact positioning of the arms among various schools of dancing. Some emphasize a slightly wider arm spread with the elbow and wrist almost directly out from the shoulder joint. Others prefer a slightly forward carriage. From an anatomical point of view, the socket which receives the head of the humerus faces outward and slightly forward, analogous to the hip socket which receives the femur. Sideward limb movements, therefore, naturally occur just in front of the median lateral plane of the body.

Ports de bras (Diagram 3)

The novice dancer has not yet learned the sophisticated coordination required in classical ports de bras. As he lifts his arms overhead, the entire shoulder girdle may be hiked upward and thrust forward, giving the impression of a short neck and narrow shoulders. In an attempt to curve the elbows outward, the shoulder tips may fall forward, and the shoulder blades poke back, producing a hollow in front of each shoulder. The following descriptions explain the anatomical actions involved in good ports de bras, and also suggest why certain common faults occur naturally as a result of the normal functioning of the arm-shoulder girdle unit.

As the arms move higher than shoulder level, it is impossible to prevent movement in the shoulder girdle, although the aim of good training is to minimize or camouflage this movement. This masking effect is achieved by stabilizing the collarbone and allowing the shoulder blade to move freely along the ribs, extending the range of the arms. This cooperative arm-shoulder girdle action can be sensed as follows.

Working in pairs, take the same position as described before, Person B lightly contacting the shoulder girdle of Person A. With the humerus rotated inwards, that is, the elbows opened outward, Person A slowly traces an arc sideways, while Person B senses the movements in the shoulder girdle. In a well trained dancer, the collarbone will remain visibly immobile throughout the port de bras, lightly resting atop the first rib. But, as the arm passes about the horizontal, the apex of the shoulder blade will begin to glide outward, forward and upward around the rib-cage. Note also the movement of the knobby coracoid process indicating action at the acromioclavicular joint. This scapular rotation redirects the socket which receives the humerus, allowing the arm to continue to rise. Kinesiology texts state that movement past about 60 degrees occurs as a result of one degree of scapular rotation accompanying every two degrees of shoulder joint movement. A similar sequence occurs when the arm traces an arc forward to the overhead position.

In untrained arm movements, this pattern is slightly different. Repeat the previous exercises with the humerus rotated outward, that is, with the palms initially facing outward for the sideward arc and front for the forward arc. Notice how much less scapular movement is involved. The outward humeral rotation is aesthetically incorrect in fundamental ballet positions and ports de bras. But, anatomically, it facilitates a greater range of shoulder joint movement by changing the relationship of the bony projections and soft tissue. This is comparable to rotating the thigh outward to increase its range of motion sideways. Whereas this action is aesthetically correct in the legs, it is *not* in the arms. But it may help us understand the beginner's tendency to drop the elbows during overhead arm movements.

Once these bony actions are fully comprehended, the teacher can begin to understand how the muscles must be re-educated to accomplish this sophisticated patterning. Stretching and strengthening the appropriate muscle groups normally occurs gradually as correct placement is established, except in cases where poor posture or structural problems have created muscular imbalances. It is beyond the scope of this article to suggest corrective exercises, but several can be found in Raoul Gelabert's *Anatomy for the Dancer*.

One very important point must be made, however, regarding the familiar direction to 'Use your arms from the back!' We have seen how large arm movements naturally involve shoulder blade actions and how the scapula serves as a stable base from which the arm operates. There is no bony connection between the shoulder blade and spine. Strong muscle connections join it to the spine and rib-cage, providing powerful control as well as range of motion. Therefore, arm movements are indirectly governed by muscles of the spine and thorax. One muscle in particular, the Latissimus Dorsi or 'broad muscle of the back', extends from the lower thoracic and lumbar spine, the sacrum,

lower three ribs and apex of the scapula diagonally outward and upward to the inner and upper end of the humerus. Arm action may be compared to that of a whip or lariat in which the force is applied close to the handle. Powerful arm swings are initiated in the back, just as forceful leg kicks are initiated in the trunk. Contrast these to the unsophisticated actions of a young child throwing a ball from the elbow or kicking from the knee.

On a final note, it is interesting to consider just how important the arms can be in improving the dancer's technique. A powerful use of the arms greatly enhances turning and jumping movements, if their action is properly coordinated with other body parts. To demonstrate this, stand on a bathroom scale, which acts as an indicator of the force which your body mass exerts against the ground. Slowly and smoothly lift then lower the arms, noting how the indicator remains quiet. Now, suddenly lift both arms upward. The scale should show that you have momentarily gotten 'heavier'. That is, your body has exerted more force against the ground. Do the opposite action by starting with arms overhead and jerking them strongly toward your thighs. The scale will register a temporary 'lightening' or 'deweighting' effect. Subsequent articles will deal with the specific ways to achieve the proper timing and direction of arm actions. But the first step involves proper alignment and integration of the arm-shoulder girdle unit.



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The Crunch Cometh

Canada Council assesses the gloomy financial prospects for our three big ballet companies

A bleak future for Canada's three major ballet companies was depicted in information considered by the Canada Council at its meeting early in December. Unless inflation stops or subsidies grow, the National Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet will be forced to reduce their seasons of employment to the point at which their survival is threatened. The grace period, the Council concludes, may be as short as three years.

Why the crisis in dance – a sphere in which, after dedicated and painstaking work over a period of four decades, Canada has finally developed performers and companies of international calibre and a large, diverse audience all across this country?

Three-quarters of a million tickets were sold for ballet performances by the three major companies last year, but even this popular success was not enough to avoid serious financial shortfalls. In 1977-78 the accumulated deficits were: \$129,000 (National Ballet), \$326,000 (Les Grands Ballets) and \$303,000 (Royal Winnipeg Ballet).

At a time when all the arts are caught in the double bind of rising costs and falling subsidy, ballet companies are particularly vulnerable. Everyone suffers from inflation, but these companies suffer more because there is no practical way for them either to cut their costs or to increase their revenues sufficiently.

Costs

A ballet company has two kinds of costs: the cost of being available to perform, and the cost of performing.

If it is to be *available to perform*, a ballet company cannot employ talent on an 'as required' basis. Because it must support a repertoire and a daily class and rehearsal or performance routine, a company's payroll is a fixed expense. Overheads such as rent and maintenance of facilities, subscription campaign expenses, royalties, equipment and supplies, costumes, set and property maintenance, and certain promotional costs are also required to maintain the company. Even pointe shoes can cost as much as \$49,000 annually for a major company.

Salaries cannot be reduced. Dancers are already poorly paid. In 1977-78 members of the corps de ballet earned between \$7,900 and \$11,500 at the three major companies. At smaller companies they exist on wages far below the

poverty line – some on as little as \$3,000 a year. Principal dancers – and there are very few of them – count themselves lucky if they pass \$20,000. The Royal Winnipeg gave its corps de ballet a 1% salary increase in 1977-78. Companies cannot operate for long on these pay scales without losing talent to other types of employment or to emigration.

At the best of times, a dancer's career is uncertain and short-lived. Most dancers estimate that 10 years must be spent in training; the time needed daily for rehearsals, practice and studying makes 'moon-lighting' difficult and haphazard; the career of a successful dancer is brief and it can be interrupted or destroyed by accident or injury; once a career is over, of course, the dancer has no job security, pension, or training which can be applied in another line of work.

There are no alternative economies through reducing the number of new works introduced into the repertoire. These 'creation' costs are in any event relatively minor; they range from 2 to 5% of the total expenses of the major ballet companies. Even if the savings were significant, Canadian choreographers and composers would lose opportunities, and audiences would stay away if they could not see new repertoire.

The *cost of performing* includes publicity and promotion, travel and transportation, the hiring of musicians, road crew and non-staff technicians, theatre costs, and local taxes.

The companies are faced with a dilemma here. Most of them can cover their costs of performing, and even make some contribution to overheads, when they appear in their home cities. The problem is that they cannot appear in their home cities for a full season. To find sufficient audience, they must tour. When they tour, they always lose money.

The major companies have toured extensively, and played to good houses in all provinces. Over the past three years, they have performed 270 times beyond their home provinces, and 500 times within them. For the National Ballet of Canada, average attendance on tour has been over 80% of capacity (over 90% at home) and the Royal Winnipeg and Les Grands Ballets have done almost as well.

Next year the companies will probably be forced to cut

back on their service outside their home provinces and concentrate on local markets. For the sizable public interested in dance – and the larger public concerned with the enrichment of Canadian culture in this large country and abroad – the loss will be deeply felt. For the dancers, faced with even shorter seasons, it represents a further drop in annual earnings.

Earned Revenues

Typically, the National Ballet, with the largest audience in its home city of the three companies, covered just over half its expenses at the box office. Les Grand Ballets and Royal Winnipeg earned about 40%.

Could they do better? Probably not very much. Audiences in the home cities are finite, and touring, as indicated earlier, never recovers its costs. Seat prices (now \$17.50 top in Toronto, \$12.00 in Winnipeg and \$10.00 in lucky Montreal) were raised before the 1977-78 season. Despite comparisons with the inflated costs of other goods consumers buy, tickets could hardly be raised again without reducing the audience and total revenues, and opening the dance to unjustified accusations of elitism. Subsidy is essential if the dance is to continue.

Subsidies

Support for the ballet has been provided by the three levels of government and the private sector.

Federal funds through the Canada Council are available for two main purposes: general support, and as an offset to the losses incurred in touring. Some federal funds have also been provided through External Affairs to partially offset touring shortfalls in foreign countries, where the dance companies have been welcomed as cultural ambassadors and acclaimed as artists. At best, these grants come once in three years to any given company.

In 1977-78, the Canada Council provided general support grants amounting to 18% for the budget of the National Ballet, and 24% each for Les Grand Ballets and the Royal Winnipeg. When Touring Office and External Affairs grants are added, these percentages increased to 25%, 36%, and 30% respectively.

The general support grants were increased by only 5% in 1977-78. This was less than the loss of purchasing power through inflation. The outlook for 1979-80 is for a further 5%, which means once again falling behind.

Touring grants, whether from the Canada Council or from External Affairs, rarely cover direct touring losses. The National Ballet played to near-capacity audiences on tours of Canada and Europe last season, but nevertheless sustained a deficit, partly because the decline in the Canadian dollar could not be anticipated when the European tour was committed.

The total budget of the Touring Office will drop in 1979-80. In current dollar terms, support of the major ballet companies cannot increase; because of inflation, this means a reduction in the real value of Touring Office support. External Affairs has indicated that budget cuts will reduce and perhaps eliminate their sponsorship of appearances in other countries. Thus the already slim possibilities for company managers to organize financially viable year-round seasons are substantially reduced.

Provincial grants fall far below federal contributions. In

1977-78, they represented 6% of the budget of the National, 15% of Les Grands Ballets, and 4% of the Royal Winnipeg. Municipalities contributed 4% in Toronto, 6% in Montreal, and 4% in Winnipeg – the latter a creditable figure, given the relative size of the cities involved.

Finally, in 1977-78, private fund-raising provided 11% of the budget in Toronto, 6% in Montreal, and 15% in Winnipeg. A survey undertaken by the Council for Business and the Arts in Canada shows that corporate support for the dance more than doubled between 1972 and 1977. This is a very encouraging trend, but it would not be reasonable to expect total private contributions in the near future to cover the cumulative effects of increasing costs and the reduction in real terms of public sector support.

To sum up, a rational person in another business or profession, faced with the economic prospects of dancers and dance companies, would long since have sought some other line of work. The fact that the major Canadian companies have to the present survived economically, and flourished artistically, testifies to the talent and dedication of company managers, public supporters, and most particularly of the dancers themselves.

Financially, the dance has survived for years on a shoestring. Now the shoestring is near to breaking. No enterprise can sustain the deficits faced by dance companies without some prospects of restoring the balance, whether by increasing revenues or reducing costs. From their own resources, the major dance companies can do neither. Substantial growth in subsidy, from both public and private sources, will be required if they are to continue.

Even in economic terms, it makes no sense to allow decline in a labour-intensive industry which employs not only dancers but a whole range of technical, administrative and musical support staff, and generates additional 'spin off' income in the community. The Canada Council estimates that its investment of \$2.3 million in the three major companies has added an extra \$9.7 million in economic activity.

