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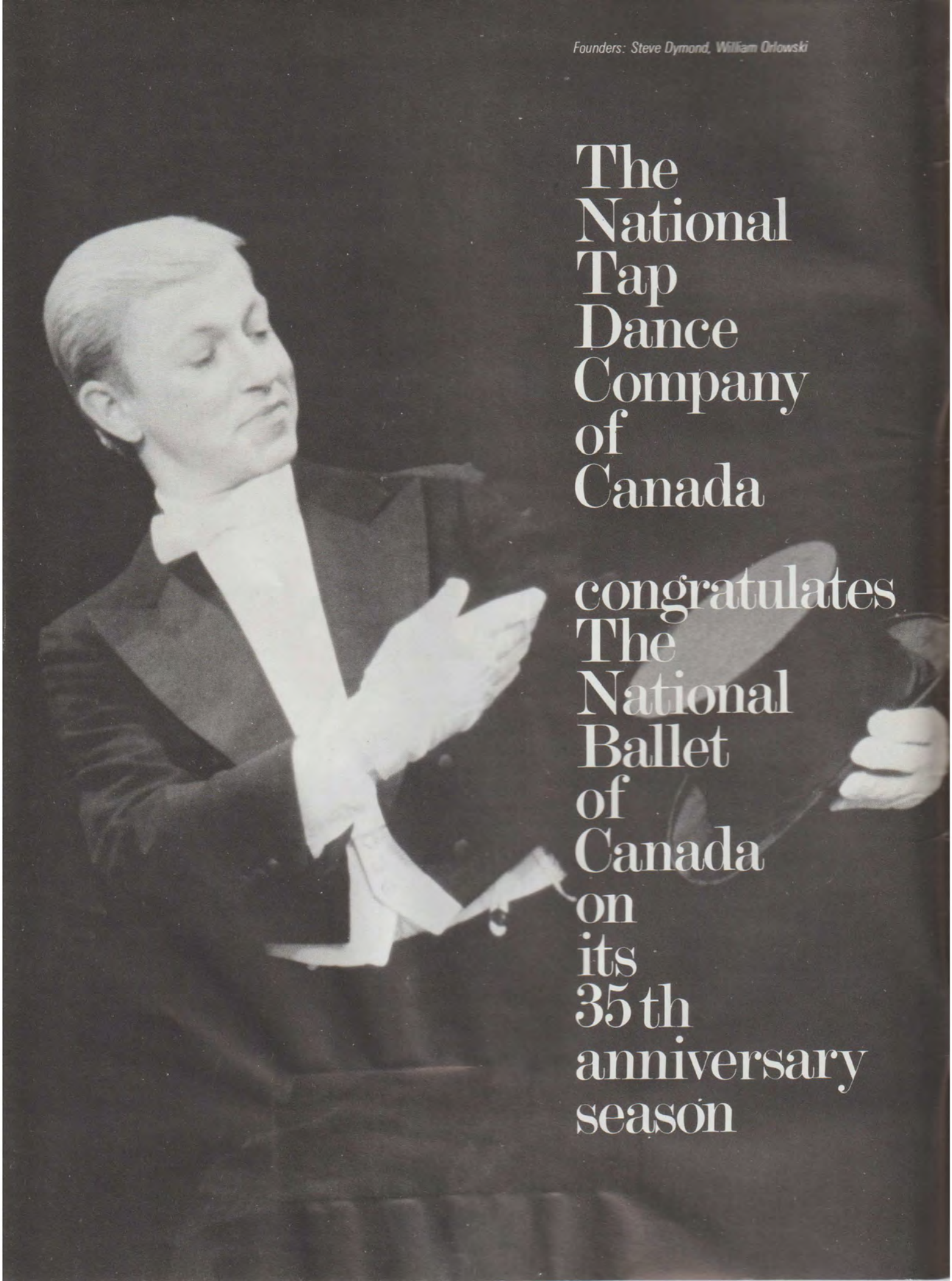
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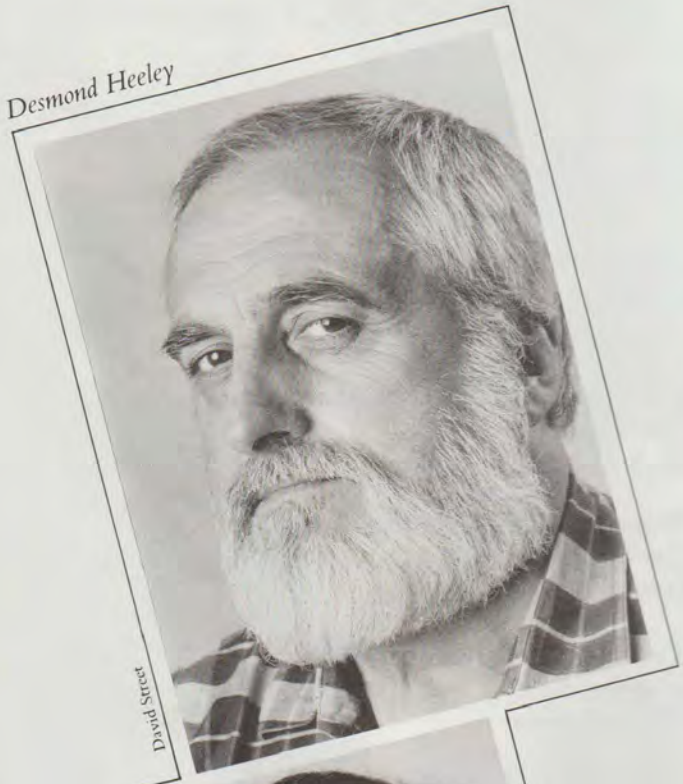
Le nouveau logo de Danse au Canada *est une création d'Elaine Laframboise Jewell, 1986.*