In artistic terms, the arduous work expended on the creation of a vibrant Canadian ballet for enthusiastic audiences will go by the board. The public at large, all levels of government and the private sector should be aware that, without increased support for the dance, this possibility is all too real.

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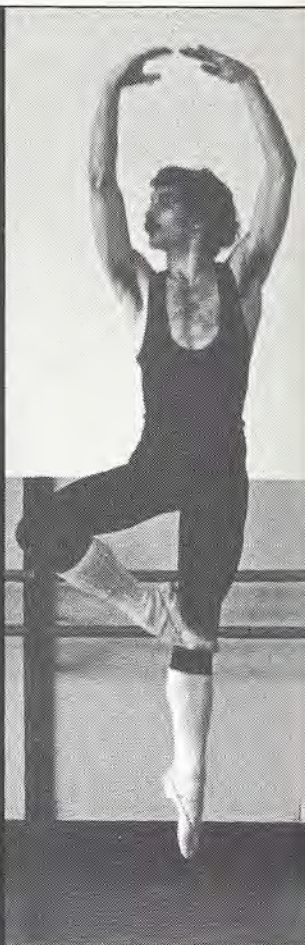
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In Review

Octobre en Danse

Centaur Theatre

Place des Arts

Montreal

11 - 21 October 1978

Octobre en Danse was a Johnny-come-lately to the Canadian dance festival scene but despite initial attacks of chauvinism and acute cases of primadonnitis, organizer Jacqueline Lemieux delivered an encyclopaedic array of 26 different companies in 38 separate dance events over 11 days. Only one artist, Margaret Dragu, cancelled at the last moment and her spots were filled by Margie Gillis and Judith Marcuse, two talented soloists, a genre we see seldom enough elsewhere. Everything else went like clockwork, stamped by Madame Lemieux's graceful imprimatur. Announcements were made in both official languages (a rarity in Quebec these days), there were flowers for the artists and 'Citizen Clown' for unobtrusive crowd control. She revealed a wicked sense of humour in the frequent juxtaposition of dancers from opposite ends of the spectrum and her smile did not falter even when one irate lady stormed out of a performance and demanded her money back. (She got it.) She gave way to craven cowardice but once when her entire Organizing Committee fled into the night at the prospect of having to sit through Groupe Nouvelle Aire. Who could blame them?

The schedule, exhilarating in its variety, was enough to tax a marathon runner in peak form.

Under the aegis of Henri Barras' tenderly nurtured l'Art du Mouvement series, we gathered each noon at the confluence of Place des Arts' impressive v-shaped marble staircase for determinedly didactic samples of things to come. At 2.30 p.m., in the recently completed catacombs beneath Place des Arts, there were workshops, demonstrations and inter-disciplinary improvisations. After dark we all moved to the Centaur Theatre in Old Montreal for 6.30 p.m. recitals of soloists, avant-gardists and other less than commercially viable entities, and stayed on for the main bout at 8.30 p.m.

October en Danse got off to a flying start with an unorthodox gala on October 11. The programme was unexpectedly substantial but conspicuously lacking in

new works. That set the keynote for the entire festival. Afraid to fritter away their regular audiences, companies jealously guarded their small repertoires.

The gala featured celestial bodies from the Big Three: The National, The Royal Winnipeg and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, which won hands down. Macdonald's *Double Quartet*, slightly re-cast and more compact on a smaller stage, still looked wonderful. And I finally caught up with Sylvie Kinal's Varna award-winning solo. This lady is pure dynamite, anything but the *Incoherence* of the title. It's time for a change of scene though. Faint heart ne'er won fair lady anything.

Next day Judy Jarvis proved a disappointment: pure Dada, a series of expressionist jokes. She showed two new works. *The Hairy Edge* was a sandwich. Two girls in exaggerated thirties mannequin attitudes lounged against a table, were draped over a ladder. A long recorded interview with Jarvis about cosmic womanhood ensued ... and back to girls, table, ladder, and a double ending to unbalance us. Jarvis caught the era in the first 30 seconds, but what of the next 10 minutes?

Chester, a Portrait, to Stravinsky and electronic blips, had three girls and a boy in hockey sweaters and Adidas; occasional narration in tones reminiscent of Peter and the Wolf; attempts at horseplay and endless recitations of 'the night was dark and stormy, the wind was howling hollow, the captain told a story, the story goes as follows ...' Humour? I must have missed the joke.

Jarvis' workshop shed more light than her performance on the nature of the choreographic impulse: the circular current connecting dancer and choreographer. She divided her group into pairs and asked them to play follow the leader. The results made us instantly aware of the two lynchpins of dance: interdependence and the calibre of invention. Some people oozed movement through their pores; some were total duds. Jarvis picked the most moronic of bodies for her demonstration but despite that the process was crystal clear: keep a movement going until it bears no repetition and naturally changes into something else.

Workshops were generally fascinating for the glimpses they afforded the lay public into the inner workings of dance.

Although only 420 people paid to get in, their impact was undoubtedly felt. Not all of them worked equally well of course.

The first one brought together choreographer Nancy Ferguson and four dancers of the Toronto Dance Theatre with Doris May, a local artist who works with wool to create great nobbly ropes and bulky carapaces. It was so rampant with imagination that it raised expectations for the rest of the week which were never again realized. The dancers improvised to a home-made soundtrack of crashing surf, twittering birds, African chants and Handel's *Water Music*. Their permutations were endless and extremely revealing, like Rorschach tests translated into motion. There was a timelessness about the experience, a sense of organic growth and of witnessing the instant of creation, framed by Doris May's Norn-like presence, as she sat coiling and twisting and plaiting the strands.

Linda Rabin's consciousness-raising session ('let it all hang out ... feel your thighs breathing ... say 'hi' with your left eyebrow'), conducted in a suggestive, insinuating, almost hypnotic tone, was practically self-parody. Groupe de la Place Royale's workshop fizzled because only two dancers turned up to participate, so they demonstrated excerpts of their work, and talked, instead. Harro Maskow's workshop was a rambling historical lecture, impeded by his fluent but unidiomatic French. He did give a hint or two on technique, for example that movement must be repeated in order to sink in, but no insights. Anna Wyman's efforts to improvise to Marcel Barbeau's painting, and vice versa, came to naught because her method is too authoritarian. The best her dancers could do was to mimic Barbeau, a slight figure who literally danced alongside his mammoth yellow canvas, drawing convoluted lines with a mop dipped into paint.

Wyman's company certainly redeemed itself in performance. Her dancers looked kooky and projected discernibly different personalities. Wyman herself showed great economy of means, imagination not constrained by habit, clarity above all and a felicitous touch that tied up each piece with a flourish.

Deflection (1977) was neat, joyous, bouncy, full of whimsical clown elements. *Quicksilver* (1977) was athletic, symmetrical, fluid, the structure somewhat un-

dermined by a Moog-dominated score. *Two People* (1977), two pools of light and passion, was a pas de deux serene on the surface but fraught with uncertainties. *Tremolo* (1977) was elegance incarnate. Like everyone else this year, Wyman used rope, not as a prop but as an essential design element. The dancers wove giant cat's cradles; were fireflies whirling through op-art foliage. *Sixes and Sevens* (1977) and *Dance Is* (1973) revealed Wyman as a people-watcher with Laban training. Her movements grew from perceptive studies into abstracts and broadened into caricature. The evening was a hit, a hit, a palpable hit – and the audience erupted with the first standing ovation of *Octobre en Danse*. There was a small, still voice which whispered that Wyman is an ice maiden, her choice of music shallow, she is missing an element of essential humanity – but the dancers are terrific, the show is great, what is she doing here anyway? Why aren't scalpers making a fortune off her on Broadway? All she needs right now is a flashy press agent.

Wyman arrived at a point in the festival when I had turned into a dance-logged yo-yo, stricken with cumulative indigestion from all the disconnected bodies, gestures, styles and music – much of it unforgettable mediocrity. So perhaps I am over-reacting. Prior to Wyman the only artist to survive in the mind's eye, uncluttered by overlays of subsequent images, had been Margie Gillis. This was the girl who had made the last Dance in Canada Conference sit up and take notice: a free spirit, a fresh wind from the East. The grapevine was right. There she was: small, sturdy body, cascading dark blonde hair, stillness, growth, unexpected bursts of movement communicating her extravagant pain. Less a dancer than a body

possessed by dance. The young Isadora must have been like this!

And then back to earth with a thud. Or, more precisely, out to pasture. *Ladies with Cows* is an elastic choreographic event which depends for its length on the quality of inspiration generated by a variable number of soloists participating in Jean Pierre Perreault's bucolic theme. One version had eight ladies and ran on – no, that's an overstatement – meandered around for 40 minutes. Another had five and lasted about 20 minutes. The cows, real live ones in Vancouver who herded the dancers off at the end, became slides in Montreal, just a point of departure. Against these constantly changing cowscapes, ladies dressed as Japanese water carriers, accompanied by tinkling gamelan sounds, hoisted skirts, shook heads, reclined – sometimes as cows, at others more like odalisques. Each worked alone, eccentric graces responding differently to similar stimuli. It was an interesting notion, not yet a performance, but it had a certain small charm. True to form, Louise Garfield grabbed the bull by the horns: shoeing away imaginary flies, she brought down the house.

Garfield also teamed up with Susan Swan, a writer, in an attempt to break us of the habit of facile pigeonholing. They were witty and inventive in support of their thesis but the classical mind/body split remained. Swan's contribution consisted of some R.D. Langish, and longish, word games and a crude 'pome'. Garfield stopped the show with a brilliantly conceived *reductio ad absurdum* of what interpretation is all about. She repeated the same choreography to six different taped readings of the same brief John Lennon poem. It was literally insight made visible, worth a dozen workshops. Apart from

that, the show was amusing. Once.

The Quebec contingent, 12-strong, fell into three distinct categories: recognizable dance working in the present, abstract narcissism in some arid never-never land and – Pointépiénu.

Pointépiénu is the brainchild of Mudra-trained Montrealer Louise Latreille and her husband, linked (says the press release) in friendship with moonlighting GBC principal Alexandre Bélin and his wife, Barbara Belinski, Pointépiénu can be described as old hat neo-classicism.

'*Les Dieux de l'Olympe*', the programme confides, 'has, as yet, no real form.' Nor has it dance vocabulary, let alone language. It has five bodies in togas of varying lengths, moving about behind a backlit screen, in front of reflecting foil, disappearing into the jaws of a revolving mirror. The spoken text identified these deities as 'Zéy-uss' and 'Afro-dzitt'.

Later, *Marlbrough Goes Off To War*, a duet for Bélin and Anthony Bouchard, made friends with its simplicity and heart-on-sleeve sentiment but also reinforced the initial impression that this group is fishing in fished-out ponds. I agree, war is a dreadful thing; we would not kill each other if individuals met face to face... but Pointépiénu's was not a statement, only a child's primer of theatrical effects.

Axis is not a cohesive group but a loose banding together of subculture choreographers whose styles straddle several decades. Peter George specializes in ersatz Cyd Charisse numbers; Iro Tembeck plumbs the depths of contemporary neuroses. The good news is Christina Coleman whose two pieces: *Véhicule I*, an austere concentrated duet for two women, and a highly dramatic though restrained trio to Brel's *Valse à Milles Temps*, had form, style and punch.



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The seeds of Quebec's affair with abstraction were sown in the mid-forties by the 'Automatistes' at l'École des Beaux Arts, under the leadership of Borduas and Riopelle. The movement embraced all disciplines including dance and Octobre en Danse succeeded in enticing two of its pioneers back into the limelight.

Françoise Riopelle and a group of disciples presented a single work, *Phantasmes*, which she pegged halfway between theatre and dance. It was surrealist gloom and doom, fragments of words, barely distinguishable shadow people, all adding up to arresting images that could have sprung from Munch, Grosz or Kollwitz. It was meticulously lit and the soundtrack of bubbles, sighs and cacophony of idiot laughter was a stereo freak's delight. It ended, as it had begun, with a girl standing stage centre, peering searchingly out into the audience. It was no use. We didn't have the answers either.

Françoise Sullivan, later in the week, also disclaimed authorship and wished to be thought of as no more than a catalyst. She presented a six-part essay, each section concentrating on a single idea — the pendulum effect, pushed to its outer limits, a diagonal walk across stage by two people alternately supporting and impeding each other. 'Sylvie Pinard, inspired by Rodin's sculpture, *Celle qui fut la Belle Heaulnière*' was, simply put, Sylvie Pinard in a white bathing suit, seated, contemplating her hands. Another minimalist. There was an unexpectedly funny finale as Sullivan, perched on a high stool, with her back to the audience, read out a litany of action verbs, faster and faster, leaving the dancers in heaps of laughing disarray.

Although the festival was top-heavy with Québécois abstraction and short on new works, 6,500 people did come to the two theatres and an estimated 4,000 shoppers paused to watch Karen Kain and other 'treebies' at a shopping centre on a rainy Saturday afternoon. The next Montreal dance festival is planned for May, 1980, thus avoiding a repetition of the conflict with Yom Kippur and the National's annual visit here. Having given Quebec dance its day, the organizers are hoping to open the doors to international participation next time. If budgetary constraints don't torpedo plans altogether, that is. This time around the Canada Council gave \$4,000 for publicity; the Touring Office chipped in \$25,000 for travel; the Bronfmans pledged \$2,600; the City of Montreal donated \$2,000 and La Belle Province gave zero. Box office receipts yielded \$20,619 and fund-raising brought in \$4,900. Private industry contributed flowers, beer and 5,000 free balloons... not quite enough to float another dance festival.



Groupe Nouvelle Aire: *Remous*

Toronto Dance Festival

Toronto Workshop Productions
Theatre

18 September to 22 October 1978

Summer had turned to winter by the time the five-week Toronto Dance Festival had presented 19 companies from across the country. Although the festival was sporadically plagued with difficulties from a lack of ventilation, to an abrasive sound system to a series of late-night shows which apart from Margaret Dragu's *Sunset Stripper's Show* sold poorly, it did manage to draw, overall, a 70 per cent capacity audience. One overwhelming impression left by the Toronto Dance Festival is that Canada's women dancers are its greatest strength and resource. I remember the festival as a series of immensely satisfying performances: the swiftness of Winnipeg Contemporary Dancer's *gamine*, Debbie Smith; tall Anne Harvie who contorted her way through Paula Ross's post partem depression dance *Embraceable You*; the cold elegance of Le Groupe de la Place Royale's Elaine Rudnicki; and the impishness of longlegged Sara Shelton, brainchild of the Halifax Dance Co-op. Another overriding impression left by the festival is how clearly the established companies of this country are divided between those intent on pleasing their audience and those who are intent on pursuing innovation.

The Toronto-based Ballet Ys is a prime example of this first category. One of the few groups who had to turn people away at the door, it performs in a style that is immediately accessible and choreographically simplistic. Their programme opened with *Echoplex*, a work full of bright costumes, genial solos and duets, entrances and exits. The dancers jazz up classical ballet technique with chicken struts and cute postures, all the while smiling with purposeless glee. The one redeeming feature was the presence of dancer Marnie Cooke, who, with statuesque regality, led

the company through the rest of the programme.

Entre-Six is a ballet company with similarly good-natured, highly accessible choreography. In *Dances Formal and Lighthearted*, the dancers, attired in English riding habits, cantered about, assembled to flirt with each other and slap their riding crops against their thighs. The character of their work is better exemplified in Lawrence Gradus's *Excursions*, where classicism and formally patterned sequences contrast with athleticism and calisthenic solos. The dancers paralleled each other's movements, played children's games or moved en masse across our field of vision.

The Anna Wyman Company, although ostensibly a modern dance company, is in some ways similar to Entre-Six. They have the same consciously theatrical presentation and their movement style has strong balletic roots. Wyman's dancers pace with the nervous intensity of purebred racehorses. *Quicksilver* is perhaps the 'definitive Anna Wyman'. The dancers, in patch dyed black and white tights, perform a tortured, aggressive series of movements over a background of constantly changing slide projections. The Anna Wyman Company attracted the same well dressed, middle-aged audience as Entre-Six did, and, whipped into a fervour by the ceaseless motion and pulsating music of the piece, they too stood up at the end to cheer.

The Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers are a repertory company. Moving from one dance vocabulary to another requires enormous versatility and compromises of stylistic purity are bound to occur. David Earle's *Baroque Suite*, for instance, was performed without its intended content. The powerful Graham back from which all motions emanate was replaced with going-on-a-picnic facial expressions of frozen joy. Contemporary Dancers do dance some works that have been choreographed especially for them, Rachel

Browne's *Just About Us*, about a mother's relationship with her daughter, among them. Debbie Smith played the quick-footed daughter who contests and eventually communes with her gentle, slow-moving mother, Rachel Browne.

A handful of companies at the festival, however, were intent on exploring the innovative. These companies were for the most part the least well known and least well attended.

Le Groupe Nouvelle Aire presented a very forceful and provocative programme. Their masterwork *Remous*, by Edward Lock, was an austere and powerful piece. In it seven dancers glide and slide about, shine spot lights at each other, call out the name of one of the dancers and drape their skirts over the lamps to create eerie silhouettes. Suddenly orchestral music cuts through the silence and gives the piece an ecstatic tone. In the end one of the women climbs on a table, removes the top half of her leotard and lies down to sleep.

Paula Ross's *Venturi*, a solo in which Leslie Manning calls on the spirit of Emily Dickinson, is another arresting piece. Wearing an unwieldy plastic collar over her white leotard, the dancer executes a series of extravagant leaps, interspersed with chirpy little runs, nervous balances and spasms of silent giggling.

Halifax and Regina are two cities in which modern dance is still a fledgling art. Yet the Regina Modern Dance Works and the Halifax Dance Co-op, neither of which had performed in Toronto before, did so with considerable flair. The Regina company presented *Goose*, a revisionist telling of the mother goose rhymes by a group of troubadours armed with song, a trunk full of clothes and ecological slogans.

A week later the Halifax Dance Co-op burst on stage, shattering all logical narrative and structure. This year-old company headed by American Sara Shelton was the one company at the festival that moved in the loose-limbed, quick-changing-direction style of contemporary American dance. The last piece of their program, *R*, was crammed full of crazily juxtapositioned images. Oversize alphabet blocks are piled atop a stepladder as a sound collage is interspersed with baroque music. Some dancers move in slow motion unison while others somersault and a tap dancer clicks away in the background until finally, just as one's overloaded senses cry out for an ending or at least an editor, it ends with Sara Shelton being pelted with the blocks.

Canadian dance companies work in such geographic isolation that it is an historic and rare treat to have them gathered under one roof for a festival such as this. The Toronto Dance Festival also fulfilled an ecumenical role. It allowed everything from the staid to the anarchistic both time and space in which to perform.

KATHRYN BROWNELL



Karen Tessmer and Sean Boutilier: *Elite Syncopations*

The National Ballet of Canada

O'Keefe Centre
Toronto

8-18 November 1978

Surprisingly the National Ballet's new production of *Les Patineurs* was not a huge success. On opening night its reception was mild to say the least; clearly the audience, a good humoured one, felt let down. Since *Patineurs* is one of Ashton's most skilfully structured and durable ballets, with charming postcard decor and costumes by William Chappell, one must look at the performance to find out just what went wrong. After all, Toronto has taken *La Fille mal gardée* and *Monotones II* to its heart; why not *Les Patineurs*?

One can start with the music, or more precisely, the playing. The score, a hodge-podge of tunes by Meyerbeer with a large chunk from *Le Prophète*, was grudgingly conducted by George Crumb and just as grudgingly played by the curmudgeons in the pit: no sparkle, no wit — certainly no pulse for dancing. In fairness, a tiny bit anyway, the band, with another new ballet on the programme and a major revival, may have had insufficient rehearsal. But is Constant Lambert's arrangement of Meyerbeer's music all that difficult?

From the band to the dancers: they looked rushed, nervous. The corps especially looked cramped in their breathless search for space and anxious lest there be a collision or, worse, a pile-up in the wings. For some reason, the National has doubled the number of couples, from four to eight. One hopes that in future performances the management will use a smaller number of dancers, as was first the case some forty years ago. Then these *patineurs* and *patineuses* might have some space to dance in, and the audience might see the glow on their faces.

But one should not lay all the blame on the corps; most of the soloists, with the possible exception of Mary Jago, looked slightly out of place. Too few of the National's dancers possess that flexibility in the upper torso that Ashton's work so often demands: as a result those sudden shifts in direction come as a jolt rather than a surprise or a pleasure. And too frequently the dancers' arms look thin and ungenerous. This fault is especially noticeable in the women. Peter Schaufuss danced the *Blue Boy* in such a cheerless manner that one wondered if he was happy with the company. For a dancer with such an international reputation, Schaufuss' Toronto performances have often been slack — though one moment in *Giselle* with Veronica Tennant might persuade one to forgive all. Very early in the first act he suddenly reached for *Giselle* just as she quickly moved away. With that single gesture Schaufuss said more about Albrecht and his tragedy than could a dozen performances. But his *Patineurs* was routine. Perhaps everyone will feel more in the mood for these skaters in February when the snow whistles around the O'Keefe.

Elite Syncopations, the other new production, was an entirely different matter. The moment the curtain rose to reveal the dancers lounging about the stage in some kind of seedy jazz spot — the musicians behind, John Goss at the piano — one could sense the audience's delight. *Elite*, without decor but brilliantly costumed by Ian Spurling, gives at first the impression of the dancers letting down their hair. Nothing pleases an audience more, so the crowd at the O'Keefe applauded the solos, pas de deux, and ensembles almost indiscriminately. In all this, Vanessa Harwood managed a huge success, Frank Augustyn and Karen Kain a slightly smaller one, and Peter Schaufuss enjoyed himself enormously. (Perhaps he is happier after

all.) The dancers' enthusiasm was infectious; and by the time the gold curtain fell, you knew the National had another hit on its hands.

Lest, in all the excitement, it be forgotten, let me state that *Elite Syncopations* is one of Kenneth MacMillan's minor works. It will serve well as a finale to triple bills, but I hope the management does not trot it out night after night. Who wants all that Scott Joplin anyway?

Between the appetizer, so to speak, and the dessert came the entrée, that heavily-crusted tortière, *Mad Shadows*. That too has been an enormous success for the National, though this piece is all about sexual repression, murder, attempted strangulation, and God knows what else. Since the ballet is based on the novel by Marie-Claire Blais, what we see must be Quebec before the Quiet Revolution. What we hear are some boringly repetitive sounds by André Gagnon, reorchestrated for the second time since the first performance in such a way as to dilute whatever tension the piece ever had. Why bother?

Nonetheless, the dancers take to the ballet heroically. The principals could not be faulted for their performances. Everyone is almost driven, and this says much for Ann Ditchburn as a producer. The so-called mad lady inspires her colleagues to dance full out, proving, if proof be needed, that the company desperately needs dramatic works. Why doesn't the National revive *Dark Elegies* or *Winter Night*, because truth to tell, *Mad Shadows* is trash, pure and simple. The book does it all so much better.

LAWRENCE HASKETT

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

Place des Arts
Montreal
November 1978

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens had been on the road since mid-October, running-in

new repertoire, in preparation for its performances in Montreal over two consecutive weekends late last year.

There had been a good feeling about the company all summer. Many dancers who'd left a season or two ago, had rejoined; there were exciting new choreographies in the works, going outside the circle of old stalwarts; and Colin McIntyre's touch, as general manager, had begun to be felt. Here was someone with definite plans, one could almost say with a vision for Les Grands Ballets, and one cautiously began to hope that in its 21st year, hovering on the brink of maturity, the company was about to resolve its identity crisis and choose a viable path.

There is no doubt that there is a recognizable intelligence at work; a man with taste and connections. It is also true that the company is dancing incomparably better than this time last year. But for all the carefully picked components: the best costume designer in town, the best Brecht singer in the country, they lack the raw material, the stuff ballet companies are made or broken by: the dancers. Despite all the high hopes, the formula so far has turned out to be the same mixture as before: a ragged Balanchine; a slight, whimsical piece with poor production values and a big block buster with no substance.