COVER: A costume sketch by Desmond Heeley for the National Ballet of Canada production of *The Merry Widow*. *Photograph by Andrew Oxenham.*

Designing Minds:

Desmond Heeley and Denis Joffre



Desmond Heeley

David Street

Ronny Shinder

Denis Joffre

by Pat Kaiser

In the program notes for a dance performance, the names of costume and set designers usually occupy the space just below that of the choreographer. But, while the décor may be praised and the costumes admired, their creators are essentially overlooked—faceless tools of the choreographer, providing nice wrapping for the only true substance on the stage, the choreography.

Relegating the designers to the land of unsung heroes is as much a long-standing tradition as it is an injustice. The choreographer, of course, is supervisor over a group of people working toward one goal, *his* goal; but *collaboration* makes a memorable dance work. No matter how strong the choreography, whether or not a dance makes an impact can depend on whether the artist at the sketchpad is merely competent or gifted.

Desmond Heeley and Denis Joffre are two of the most prominent designers working in Canadian ballet and modern dance. At first glance, however, they would appear to have little more in common than their sketchpads.

A big, comfortable woolly bear of a man, Desmond Heeley stands in a fabric-cluttered room at the National Ballet of Canada. The large wardrobe staff is busy with scissors and conversation at rows of tables. "Welcome to chaos!" he quips, above the noise.

Born in England, Heeley is the very definition of the international designer. Since his early days, in the 1940s and '50s, at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-on-Avon and Covent Garden in London, the Tony Award-winning designer has racked up a long list of design credits embracing theatre, opera and ballet for companies around the world.

For the National Ballet of Canada, he has given fairy-tale enchantment to Erik Bruhn's production of *Swan Lake* (1967) and spell-binding Gothic life to Peter Wright's *Giselle* (1970). And in 1985 he pulled off a handsome tidying-up of a hand-me-down production of *Don Quixote*.

A Heeley stage is a three-dimensional Disney fairy-tale that casts an intoxicating spell. Malevolent, sequinned Black Queens, damsels dressed in flowing silken gowns and rustics clothed in burnished velvet tones make their way through opulent halls and story-book courtyards of an old Europe that never existed anywhere but in the imagination.

Yet Heeley insists that "ballet can't be just a succession of *Swan Lakes* and *Sleeping Beauties*, and I have the utmost re-

spect for modern ballet and designers who can make 'rubber band' clothes. But my specialty," he smiles, without apology, "is the Romantic ballet."