Passing over *Serenade* to the new works in the repertoire, Lynn Taylor's *Sonata for Cocktail Piano* seemed less endearing than it had been in rehearsal. Somewhere along the way it has lost its innocence and intimacy and gathered a hard gloss. It's a small work, a little lost on the huge stage of the Salle Wilfrid Pelletier, and the muddy colour-scheme of the costumes did not altogether help to define it. The kooky third movement worked best because of its zany clownish elements, a playful upside down waltz among others, but for all that, it's a faceless work. That's what I felt after opening night. Curiously enough, subsequent casts did a lot to bring it to life by recapturing the playful improvisational quality I had remembered.

The main bout of the evening was Fernand Nault's adaptation of the Brecht-Weill *zeitkunst* work, *The Seven Deadly Sins*. Advance reports had been so negative that it was unofficially dubbed the Eighth Deadly Sin but the wits had overstated their case.

Seven Deadly Sins is a modern morality play, the last collaboration between Kurt Weill and Berthold Brecht, a bitter condemnation of American materialism. Like Karl May, the prolific German writer of westerns who preceded them by a generation, neither Brecht nor Weill had been to America yet when *Sins* premiered in 1933. It is typical of the love-hate relationship German intellectuals have always had with America and it continues to this day with Gunther Grass and Hans Werner Henze.

The Brecht-Weill fable is simplicity itself. Two sisters, both named Anna, set out from Memphis to earn enough money to build a house for their family back home. They are away for seven years and in each city Anna I, the realist, sung by Pauline Julien, forces Anna II, danced by Sylvie Kinal, to surrender yet another principle. The musical counterpoint is a quartet of males, representing the family, who egg the girls on. The quartet, with Pierre Charbonneau singing a bass mother quite outstandingly, was a highlight of this production.

There have been several productions since Balanchine's original one in Paris with Tilly Losch and Lotte Lenya; Balanchine himself tackled it again later, as did Harald Lander, Birgit Cullberg, and most recently, Kenneth MacMillan. The text gives the main stages of the journey without always tying the choreographer down to specifics. In Nault's version *Anger*, one of the seven deadly sins, is aroused when Anna joins a circus and sees the ringmaster mistreat a horse. Other choreographers have set the scene in a theatre where Anna has been bypassed for an important role by the director's girlfriend. When it comes to scenario, the sky, or the imagination, is the limit. I saw the work four times. The design elements are so strong that it wasn't until

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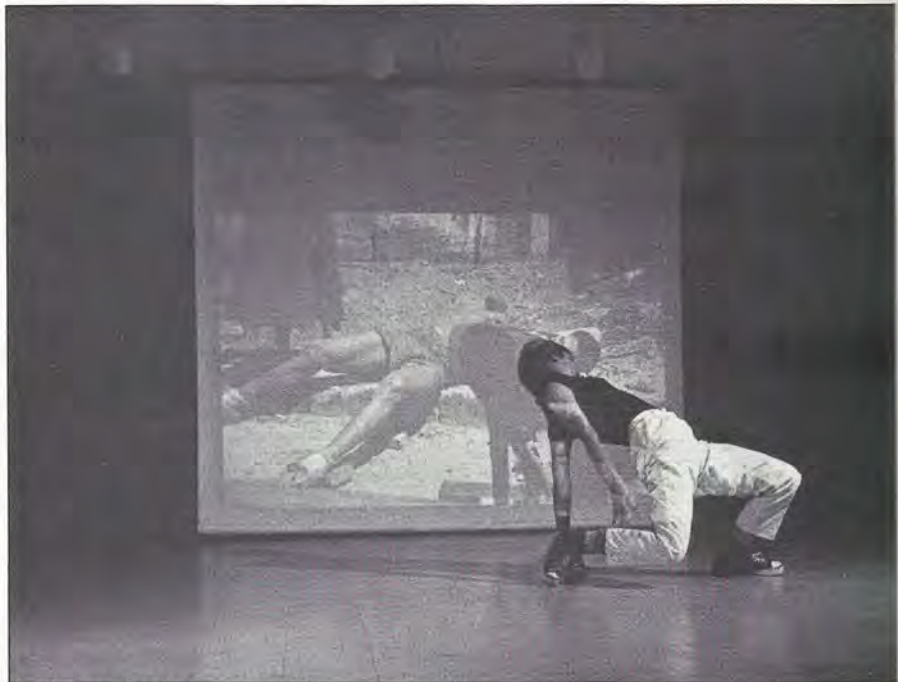
the last night that I began to wonder why I couldn't recall any of the dancing. The answer is that there is very little dance. There is movement and some mime and fragments of character dancing—the circus setting calls for animals and clowns—there are three pas de deux in the opening section and an exceedingly brief pas de deux in the section where Anna gives up a millionaire admirer for a gigolo she loves—but of a 40-minute work, that covers perhaps three to five minutes.

The discovery comes late because as the idealistic Anna, Sylvie Kinal literally draws the eye like a magnet. She is the personification of innocence betrayed, a child adrift in a brothel. Her contribution could be best assessed when a second cast took over and her role paled into insignificance. She even made Pauline Julien, usually as forceful as a tigress, seem just a part of the scenery. Julien sang well, no easy task because the generally idiomatic French translation by Réjean Ducharme, often forced her into emphases alien to the language. The design concept was the antithesis of the grotesque excesses that usually plague this work. Guy Neveu and François Barbeau opted for a severely restrained, almost monochrome look. The entire cast was in basic steel grey and each of the sections was accessorized in a different colour. If anything, they erred in the right direction: the simplicity was fine but the starkness was absent. That is true of other aspects of the work as well. The gesture was made but the spirit was missing. The references are clear but the message is muted. Brecht's bitter social comment has been diluted and given a cosmetic touch-up. And all the cosmetics in the world cannot camouflage the void where inspiration should have been. They have illustrated a story rather than created a work of art.

Ah well, hope springs eternal. For their spring tour, the company will have new works by Paul Taylor, Lar Lubovitch and Brian Macdonald. Maybe they'll pull it off then.

Adapted from a CBC-FM radio broadcast — The Dance, 3 December 1978.

KATI VITA



Irene Grainger: *Slide Over*

Irene Grainger

15 Dance Lab
Toronto
26 - 28 October 1978

Irene Grainger, in collaboration with dancers Tom Treadwell, Grant Stitt, and Mary O'Connell presented *Slide Over*, a dance/slide piece of clean, dynamic movement and images. The movement style was post-Cunningham 'New York' — off-balances, throws, swings, slides — a style that while technically rooted showed the evidence of a relaxed pedestrian influence. In dynamic the movement ranged from systematic single movement to the fast-action reflex of duet and group work that bore the influence of contact improvisation, as well as more formally patterned work. The vocabulary was equally extensive without ever becoming muddled by variation. The dancers' presence had a quiet competence that emphasized the directness of their dancing. The duets were particularly strong.

The choreographer was also the photographer. The slides were mostly of people (usually the dancers) in both stillness and caught in movement, often

placed against urban landscapes. They had the same sense of clean, clear visual impact and much of their power came from a strong feeling for colour — particularly the colour red.

The slides and the dancers passed through many relationships including the use of the projector light alone. Simple juxtaposition of movement and image changed as the image became environment, interrelated with shadow, mingled with the dance as it projected on the dancer and separated. Because *Fifteen* is basically a square space and quite small, the distance between the huge screen and the dancers was limited but they made full use of the available length.

Music sometimes accompanied the dancing as did two spoken texts. Punk rock and the spoken 'tough' stories worked with the images to emphasize the urban, hard edged sensibility although it was never abrasively or dramatically presented.

Slide Over was exciting and full of interest for the eye. The collaboration of the dancers with the choreographer created a strong and cohesive work.

ELIZABETH CHITTY



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Terrill Maguire

University College Playhouse
Toronto

12-14 December 1978

There is a touch of onomatopoeia to Terrill Maguire's name. Its sound suggests the cool, subtle flow of her dancing and choreography as displayed in *Selected Dances*, a December retrospective of her work since 1975.

Terrill teaches dance at York University, where a few of the pieces were first staged. As a performer, she is most assured in a solo situation which allows room for some improvisation. Four of the six dances selected were of this nature; the others were a duet with Francisco Alvarez, *Eclipse*, and *Tempes Fugit*, performed by seven present or former students from the York dance program.

As a soloist, Terrill Maguire has a commanding presence. Her long limbs are capable of impressive extensions. She gives a great sense of fluidity in many of her movements, seeming to send a wave of energy through an almost boneless body. There is obvious strength and control in her dancing, yet seldom any overt display of effort. Everything is subordinated to her idea of grace.

Her concentration seems somewhat remote, as if it went over the audience rather than to it. Few of the tactics of avant-garde dance artists – direct encounters with the audience, or studies of the acoustics of flesh hitting hard surfaces – appear to have influenced her. She makes little use of her face and voice, and nearly always performs to either live or recorded music. Interaction with video, large-scale props or outrageous costumes did not appear in any of the six dances.

Her conception of the role of the dancer is thus conservative. What Terrill has to offer is simply dance, of a rather austere and often mystical quality. The only connection her work might have with recent experimental trends is an occasional minimalist attention to a single movement quality. In *Sea Changes* she is bathed



Terrill Maguire

throughout in dim blue light; we barely see her slow transitions from a foetal position to a single travel across the floor.

In fact, we barely saw the beginnings of a number of the evening's program. Terrill seems, logically enough, to show the initiation of a piece as rising out of the contact between dancer and floor, but the poor design of the bleachers at the University College Playhouse in Toronto made anything at floor-level obscure.

First on the evening's card was *Run Ragged*, a 1976 work performed to James Tenney's music. In clown-like suspended pants, Terrill began to circle the stage, and increased velocity throughout the piece without ever reaching the absolute exhaustion suggested by the title. *Sea Changes* followed. It really did evoke an underwater environment, in which Terrill seemed a protean form gradually evolving while exploring the ocean's floor.

The group piece, *Tempes Fugit*, was developed between 1975 and 1977. It had suggestions of a grid piece in the opening,

in which the performers passed back and forth gestures and movements. But the grid dissolved to a vigorous series of falls and rolls which culminated in a marvellous ending. The dancers rolled with their feet together, making a muscular wheel which increased speed in rhythm to the music – Michael Byron's halting, dissonant piano chords – and then stopped when the maximum speed of rotation was approaching. A strong piece, well danced by Francisco Alvarez, Sonia Delwaide, Christopher House, Holly Small, Pierre LaChasseur, Isabelle de Pelteau, and Anita Shack.

In *Marrow* (1978), Terrill seemed to draw at times on the style of Indian dance and Oriental dance generally. One of her trademarks is a quick change in focus from a large movement which involves her entire body to a subtle flick or shake of an isolated part – head, hand, foot. In *Marrow* she held at one point an almost votive position, palms pressed together in front of her, but quickly went to a less literal pose. Her program notes said 'the marrow is the core of the bone ... some say it is the choicest part'. In fact, the theme might have been the paradox of the body's construction, in which soft-cored bone supports soft flesh; or of the dancer's consciousness, where the most vague impressions and ideas are transformed into discrete physical events.

Eclipse, by contrast, occasionally suggested the stylizations of flamenco. At first, Terrill was concealed behind Francisco Alvarez. She appeared slowly at his side, and they faced each other, stamping, arms flung back and up. At the end Francisco was eclipsed into the wings as Terrill remained on stage.

The final dance was titled *Kali*, after the Hindu goddess who is the force of simultaneous creation and destruction. Terrill remained vertical, spinning, and alternately embracing the space around her and negating it. She reacted to Gordon Phillips' music in an implicit manner, incorporating its rhythms in her dance without particularly stressing them.

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The Joffrey Ballet

City Center 55th Street Theater
New York
October 1978

City Center has a fresh coat of paint and a new curtain, and the Joffrey Ballet has another Ashton masterpiece in its repertory. The Joffrey seems to be the only company dedicated to restoring pieces from other eras. The American ballets – *Rodeo*, *Interplay*, *Cakewalk* – present fewer problems in restorations because the dancers are closer to the modes they offer. With the Ashton works, few American companies can relax and surrender naturally to the stylistic requirements.