In another part of downtown Toronto, Denis Joffre, Toronto Dance Theatre's wardrobe staff of one, alternates between a sewing machine and cutting board in the company's quiet basement studio.

Joffre, since his 1980 appointment as the company's resident costume designer, has shown himself to be a wizard at the art of creating "rubber-band" clothes. His designs range from bizarre—"x-ray" leotards for Luc Tremblay's *Chiaroscuro* (Danse Partout, 1980)—to dreamy—blue unitards for Patricia Beatty's *Skyling* (Toronto Dance Theatre, 1981).

But modern dance does not live by unitards alone, and Joffre has proven himself equal to all sorts of costuming demands—from the sombre figures suggestive of Depression-era workers in David Earle's *Sacre Conversazione* (1985) to the mythical, goat-legged demons of Christopher House's *Goblin Market* (1986).

He has designed, cut and sewn the costumes for some 60 pieces, mostly for Toronto Dance Theatre's diverse quartet of choreographers—Beatty, Earle, House and Peter Randazzo. And in recent years he has branched out, to critical acclaim, with designs for Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Danse Partout, Dancemakers and, this season, Contemporary Dancers Canada.

Born in Ottawa, Joffre made his professional debut as a designer for dance with an evening of David Earle's works in Toronto in 1980. Alina Gildiner, writing in *The Globe and Mail*, described his costumes for *Frostwatch* as "blocks of pure deep colour cut in modified Japanese style [that] echoes Earle's movements". She went on to say that "all of Joffre's costumes . . . are evidence of the same sensibility and purity of line and design that Earle has"—an appraisal that aptly sums up what a Joffre stage is all about.

This season Desmond Heeley has returned to the National Ballet to recreate his sets and costumes for Ronald Hynd's production of *The Merry Widow*, originally choreographed for the Australian Ballet in 1975. It will open the National Ballet's fall season in Toronto, part of a year-long celebration of the company's 35th anniversary.

Heeley recalls his arrival in Australia: "The choreography was completed, and they told me, 'You lead, we'll follow.' It was the nicest compliment I ever received."

Judging by the success of *The Merry Widow* at home in Australia and abroad, the compliment was also thoroughly warranted. Following the work's 10th-anniversary performance by the Australian Ballet, Vicki Brownbill wrote in *Dance Australia* that "Desmond Heeley created designs that have gone down in Australian theatrical history as quite the most lavish".

"Theatre should not be some ghastly, uptight experience," Heeley asserts. "*The Merry Widow* is a wonderful adult *Nutcracker*. It's like chocolate cake!" He laughs. "Who can turn *that* down?"

He surveys a sumptuous white lace *Merry Widow* gown under construction. "The style [at the National Ballet] is phenomenal, always has been! They take such care—and they laugh when I jump up and down with delight at the things they can do. If an artist has a very personal style, it's marvel-

Andrew Oxenham

Two of Desmond Heeley's costume sketches for The Merry Widow *(National Ballet of Canada, 1986).*

Ken Bell

The National Ballet's production of Swan Lake *(1967), choreographed by Erik Bruhn, was Heeley's first venture into ballet design in Canada. Bruhn told him that he wanted the work "to look like a fairy-tale".* Above: *The first scene of Act I, with Hazaros Surmeyan as the Prince.* Right: *The second scene of Act I, with Celia Franca as the Black Queen, Lois Smith as the Swan Queen and Earl Kraul as the Prince.*

ous to have such people who can put it all together."

National Ballet wardrobe supervisor Pat Scott explains: "Desmond has so much energy, and he wants that around him. He needs feedback." She smiles as she adds, "Everyone here [in wardrobe] loves him. The dancers adore him."

Her own working relationship with Heeley, she relates, "goes back to Stratford-on-Avon—*before* he was a designer. Desmond lived near Stratford and worked in the prop shop [at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre—now the Royal Shakespeare Company]."

In 1957 Heeley came to Canada to design Michael Langham's production of *Hamlet* for the Stratford Festival. It marked the beginning of a long and fruitful association that continues to this day. Among the plays he has designed for the Festival are Langham's productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1963), co-designed with Tanya Moiseiwitsch, and *Arms and the Man* (1982); John Hirsch's *Richard III* (1967), *The Tempest* (1982), *As You Like It* (1983) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1984); Michael Bawtree's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1972); and Brian Bedford's *Titus Andronicus* (1978) and *Coriolanus* (1981).

He is not certain what inspired Erik Bruhn to ask him to undertake designs for his 1967 production of *Swan Lake*, which was the designer's first venture into ballet in Canada. "I don't think [Erik] had seen my ballet stuff. I feel I've actually learned ballet here, in Canada, at the National Ballet."

Speaking of Bruhn, Heeley recalls that "like any good director, he told me the absolute essentials in the ballet—the things that *had* to be. He said, 'I want it to look like a fairy-tale, Desmond.' And then he trusted me entirely."

Bruhn's *Swan Lake* achieved instant notoriety for its blunt Oedipal premise and its glittery, tyrannical Black Queen. Less attention, however, has been lavished on the ballet's spectacular transitions between court and lakeside scenes—an

amazing movable feast of effects, scenery and props that seamlessly takes the Prince from court to lakeside without dropping the curtain.

Musing over the trickiness of the transitions, Dieter Penzhorn, the National Ballet's production director, declares, "You have to rely on a lot of people doing the right things at the right time—men pulling on ropes spread over a 50-foot area. And then there's the dry ice, which will do the strangest things—sometimes filling the stage nicely, or going back into the wings, or straight out and falling into the orchestra pit!"

He stresses, however, that the transitions generally run smoothly. "A good designer will not create something that isn't in existence. Desmond comes in with a clear idea of what he wants and will have it all worked out—rather than coming in and saying, 'This is what I want. You work it out.' And having *no* clue how to achieve it."

Heeley nods cheerfully. "There are designers who say, 'Just do it!' But I think the effects through. I like having hands-on, not just doing the drawing for the set and handing it over. I like to know *exactly* what's going on. I can build—and will, if I must. I do mock-ups, little models to scale. That's my scenery training!

"If you know how to do all that stuff," he continues, "it gives you a headstart that's terribly important."

Heeley reflects that "doing something new is always harder. Doing something like *Giselle* is easier—the 'railway lines' are known." Nonetheless, this Romantic ballet is burdened with a history and tradition that give a designer a great deal to live up to. In 1970 Peter Wright's production of the work for the National Ballet provided Heeley with that considerable challenge.

He speaks with satisfaction of his approach to the ballet: "Making another century—not the reality, but finding the essence, creating an aura, an atmosphere. With *Giselle*—which I've done four times—you can't play games. You have to make it look like an 1840s or '50s print."

Heeley's version features fallen Gothic pines. He replaced the customary big stone cross on Giselle's grave with one made of two twigs draped with a wreath of roses—"more touching, more accurate to the story, more 19th-century," he explains.

"Now, I had seen *Giselle* many times," Heeley relates, "and that second act . . . I had always thought, 'Dumb girls in dumb white dresses. *Why*?' "

He then proceeds to relate how he returned to the ballet's original libretto by Théophile Gautier for guidance. "I'm quoting freely here," he cautions. "[Gautier] said that they (the Wilis) were jilted brides who died for love, buried in unconsecrated ground. The hems of their dresses were always damp. So, the colour would be off-white, slightly browned. Not dumb girls in dumb white dresses, but ravishing Miss Havishams who had been buried for a long time."

Costume executor Angela Arana had just come to the National Ballet when *Giselle* was being built. She recalls her shocked introduction to Heeley's hands-on methods: "[There

Act II of Peter Wright's production of Giselle (1970) for the National Ballet, with Veronica Tennant in the title role, Sergiu Stefanschi as Albrecht and Nadia Potts as the Queen of the Wilis.

were] something like 30 [Wilis] costumes. I was always telling the wardrobe ladies, 'Clean your machines first. Keep the bodices clean.' And I kept the dresses packed like roses in boxes. And then the day he came in, there were the costumes, finished, beautifully white—and he threw them on the floor, took out his paints and sprayed them all over!"