When Sadler's Wells Ballet made its first American tour I was an impoverished student who chose my first full-length *Sleeping Beauty* with Violetta Elvin over a mixed program featuring Ashton's *A Wedding Bouquet*. Over the years I've treasured an eight-minute excerpt from its score, in which the nasal voices of an English operetta chorus enunciate with fairy lightness and clarity Gertrude Stein's dotty words over the strains of an insinuating, voluptuous tango. The expected silliness of a Ronald Searle cartoon or a Hoffnung concert is absent in the Joffrey revival, but it's full of fun and delightful surprises. The oval cut-out of a lakeside village is a sepia monotone, and the vivid colours I expected came out in the bright cerise and canary gowns of the lady guests at this nuptial celebration in provincial France.

Anthony Dowell narrates the text (the mixed chorus was abandoned after the war) and his presence is smashing as he expectorates each syllable like an olive pit. Elegantly attired, with slicked-down hair, he guzzles champagne from an iced bottle at stage right and comments in chant on the antics of the guests.

Gary Chryst, as the groom, who has in the recent past made love to most of the lady guests, has a marvellous command of the character that Ashton etched – the

typical 'greaser' that appears in so many satirical ballets of the period and which reflects the general British awe and horror of the Mediterraneans. Bonnie Wycoff doesn't convey the sternness of Webster, the maid to the bride and task-mistress to the peasants. De Valois created the role and would be a hard act for anyone to follow. Beatriz Rodriguez is downright catatonic in her portrayal of the demented Julia: I rather expect that Fonteyn and Shearer were less clinical in their handling of her betrayal.

Lisa Slagle shows us with wit what Ashton does when he has people portraying animals. Her Pepe, Julia's Mexican terrier, is as sassy and jittery as the hens in *La Fille mal gardée*. To let us know that she's really a girl, he puts Pepe in a short tutu for the finale, and we are aware of the pun: a woman playing a Chihuahua in drag. Similarly attired and ready for action (with the embellishment of a saucy garter on her thigh) is Lynn Glauber as the bride. Before this, the guests have disported with varying degrees of dignity, and the gorgeously appointed Josephine (Jan Hanniford) drinks entirely too much champagne and is requested to leave.

The piece seems a bit sharp but may mellow as its subtleties become clearer to the dancers. City Center audiences, who love the home team, seemed puzzled by this sophisticated trinket from the past.

LELAND WINDREICH



Lucinda Childs

Université de Montréal
le 7 décembre 1978

Danser peut être lyrique, dramatique, humoristique, tragique, acrobatique, géométrique, esthétisant, et cetera, mais c'est avant tout rythmique et une danseuse newyorkaise est venue nous le rappeler éloquentement le 7 décembre dernier à Montréal: Lucinda Childs.

Invitée par le Musée des Beaux-Arts et le département d'histoire de l'art de l'Université de Montréal, Lucinda Childs est venue seule, accompagnée du musicien George Andoniadis à l'orgue électrique.

Elle a présenté dans l'ancien gymnase du pavillon Mont-Royal de l'U de M, trois chorégraphies d'un même cycle basées sur l'exploration de la diagonale – *Plaza* écrit en 1977, *Katema* en 1978 et *Work in Progress with Philip Glass*, oeuvre encore inachevée qui sera présentée en totalité à l'automne 1979 à New York avec le concours de l'artiste Sol Lewitt.

Lucinda Childs travaille seule dans une sorte d'ascèse de la forme et du contenu qui en elle-même est assez fascinante. Elle se présente dans un maillot et un pantalon blancs, chaussée d'espadrilles qu'elle change au cours de la soirée selon les oeuvres présentées. Grande et sévère avec son petit chignon serré à la nuque et son regard ardent, elle arbore des allures très 'professionnelles'; tout dans sa tenue respire le contrôle, la maîtrise de soi, la clarté du propos. Il faut dire que Lucinda Childs n'est pas née d'hier. Diplômée en danse du Sarah Lawrence College en 1962 elle danse et chorégraphie depuis ce temps (dont six années avec le Judson Dance Theatre de New York). Avec la présentation au Metropolitan de l'opéra *Einstein on the Beach* dont elle a signé la chorégraphie en 1976 et interprétait le rôle principal, Lucinda Childs a commencé à explorer la diagonale comme cadre spatial à ses phrases rythmiques.

Childs détermine la diagonale choisie en projetant sur le sol au moyen de deux

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Lucinda Childs

adonne de projecteurs une aire de lumière à l'intérieur de laquelle elle se déplacera.

Plaza est une recherche sur un rythme à trois temps et une diagonale nord-sud; *Katema* par contre est élaboré sur une diagonale est-ouest et un rythme plus long. *Work in Progress*... utilise enfin les deux diagonales croisées et un rythme beaucoup plus long et complexe.

Avec le martèlement de ses chaussures sur le parquet mais surtout ses mouvements précis qui ont la rigueur du pendule du métronome, Lucinda Childs nous entraîne dans une aventure rythmique hallucinante. Ses balancements des bras, ses retours continus à un même point de départ, ses petits tours et pivots sur elle-même, ses sautilllements, et cetera, sont groupés en séquences ou phrases

rythmiques répétées inlassablement selon des variantes infinies.

Dans la dernière pièce qui prolonge les deux premières, Lucinda Childs est accompagnée d'Andoniadis à l'orgue et présente des variantes plus longues et plus complexes mais toujours avec cette précision absolue qui est l'unique façon de dégager un rythme clair et identifiable de cette cybernétique. La musique de Glass toute en petites cascades de notes coulant sous les doigts du musicien à une cadence prodigieuse trouve un écho dans la chorégraphie de Lucinda Childs qui n'arrête pas de 'bouger' pendant près d'une demi-heure! Le tonus requis pour ce faire est proprement exceptionnel et la danseuse ne laisse jamais percevoir la moindre défaillance.

Cette recherche rythmique, malgré toute sa rigueur et sa froideur de 'sciences pures' présente néanmoins quelque chose de quasi enfantin et de nostalgique en raison de l'acharnement de la démarche, la répétition et l'insistance du mouvement. L'effet produit sur le public est très intéressant: hypnotisé littéralement par le jet de lumière et la silhouette mouvante qui s'en détache, le spectateur participe irrésistiblement à l'énergie rayonnant de la danseuse et ressort de la soirée avec un enthousiasme peu commun.

Avec le passage à Montréal depuis deux ans de Trisha Brown et Simone Forti, les amateurs - venus très nombreux au spectacle de Lucinda Childs, compte tenu de la nature de l'événement - commencent un peu à 'tâter' de l'avant-garde en danse contemporaine grâce à ces merveilleux danseurs qui n'hésitent pas à rencontrer le public pour discuter de leurs concepts et techniques au cours d'ateliers. Maintenant que le mouvement est bien amorcé dans la métropole par des animateurs éveillés et créatifs, il ne faudrait surtout pas qu'il s'éteigne. Il est bien agréable quand New York vient à nous... le mouvement a été trop longtemps en sens inverse!

ANGELE DAGENAI

Eurythmeum Stuttgart

Queen Elizabeth Theatre
Vancouver
October 1978

When I asked David Randolph, tour manager for the Eurythmeum Stuttgart, why Else Klink, the artistic director, did not include any humorous pieces in the first half of the programme, he replied: 'She just won't compromise'. That artistic integrity which placed such a demand and a challenge on those of us who attended the Eurythmeum performances suggests a very high artistic aim. It is towards an understanding of that aim that these notes move.

In eurythmy we are not dealing with body movement. It is a kind of breathing through the soul. The body is only an instrument for the soul.

For the record: The Eurythmeum Stuttgart's first North American tour included, in order, Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal, together with about a dozen U.S. cities. The advance representative, Alice Stamm, spoke not only with the media but to groups at the Waldorf schools in Toronto and Vancouver, part of a varied promotional campaign aimed at attracting as much interest as possible for the Eurythmeum's important visit.

In Vancouver, apart from the formal appearances, there was a special children's show, a morning workshop at the Teacher Centre and a demonstration by Else Klink and company members at UBC.

Sarah Burton was the main speaker for the performances, reading short poems and extracts from longer works. After the first evening performance she told me that for Else Klink's solo, Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*, she had to vary the rhythm from lyric to epic 'because all her movements are epic'.

The reactions to the visit varied considerably from the 10 percent who walked out at intermission to the dancer who said



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she enjoyed the pure flow of the movement.

My own reactions were mixed. The Schubert *Unfinished*, which started the first evening performance proved most convincing and satisfying – more of a *gesamtkunstwerk* than anything else I have experienced. The classical, completely geometrical *T.I.A.O.A.I.T* was less accessible as was the Steiner verse 'The weaving essence of the Light rays forth'. I also felt satisfied by Thornton Wilder's *Hast Thou Considered My Servant Job?* Here, a triune, calm Christ in pale pink confronts a triune, fidgety Devil in black, as 12 eurythmists, representing the zodiac, weave inexorably around them.

Many people were probably also put off by the gentle humour of the second half. The fare we are served on the idiot box together with the general violence of our society make such gentleness seem mild indeed. And with confused ideas of what Loie Fuller and Isadora Duncan must have looked like, the 'flapping hands' and floating veils appeared too 'old fashioned'. Add to this a religious, a spiritual 'content' which the company dared to present on the contemporary stage and it is no wonder that many audience members, dancers included, reacted as strongly as they did.

I could sympathize with these attitudes: I prefer *doing* eurythmy to watching it. Somehow I feel that eurythmy as a stage art has not yet reached its 'form'.

Eurythmy is something between ballet and mime.

Many observers were puzzled by the concentration of movement in the hands and arms. Why are they given this importance? If we watch an animal, one description of it might be something like this: the animal is mainly a trunk with four limbs and a mouth at one end. The limbs move the trunk and mouth around so that the mouth can feed. It seems the prone position locks the animal into that pattern.

Now suppose the animal becomes upright, as with the human being. Immediately we see that two of the limbs are freed from the pattern of a feeding body. These limbs can be used for other things, which can relate the animal to the wider world. This realization was the basis of industry and technology which, originally termed 'manufactures', (i.e., hand-made), allowed us to serve other human beings.

Today that word has been supplanted by 'industry' and 'technology'. Could it be that the machine has eliminated this service element?

So it is through our hands and arms that we relate to and serve others. In that sense eurythmy is a celebration of the hands, an emphasis of our relationship to all other people.

To enter into a real understanding of eurythmy we must go beyond sense perception. We must experience a performance with the soul.

What were the other main approaches to movement in the early years of the century when Rudolf Steiner first provided the basic gestures of eurythmy, in 1912? Dalcroze, Laban, Delsarte.

Jacques Dalcroze, a professor at the Geneva Conservatory, considered that the musical preparation of his students was inadequate. So he devised a series of movement exercises, based on the elements of music, which five-year-old children should be taught so that they would have a good basis for musicianship when they started lessons at seven. He called these exercises 'eurythmics' and they still have some influence in music teaching but little in dance. So Dalcroze started and ended in music and never thought of his exercises as a performed art.

Rudolf von Laban's approach was to make a thorough analysis of the elements of movement. From this he built up a method of notation for movement which is used successfully in dance, but it was Mary Wigman who developed the stage art.

François Delsarte constructed a science of gesture, as it relates to the whole gamut of human emotion, from detailed observation of human beings. But again, Delsarte thought of his work only as a theoretical basis for speakers and actors.

And what was Steiner's approach to movement? He started with sounds, those of speech and music, and asked, 'What are the gestures of these sounds?' Now we must be mindful of Else Klink's warning to go beyond sense perception if we are to come to grips with eurythmy. So by using 'supersensible perception', as he called it, Rudolf Steiner discovered the gestures appropriate to each sound in speech and music. These he then made visible through body gestures, almost like tracing a map

through transparent paper. By moving one gesture to the next, the flow of movement in the gestures is continued into a whole – eurythmy, or visible speech and visible music.

This shows that Steiner took an objective approach to movement. Some idea of this may be obtained by looking at Theodore Schwank's book *Sensitive Chaos*, where he has photographs of columns of smoke in vacuum tubes. When sounds are made near the tubes the smoke columns assume shapes specific to the sound.

Of course, in creating a eurythmy performance words and music are not 'spelled out' literally. The eurythmist may choose to emphasize vowels or consonants, or the mood or rhythm of a poem or a piece of music, although the elements are all taken into account. The end result is the flow of movement and colour which is built up into whole poems and even such a work as Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.

The flowing costumes and veils are used not only to add colour but to emphasize the movement by prolonging it.

Eurythmy is not perfect yet. It is still a very young art.

Although eurythmy has found application in Waldorf schools and in curative homes and clinics, Steiner insisted that it can develop only as an art for the stage. So it must be judged as an art. But today such a judgement is the most difficult to make. Even though we are heirs to cubism, dada and surrealism we still seem to demand some kind of *re*-presentation judged by the old classical standards of Beauty, Goodness and Truth, or the old Romantic canons of individual and social relevance. In eurythmy we experience a presentation, not a representation; so all the old intellectual and emotional baggage has to be abandoned at the door.

To experience this new art in its still developing stages makes great demands upon us, especially upon our imaginative faculties. Perhaps Delsarte was near the mark when he said, 'Art and Prayer so confound themselves in one ineffable unity that I cannot separate the two things'.

JACQUES GOLDMAN

The statements in bold print are all by Else Klink.

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CENTENARY 1979

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet The First Forty Years

Max Wyman
Toronto: Doubleday
1978

Max Wyman, music and dance critic of the *Vancouver Sun* describes his book as, 'an affectionate exercise in curiosity'. The choice of adjective is apt: in Max Wyman, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has found the ideal chronicler. The enthusiastic, vivid, almost breathless way in which Wyman writes about the Royal Winnipeg Ballet admirably reflects the character of the company itself. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet is full of the same kind of excitement and energy that makes Wyman's book so much fun to read.

It is, in the best sense of a somewhat abused word, journalistic, in its concern to remain engrossing and to cover all the important bases. Wyman has tackled the problem of organizing his material by dividing the book into three major sections, each sub-divided into chapters.

First, there is a colourful history of the company from the days when it was little more than an amateur club putting on occasional performances to its present position as a significant international contemporary ballet company.



Max Wyman

Although Max Wyman only gives a general indication of the sources he has used for this narrative, it is clear he has been tireless in sorting out a great deal of complicated history. No doubt there are still a few loose ends, but anyone coming after him will have an easier task as a result of his researches. For example, at last, after more than 20 years, we have a clear analysis of what really happened during the turbulent period following the destructive fire of 1954. The conflict of strong personalities, the flurry of resignations and

financial crises—all is carefully unravelled.

Next, Wyman devotes a shorter section to the company itself, including the Board of Directors. Naturally enough, one of the most telling chapters in this section is devoted to Arnold Spohr, the lanky Saskatchewan-born eccentric who, from 1958, has steered the company through depression to triumph. The portrait is perceptive and sympathetic.

Last, and perhaps least effectively, Wyman discusses the choreography. If you study the list of ballets performed by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, usefully appended in this book, it is astonishing to find that of 137 ballets, excluding classical pops and pas de deux, 103, or 75 percent, have been original works. That, in any company's annals is impressive. As Wyman admits, not all these have been great ballets, but they have helped to maintain an artistic freshness and vitality within the company.

If Max Wyman's account is 'affectionate' it is certainly not clouded by a star-struck vision. The tone is positive but incisive. There is no papering over cracks. It is simply that Wyman sees no need to gloat at the cracks: malignance does not have to be the congenital disease of the critic.

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Slow Dancing in the Big City

Directed by John G. Avildsen



Ann Ditchburn and Paul Sorvino

It always seems to happen. The minute you let a director indulge himself, the film is a failure commercially, and almost as often artistically. After the stunning success that *Rocky* was, director John G. Avildsen (you know there's trouble when creative people start using middle initials) wrote his own ticket with his latest picture, *Slow Dancing In The Big City* ... but it was a one-way ticket to dullsville.

When you are successful in the film industry, the theory is, you'll be successful even if left to your own devices. However, the creative checks and balances that applied to *Rocky*, and contributed to its success, did not apply to *Slow Dancing*, and so Avildsen's neo-Capra-esque tendency towards the super-sentimental runs rampant. That in itself is not so bad but in *Slow Dancing* the sympathetic focal points are critically misplaced. The characters who need our sympathy for the film to work don't get it.

Tragedy abounds in this story of street meets feet. Lou Friedlander (Paul Sorvino) is a Jimmy Breslin-type New York columnist who meets Sara (Ann Ditchburn), an attractive dancer, when she moves into his Westside apartment building. At first this fairy princess responds to him with bitchy condescension, but when she learns that he is a prominent 'heart-of-New York' columnist, she decides that maybe this man of the streets is not beneath her after all.

The street had been merely something our dancing princess trod on her way from cultural castle to royal carriage. Now, however, Lou, the positivist knight, lays before the princess all the earthly riches that slop from the untethered loins of New York. Sara is attentive but she is more interested in her own loins, for, you see, her muscle structure is such that she never

should have been a dancer in the first place. Furthermore, if she dances in the performance she is painfully rehearsing for she may lose her ability to walk, let alone dance, again.

If this isn't enough tragedy: parallel to Sara's dilemma, Lou is involved with a young heroin-addicted Puerto Rican punk who he thinks has the musical talent to be the next Gene Krupa. All of which goes to show that fate is democratic in its unkindness, affecting both fairy princess and street urchin with near-equal severity.

The street drummer dies from a heroin overdose but Sara gets to dance in that final concert. However, before the curtain call Sara discovers that she can't walk. And here is the moment that surely must make all dancers cringe. Lou, who has been in the wings, actually carries her onstage to receive an ovation. Well, John G. Avildsen, you blew it. Not only did you leave your regular audience gasping for breath in a sentimental vacuum but you alienated the one fringe audience you could have had if only you'd paid more attention to the laws of real behaviour in the dance community.

All of this tragedy would have worked, if only we could have cared more for Sara and the little drummer. As it is, Lou, with his noble intentions, is the only character worth caring for. Avildsen hopes that because we care for Lou, we'll also care for the people *he* cares for, but that sort of redirected sympathy is usually unsuccessful. So a potentially effective drama turns into a run-of-the-mill melodrama.

As for Ann Ditchburn, she has a few good moments but she's not an actress and it is painfully obvious most of the time; especially in contrast to fine actors such as Paul Sorvino, Anita Dangler, who plays Lou's worn girlfriend, and Dick Carballo who is a delightful distraction as the apartment superintendent. Ditchburn is nice enough to look at but she has an annoying tendency to allow tension to collect around her mouth and there are rough emotional inconsistencies in her character that originate in the bad writing but are compounded by poor performance.

But then again who can play dancers in film better than real dancers? Dancing actors perhaps, but better still acting dancers. The relationship between dance performance and acting performance is not to be ignored. Dancers should more often explore acting method the way many actors dutifully explore dance technique, especially considering that Hollywood will continue to deal with the drama of the dancer's world — and rightly so, for dance is well-suited to kindling the motion in Motion Pictures.

James Orr is a Canadian film director and writer.

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THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA.

The National Ballet of Canada:

A Celebration

With Photographs by
Ken Bell

And a Memoir by
Celia Franca

Toronto: University of Toronto Press
1978

The National Ballet of Canada: A Celebration is a handsome book, one you should certainly have in your library. It is not a definitive history of the company nor an autobiography of Celia Franca, though the book gives us snippets of both.

Of course, a major attraction of the book is the collection of 300 photographs, all taken by Ken Bell, spanning the years since the company's inception in 1951. Although the quality of reproduction is inconsistent and some of the captioning tedious or obscure, it does provide an historically valuable visual record.

As for the text, what it chiefly lacks is solid underpinnings and a brave look into the future. What we are given is a discreetly edited version of the hardships, the fights (very few of these) and the successes and failures of the years of Franca's reign.

If you want to categorize, it belongs to Phase Two of books about ballet in Canada. Phase One consisted of books largely devoted to text — Herbert Whitaker's laudatory history of the National Ballet was a good example; the book (in French) about *Les Grands Ballets Canadiens* was another. Phase Two reflects our publishers' view that what we need is lots of picture books about ballet, with a minimum of text. This Bell-Franca book is an excellent example.

But we have already moved into Phase Three, with Max Wyman's history of the last 40 years of *The Royal Winnipeg Ballet*. This has some errors, but it sets the background, speaks frankly about disasters and disagreements, as well as successes. It takes a stab at distancing, and offers a cool assessment.

In the solid underpinnings department, Franca still basically takes the attitude that she was invited to Darkest Canada, found no ballet here, and established a company, against enormous hardships. She does have the grace to tell us that Ernie Rawley, former manager of the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, used to invite her into his office and lecture her on the old days, when Canada had many visiting ballet companies, such as the Ballet Russe, and Ballet Theatre.

She does mention ballet festivals, too, where she got dancers for her fledgling company. But she gives no hint that Lynn Seymour, discovered at a ballet festival in Ottawa, went almost directly to the Royal

Ballet — she was that good. She does not go back to the thirties and forties when Gwen Osborne, in Ottawa, was producing dancers such as Nesta Toumine, (of the Ballet Russe), Norah White and Patricia Wilde (later to become one of the most formidable technicians the New York City Ballet ever had).

She does not tell us that the reason the Toronto company was founded in 1951 was that Toronto socialites could not bear the thought that a prairie city like Winnipeg had had a ballet company since 1938. But she does enliven her bland text by telling us that Lady Tupper, backer of the Winnipeg Ballet, called the Franca company 'Toronto upstarts'.

Her discretion makes the book tantalizing. Perhaps she is saving the best stories for her next book (there are conflicting reports as to whether there is to be a next one), or until some of the people concerned are safely dead.

We think she is beginning to be open when she reveals the secret (scandal, some called it) that the Nureyev production of *The Sleeping Beauty* was outrageously expensive (\$400,000). But she defends it, because the company got a lot of mileage from this production; perhaps it was worth the cost.

But then one immediately thinks of *Kraanerg*, the disastrous Roland Petit ballet that opened the National Arts Centre in 1969. It had a commissioned score, commissioned decor, commissioned choreography, and imported male star, all from Europe, and she does not even hint at the cost. (Perhaps it is not her secret to tell; perhaps it is locked in the fortress called the NAC.) But neither does she tell us how quickly it was dropped from the repertory. She implies she had to wait until it had been taken to England, at great expense, and had been roundly panned by the British critics, before she realized what a dud it was. Canadian critics had been saying the same thing for months.

She is strangely selective about choosing among the many amusing anecdotes available. Thus, she relates a good story about the architecture of the Lord Beaverbrook Theatre at the University of New Brunswick. But she omits what was to many of us one of the funniest things we ever saw on stage.

It was during a National Ballet performance of *Romeo and Juliet* at the NAC opening festival. In the ballroom scene, a section of the orchestra pit, complete with conductor and some players, rose to the level of the stage and stuck there. After some time, it sank again, ignominiously and mysteriously, with one player gallantly waving a handkerchief tied to the end of his bow.

Over the years the National was castigated by critics for not developing native choreographers (this was before the days of Ann Ditchburn's *Mad Shadows*, and

James Kudelka's *A Party*). To her credit, Miss Franca does mention many of the honorable failures in the fifties and sixties; it was not for want of trying, she says, that we did not get Canadian ballets. But she does not give any coherent explanation of why it took her so long to go shopping for ballets by George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins, who were next door. Instead, she went harking back to Britain and imported some already out-dated works.

Finally, she could not resist telling an interviewer at the time of the book's publication, 'I still think the company has the cleanest line in the world'. Well, yes, perhaps, though this judgment might more gracefully have been left for an outsider to utter. But I know a critic who was puzzled by what that 'clean line' reminded her of; she finally remembered that it was exactly the way the Sadler's Wells corps looked in the late forties. New York critics too have begun to hint that the National's dancers lack some of the plasticity and fluidity which other companies boast as a result of working with a wide variety of the new breed of classical-modern choreographers.

Indeed, this is a provocative book. It sets you to wondering in what state Miss Franca left the company, and where it has been heading since.

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To Dance

Valeri Panov with George Feifer
Mississauga: Random House (Knopf)
1978

George Feifer is a London-based Sovietologist who gained overnight fame in dance circles when he published an interview with Plisetskaya. During the single moment when her KGB shadow had been out of earshot, Plisetskaya's polished surface had cracked to reveal her self-disgust for not having taken a stand on human rights issues. It was the classical Soviet dilemma of conscience versus career. Had she signed the petition, she feared she would never be allowed abroad again.

Feifer's paragraph kicked off a furious response in the press. Critics held that Feifer had played god and, in the name of truth, had sentenced Plisetskaya to Siberian exile. Others maintained that the conspiracy of silence to protect artists merely played into the hands of the KGB by keeping the West ignorant of its methods. Feifer's article eventually came to be regarded as a landmark decision. If to publish was to perish, more and more Soviet artists were willing to risk it in order to stave off artistic death.

In the case of the Panovs, Feifer had no such soul searching to do. Panov sought his help once he was already out of the USSR. The result is *To Dance*. His rendering of Panov's tale into English has all the Feifer hallmarks of sobriety, clarity and nuance, while allowing Panov's own personality full rein.

Panov (né Shulman) was born in Vitebsk 40 years ago to a committed Communist father who hated all Jews, including himself. A precocious youngster, his childhood was shaped by Bilibin, Münchhausen, Pushkin, Johnny Weismuller, and war-time evacuation to the Urals. At the age of eight his natural flair for movement and early coordination had already propelled him to the top of his local dance class and a chance encounter with the legendary Vaganova gained him entrance to the Leningrad Ballet Academy.

He was to be a square peg in a round hole all his life. Periodically he would be succoured by inspired teachers but with their death or fall into disfavour, Panov would find himself out on his ear again. Nonetheless, by the age of 21, he was good enough to be included in an American tour during which he made the youthful mistake of not camouflaging his enthusiasm for an alien society. He was flown home in mid-tour.

It was to be Valeri Panov's last glimpse of the West for 15 years. Though he rose to stardom at the Maly, the Kirov and the Bolshoi, and despite technique so incredible that certain steps were dubbed 'les pas-nov', his main function was to serve as a living reminder to other dancers that no talent was big enough to buck the system.

In most cases the warning was heeded, though not necessarily as the KGB had envisaged it. Nureyev (a year ahead of Panov at the Academy) took the trouble to establish what Panov's 'sin' had been before he made his own spectacular grand jeté to freedom. Makarova and Baryshnikov were cautious bystanders. Yuri Soloviev committed suicide, 'an internal defection which could be added to the list of those who escaped abroad.'

Denial of access to the West – meaning the fame and contraband which could be converted into Shangri-la living back home – was not the ultimate frustration. The issue which finally drove all of them over the edge was the need for artistic freedom. 'When nothing new is permitted, a dancer can only repeat himself, which is a form of cannibalism.'

Panov saves his greatest scorn for Russian ballet 'tradition' which he equates with learning by rote rather than pushing for individual development. Conversely, his book is suffused by the mixture of bravado and inferiority complex which is characteristic of self-made men. Endowed with *non-pareil* technique, he perceived himself as a rough mechanic and worked like a demon to achieve the purity of the aristocratic Kirov style. Having dazzled, he wanted to move; to wed *demi-caractère* to *danseur noble*.

Dancers are born narcissists. It is the very narrowness of their focus that enables them to reach greatness. Panov is not your natural dissident hero, the stuff of Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov. For years he simmered like a samovar and in the end almost blundered into his defiant stand. He had heard that other Jews were being allowed to emigrate so he also applied. It was the full brunt of official displeasure which hardened his resolve. The Soviets stopped at nothing. They threw him into a jail cell with amputees; the subtlety was not lost on a dancer. When all else failed, they attempted to poison him. He had a heart attack; Galina miscarried. In the end, bowing to unprecedented support abroad, the Soviets ejected them, sure that their days as dancers were over. Fortunately, despite false starts, the gloating has been proved premature.

I was in Budapest the week after the Panovs landed in Israel and none of my ballet acquaintances there had even heard of the Panovs. That is where this book should, but of course won't, be published. It is immensely useful for its insider's view of Russian ballet but one hopes its readership will not be restricted to the captive dance audience.

KATI VITA

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Dancing Since 1887

Great Male Dancers of the Ballet

Walter Terry
Toronto: Doubleday
1975

How To Enjoy Ballet

Don McDonagh
Toronto: Doubleday
1978

Whatever its causes may be, the boom in dance on this continent rolls on in full and undiminished swing. As an activity commanding mass attention, it now approaches both organized sport and commercial film in the breadth of its popularity. The surge has, quite predictably, washed its way through the publishing houses, bringing the production of books about dance and dance personalities to an unprecedented extent. Everyone who can wants to cash in on some of the magic that glitters tantalizingly about this most thoroughly glamorized of the performing arts.

However, when professedly serious dance writers align their interests with those of the producers of coffee-table glossies and dispense with the obtrusions of responsible journalism, the results can be embarrassing.

Walter Terry's *Great Male Dancers of the Ballet*, which appeared last November, does nothing more than repeat, in a sort of quivering sentimental garble, all the same discussion undertaken a year earlier by Richard Philp and Mary Whitney in *Dance: The Male in Ballet*. That long overdue volume was a comprehensive and disciplined account of the shifting fortunes of the male dancer in the Western cultural tradition. The authors traced the male dancer's glowing ascendance in the court of Louis XIV to his eclipse during the Romantic era, when the development of the pointe shoe literally lifted the ballerina to a complete supremacy.

Danseur deals incisively with historical

movements yet remains synoptic enough to be fully intelligible and informative to the general reader.

Generally, the Philp and Whitney book is better illustrated than Terry's book which can be faulted on other counts as well. The writing is maddeningly sloppy, full of graceless constructions, inapt terms and syntactical convolutions. Most irritating are the sticky little personal anecdotes about contemporary superstars, all of whom are referred to by their first names so that the author can imply his cosy personal familiarity with them. It is the sort of thing you might expect from some palpitating stargazer at a party, who flutters and whispers along after you, name-dropping himself into a breathless fever. Perhaps, instead of repeating a literary exercise done already far more competently by others, he might usefully have directed his investigation towards a more valuable topic such as great ballet partnerships. There is no question that Walter Terry is a man of wide experience and knowledge. His latest in a long line of books simply does not do him justice.

Don McDonagh's *How To Enjoy Ballet* does at least avoid the humid self-indulgence of Terry's book and attempts instead to provide useful information to the untutored. A history and anatomy of classical dance are compressed into a handful of chapters which are, as a result, full of drumskin-tight definitions of conventions and practices that really require more careful consideration. From McDonagh's capsule account one would think that ballet dancers were as precious and as immediately classifiable as show-dogs or whooping cranes.

The histories of those ballet companies McDonagh believes to be primary are excellently rendered but the few members of this exalted group are drawn exclusively from America, Europe and Britain. Predictably, Canadian ballet history is ignored.

The chapter, 'Critics and Publications' is laced with such simplistic generalizations that only rank beginners will not feel

seriously insulted. Many pages are taken up with dutiful instructions about how programme notes and souvenir booklets must be read.

The photographs too are uninspiring, some of them so tiny and obscured as to resemble bad photocopies. Still, the appended glossary of ballet terms is smooth and accurate and the section on 'Teachers and Steps' is full of useful and engaging information. Nevertheless, as fair warning to prospective buyers, this book should be subtitled, 'For Novices Only'.

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Letters to the Editor

Scarborough, Ontario

Dear Mr. Crabb,

As the publisher of Graham Jackson's book *Dance as Dance*, reviewed in the Winter '78 *Dance In Canada*, I find it curious that you should publish so malignant and wilfully inaccurate a review of one of your most regular and important contributors, especially one whose work has been very favourably received by dance writers of the first rank, such as Deborah Jowitz, Oleg Kerensky and Jack Anderson.

A critical look at a contributor would be quite in order, and might be a refreshing change from the usual pal-boosting. But *Dance in Canada's* piece, signed by an otherwise unidentified Lyn Roewade, attempts to characterize Jackson's writing as virtually worthless. If this is your opinion, why on earth do you continue to present his work as a major feature of your magazine? If you value his writing enough to publish so much of it, why run an obviously biased review that deliberately misrepresents the text of the book?

To list all the inaccuracies and faux pas of your review would take more space than I care to give this matter, but I would like at least to draw readers' attention to a few points.

Roewade accuses Jackson of 'overmuch jargon', and cites - but does not quote - page 108 of his book. Page 108 is in fact Jackson's discussion of the ways some critics abuse ballet vocabulary. Thus there are many ballet terms. Roewade would lead us to believe that this selection of other writers' jargon is typical of Jackson's own writing.

Jackson makes 'an occasional daring side-trip to New York'. Now there is of course nothing daring about going to New York and Jackson is not idiotic enough to suggest there is. But Roewade throws that in on her own, just to try to make Jackson look silly.

Claiming that Jackson cannot write well about ballet, Roewade implies that he cannot understand a work she identifies

only as 'Firebird'. In fact, Jackson's criticism is directed not to *the* 'Firebird', but to a modern, made-for-TV 'Firebird' by the Royal Danish Ballet.

The anti-gay slur in the review only confirms the bias displayed in the rest of the piece. 'Perhaps Jackson needs to come to terms with himself', she sniffs - the standard phrase stuffy matrons use about young gay men.

The gist of your review seems to be: Jackson is young, therefore he is stupid; he is gay, therefore he is prejudiced; he is published, therefore he is infuriating.

The unresolved contradiction involved in the presentation of this piece is obvious, and leads one to wonder what is behind it - professional jealousy perhaps?

Sincerely,
Ian Young
Director
Catalyst

The editor comments:

Writers' views do not necessarily represent those of either the editor or the Dance in Canada Association. While every effort is made to ensure accuracy and fairness of reviews, the critical judgment of the writer remains his or her own. Mr. Jackson has had as much freedom to express his ideas in this magazine as had Ms. Roewade in reviewing his book. As for that review, interpretations of its tone and implications are bound to vary according to the standpoint and sensitivity of the reader.

Montague, P.E.I.

Dear Dance In Canada,
Thank you for your magazine which I find really informative. It is filled with interesting articles about everything to do with dance.

Thank you again. I love it! Keep it up.

A dance fan,
Karen Micher

Ottawa

Dear Sir,

As a footnote to the review of Graham Jackson's *Dance as Dance* which appeared in your Winter issue, may I draw your readers' attention to an unfortunate misstatement on page 129 of this book. Mr. Jackson attributes to Peter Brinson the responsibility for the size of Canada Council grants to the National Ballet School and the schools of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and The Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

The Council asked Mr. Brinson to assess the quality of the teaching at these institutions. He was not asked to advise on the amount of Council grants and did not do so. The responsibility for such decisions rests entirely with the Council.

The substantial increase in the Council's grant to the National Ballet School in 1975 was based on an analysis of the salaries paid to the School staff in comparison to those paid to similarly qualified staff at other institutions. In the sixties and early seventies there was a rapid rise in the salary scales of teachers in the Toronto public school system and at post-secondary institutions such as York and Ryerson. It became evident that unless the National Ballet School could upgrade its salaries, it would lose many of its best teachers to competitive employers. The entire increase in the Council's grant was absorbed into staff salaries which make up about 70% of the School's budget. Even with this increase the School has been unable to offer salaries which match those paid by other educational institutions.

Mr. Jackson tells me that his criticism of Mr. Brinson was based on information contained in a newspaper article. In view of the unfairness of the comment, it is regrettable that he would rely on such a source.

Yours sincerely,
Timothy Porteous
Associate Director
The Canada Council

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Noticeboard

Dance-lovers who have given up hope of ever seeing the New York City Ballet perform in Canada will at least be comforted to know that the 97-strong company will be within shooting distance of Southern Ontario audiences when it appears from March 28-31 at the Shea's Buffalo Theater. A selection of works from its current repertoire will be performed, including George Balanchine's famous jewels and his more recent *Ballo della Regina*.

The Centenary of Rudolf Laban's birth will be celebrated in July 1979 with an International Symposium to be held at the Laban Centre, London, England. The symposium will provide an opportunity to discuss Laban's work, its history, present applications and future developments and should be an exciting and stimulating conference for everyone interested in human movement. Send enquiries to the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance, University of London, Goldsmiths College, New Cross, London SE14 6NW, England.

In answer to the prestigious International Ballet Conference in Varna, the first American-sponsored ballet competition will take place in Jackson, Mississippi, June 13-23, 1979. In conjunction with the competition will be a dance film festival, fine arts dance exhibit, international dance school, lecture demonstrations, and dance workshops.



Constantin Patsalas

Constantin Patsalas, soloist and choreographer of the National Ballet of Canada,

has received a \$5,000 prize for a ballet entitled *Piano Concerto* from the Boston Ballet Choreographer's Showcase. Patsalas has been a member of the National Ballet for six years, and a number of his works has been included in the repertoire.

The Eighth Annual Dance Video and Film Festival will be held June 2 and 3, 1979 in New York. Film and videotapes of all dance forms as well as dance therapy, dance education, mime and experimental performance art may be submitted for pre-screening. The deadline for application is March 1. Films and tapes must be submitted by April 15. Contact: Dance Films Association, Inc., 250 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Vancouver Ballet Society have, perhaps, found a solution to the shortage of male dancers. They are offering free ballet classes to interested young men. Former Principal of the China Ballet of Peking, Mr. Chiat Goh, has been engaged to teach these classes at the Scottish Auditorium, 12th Avenue and Fir Street, Vancouver, Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

David Adams will be conducting the Vancouver Ballet Society's 1979 Ballet Seminar from March 22 to April 1.

Better Bodyworks Dance Theatre is a newly formed Vancouver dance group presenting jazz, contemporary and improvisational dance. Director Valerie Savannah, and seven young women gave their first concert in early December.

ALBERTA

Year-round programming for The Banff Centre School of Fine Arts has been approved in principle by the Alberta government. The transition to a year-round conservatory is expected to take five years. In addition to the existing year-round Visual Arts programme, there will be extensive programmes in Music, Theatre, Dance, Opera, Design and Electronic Media. Admission is to be based on talent. The dance programme is envisioned as an intensive two-year programme for 20 exceptional dance-artists (10 in each year) with the potential to be creative leaders in dance. History of Dance, Notation, Musicality, Choreography, Technical Theatre and Visual Media would all be integrated into this advanced performance programme.

The Alberta Ballet Company's spring season featured the world premiere of *Three-part Invention*, a new ballet by Brian Macdonald set to music by Edmonton composer Malcolm Forsyth.

The company's 1979/80 season will open next October with the National Ballet of Canada. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet will present *The Nutcracker* in December and the Houston Ballet will present *Giselle* and *Coppélia* in January '80. The Alberta Ballet's own performances this fall will feature new choreography by the Artistic Director, Brydon Paige.

SASKATCHEWAN

Western Canada has a new dance organization—Prairie Dance Lab. While members of the newly formed Regina group do give dance performances, the main focus of their programme is to offer an educational and community service. They give courses, workshops and demonstrations in schools, universities and colleges, Regina City Parks and Recreation and other social service organizations.

MANITOBA

Contemporary Dancers premiered another Judith Lander/Lynne Taylor collaboration in their January season at Winnipeg's Playhouse Theatre. The new work, *Diary*, is the story of Lander's childhood in Winnipeg and is dedicated to Winnipeg teacher Sara Udow.

During March the company will be touring the United States. Included on their itinerary are performances in North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin.

A specially commissioned work by Judith Marcuse will be premiered in their spring season in Winnipeg, April 12-14.

Former company member Stephanie Ballard has been appointed Director of the Apprentice Programme of Contemporary Dancers.

Sundance is a new modern dance theatre company in Winnipeg that is bound to enliven the Manitoba dance community with its concerts, classes and presentations in schools and community centres. Founders of the new company are Odette Heyn, Sybrig Dokter, Joanne Tokaryk and musician/composer Fred Penner. Their dance/theatre presentations combine narrative, song, music and movement. Two

works in their repertory, *Blunder* and *Lisa and the Owl* are based on fairytales and assume audience participation.

ONTARIO

Yves Cousineau has been appointed the new chairman of the York University Department of Dance. Professor Cousineau was a member of the National Ballet of Canada for 19 years and is well-remembered as a principal character dancer for the company. He joined the Faculty of Fine Arts at York in 1970 teaching in both the dance and theatre departments and has also taught at the National Ballet School and at Québec Eté Danse. In 1972 he assumed a full-time position in the Dance Department. He succeeds Professor Grant Strate who founded the department and was, for six years, its chairman.

For the third consecutive year, the University of Ottawa has hosted a free dance series in the University Centre aimed at bringing a diverse selection of Canadian solo artists and companies to the community. Participating in the series this year were Pointépiénu, Fulcrum, Muna Tseng, Terrill Maguire, Judith Marcuse, Chatouille, Chocolat et Bezom, Lise et Gilles Paquin. The series will finish with Mime Omnibus of Montreal, March 13 and Menaka Thakkar of Toronto, April 13.

Ann Ditchburn's ballet *Mad Shadows* was made into a film this January by the CBC. The one-hour film, produced by Don Richards and directed by Eric Till, will be aired on CBC-TV's Musicamera Series in the fall of 1979.

A dance concert will be held March 8-10 in Burton Auditorium, York University. Choreography by students and faculty of the Dance Department will be performed.

The Y.M.H.A. Programme in Dance is presenting a Sunday Concert Series this year in the Studio of the Leah Posluns Theatre. The series began with The Toronto Dance Theatre, January 28 and Dancemakers, February 4. The Ottawa Dance Theatre will appear on April 1; Ace Buddies will be in residence at the Studio April 23 - 29, giving workshops and school performances through the week and evening performances April 23 - 29. On May 6 the Judy Jarvis Dance and Theatre Company will perform.

Theatre in Motion is a new mime company founded by Naomi Tyrrell, formerly of the Paul Gaulin Mime Company. Working with her on the company's first show—*Birth of a Motion*—are Scott Smith, Brenda Carr and Pete Muir.



Naomi Tyrrell

Danny Grossman, winner of the 1978 Chalmers Award for Choreography, has moved his young company into its own studios at 507 King Street East. The company performed at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa in January and in February they visited Hamilton, St. Catharines, Guelph, London and Waterloo.

Elizabeth Chitty, the Toronto-based dancer-choreographer will be in residence at the Alberta College of Art in Calgary from March 12 to 17 and then, for a month, at Western Front in Vancouver.

Choreographer Paula Ravitz and dancers Denise Fujiwara and Joe Bietola embarked on a small tour this winter with musicians Paul Hodge and Tina Pierson. In February the group performed at Peter Robinson College, Trent University in Peterborough, and in the Art Gallery of Ontario dance series. They will visit Kingston, March 1, give a workshop and performance March 2 and 3 at the Musée des beaux arts, Montreal, and March 4 they will perform at the SAW gallery, Ottawa.

The 7th National Dance in Canada Conference, to be held at the University of Waterloo from June 27 to July 2, is well underway. This will be the last dance conference of the seventies and therefore looks towards the future. 'The Future' will be the main focus of conference sessions which will examine the following topics: Dance/Creative Thought and Expression; Dance/Physical; Dance/The Arts; Dance/Our Role in Society. Speakers, teachers and panelists noted for their progressive and innovative ideas will address themselves to these areas.

Confirmed key-note speakers are Gertrude

Lang, Chairman of the Canada Council, Bella Lewitsky, Artistic Director of the Bella Lewitsky Dance Company, of California and Lukas Fosse, composer and musician.

The initial response to the call for papers, teachers, speakers and performers has been enthusiastic and it is expected that more than 700 delegates will take part in a conference which may well come to be recognised as a crucial turning point in the history of Canadian dance.

On February 28, a fund-raising gala was held in the opera house of the National Arts Centre, Ottawa, for the proposed Capital Ballet of Canada. Carlos Arduh and his wife Beatriz Mora, both formerly of the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, have plans for a company that will present full-length ballet classics. Arduh and Mora have been in Ottawa since May last year and have already established a ballet school. They hope to begin work with a troupe of 14-20 dancers and an operations budget of \$200,000.

During October Missing Associates (Peter Dudar and Lily Eng) presented performances, film and video showings in Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Belgium and Great Britain. This is the third European tour since their formation in 1972.

Toronto modern dance company, Rinmon have provided an unusual diversion for shoppers at the Eaton Centre. Late in January they gave a series of dance performances and classes at the Centre. March 1-3 the company will participate in Eaton's 'Uncrate the Sun' promotion.

In January and February Ballet Ys hosted a 'Song 'N' Dance Series' featuring performances by Ballet Ys dancers, Daisy Debolt and Mendelson Joe, Pointépiénu modern dance company from Montreal, Marie-Lynn Hammond with Jack Grunsky, Andrew Harwood of Fulcrum Contact Improvisation and Dance Plus Four.

Late in the fall Toronto dancer and choreographer Susan Cash presented a full evening of her own work at 15 Dance Lab. The various dance and music talents of 11 performers were featured in Susan's first concert since her graduation from York's Dance Department last spring.

Elaine Bowman, former principal dancer with the now-defunct Marchowsky Dance Theatre Company, currently teaching Graham technique for the Toronto Dance Co-op, is co-ordinating the dance division of *Curtain Call*, a festival promoting women in the performing arts in Canada, February 23-25.

Studio 10 Summerhill Ballet is a new dance group in Toronto directed by Teresa Kowall, former dancer with the Harbinger

Dance Company of Detroit. In late November Kowall, in collaboration with Alexandra Langham and Joseph Starr, gave a concert of original dance, mime and theatre works at 15 Dance Lab.

Maryann Balay, editor of *Performing Arts in Canada* has announced the appointment of Graham Jackson as dance editor. Mr. Jackson is a well-known Toronto dance critic, author (*Dance as Dance* being his most recent work) and frequent contributor to this magazine, *Onion* and several other publications.

QUEBEC

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens is currently settling the details of a tour which will take the company to several cities in different parts of Europe for a month, starting in late June.

The company has also signed a contract with Columbia Artists Management Inc. for a tour of the United States during the 1979/80 and subsequent seasons.

In January and February *Entre-Six* toured South Western Ontario including performances in Hamilton, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Oakville. For the first month of the tour Karen Kain and Frank August were guest artists.

February 20-25 the company was in Paris to perform *Three Pieces Taken From a Children's Program* and *Peter and the Wolf* at Le Théâtre du Jardin. This first overseas appearance of *Entre-Six* is part of the International Festival of the Year of the Child.

From February 27 to April 7 the company will tour Quebec and New Brunswick. Plans are in the making for a tour to Paris, London and Germany in the spring of 1980.

Guest teachers at Quebec Eté Danse this year will include Olga Merinova, Elaine Werner, Lee Ann Griffiths, Michael Maule (Ballet), Walter Nicks, Poli Rodgers (Jazz), Phyllis Lamhut (Modern). This intensive summer dance session which takes place annually in Lennoxville, Quebec, will be held July 14 to August 18, offering a two-week Teachers' Curriculum, followed by a three-week Dance Technique Curriculum.

'Qui danse?' an evening of new dance at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts featured the work of independent choreographers Iro Tembeck, Margie Gillis, Daniel Léveillé, Le Grand Jeu, Ilana Schwartz, Marie Chouinard, Angie Frank, Daniel Soulières, Fiona Griffiths, Monique Giard and Amarelle. The next new dance series at

the museum will be held the first week of March.

Le Groupe Nouvelle Aire, now in their tenth season, presented new works February 23-25 at the Théâtre Centaur 2. The programme included *Fil d'images* by Martine Epoque and *Rêve 1* by Paul-André Fortier.

NOVA SCOTIA

The Halifax modern dance company *Sekai and Company* gave a performance on February 4 at Immaculata Auditorium. Company member Jeanne Robinson presented a concert of her own work on February 9 at Odin's Eye Cafe.

Correction

In our last issue a *Dance Series* was attributed to the sponsorship of the University of Western Ontario. In fact, the University of Waterloo are the sponsors. Our apologies to both universities.

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