Ballet tends to take design seriously. Two years ago Heeley was called in to refurbish the National Ballet's production of *Don Quixote*, which he describes as "a worn-out ballet" when he came to it. Referring to his designs for the dryads, he speaks of "softening" the costumes.

He returns to the same word when discussing his partial redesign, in 1979, of *Swan Lake*, talking about "softening [the costumes], making them quieter, removing the stuffiness". In an aside, he adds a brief swipe at the 1950s, when "tutus were short, perky—*beastly*!".

Heeley declares blissfully that "fashions have changed. Movement in fabric—I like it a lot." No matter the ballet under discussion, such words as "flow", "silken" and "rippling" recur throughout his conversation.

"It's all a matter of taste," he says. "It's *my* taste." But he makes it clear that a costume is one piece of a puzzle, "a part of a larger picture. Each small piece of a costume, each small role is important, designed to fit with everything. If someone says to you, 'What a beautiful dress!'—you've blown it."

Still, Heeley *is* a creator of beautiful dresses and costumes. His vivid sketches of the glorious gowns for *The Merry Widow* attest to the fact that it is as much the designer's ballet as it is the choreographer's.

Reflecting on the synthetic imitations that give the illusion of delicacy, Heeley says, "Technology's been very good. I love genuine silk organza, but people don't realize the beating ballet clothes take."

He speaks about things to be considered in choosing and buying fabric: "What is terribly important in a huge company [like the National Ballet] is that in the future you might have who-knows-how-many Valenciennes [a character in *The Merry Widow*]—and you have to have enough fabric for the next five years. And each fabric is chosen to fit with all the other fabrics, the other roles, the décor, everything. Choosing fabric is always so dodgy, anyway. It has to be fabric that, 10 years down the road, will bounce back to life each time it's put on."

When Heeley heads for the fabric stores, he also has other pressures influencing his choices. The budget—"I'll wave a national flag for anybody, but if it's cheaper in New York, I'll go there," he declares. And the time element—"If you need 400 yards, and they say they can get it in three weeks, it means five weeks! You just can't take the chance."

Early in the design process, a dancer is called in to try on a prototype costume, constructed in a fabric similar to the one chosen for the production—made, perhaps, from a remnant from another work. The aim is "to see what [the costume] does, how it moves," explains Angela Arana. "Then [Heeley] can see what he'll do with it—what happens if you add another layer, or cut it in another way. On a stand, it just doesn't work."

Heeley's particular creative approach can leave him very much at the mercy of those around him. He finds a limp dancer as discouraging as a dismal wardrobe staff. "There are those [dancers] who hate going into the fitting-room, but that's part of their job," he says. "Some of them don't *do* anything. They hardly move."

"Lack of enthusiasm cuts him off entirely," explains Arana, "but put [a costume] on another dancer who comes alive and moves beautifully, and that opens little crevices. He just starts blooming!"

Use of particular colours and fabrics is a Desmond Heeley trademark. "When I think of a Desmond Heeley costume," remarks Pat Scott, "I think of gold mesh, layers and layers of organza, gold and silver."

"Lots of frills, lots of glitter," adds Angela Arana.

A massive trek through the religions of past cultures from Africa to the Middle East, *Realm* was originally created for Toronto Dance Theatre, but in 1985 David Earle and Denis Joffre rechoreographed and redesigned it for the National Ballet of Canada.

Angela Arana worked with Denis Joffre on the project. She comments on the creative approaches used by Joffre and Desmond Heeley. "Quite different," she says. "Opposite."

Heeley, she relates, is "like a Picasso dreamer. He has his dream in mind, a vision very far away. His early design sketches are never very clear. What you do is draw a pattern and, with him, get a basic shape. From there, you consider all you can give him. You don't give him just one sleeve—you give him five *different* sleeves. He'll see one and say, 'Oh, that looks okay.' It's always a matter of giving him a million things, and from there he starts creating. He builds *into* a costume. It is the outer first, and the decorations, and he works down to the basics."

Whereas Joffre, she continues, "starts at the bottom—the basic elements first. The fabric, seeing the pattern, the lines—*then* the decorations. For me, to work with Denis was much easier than to work with Desmond, because we think the same way."

From observing Joffre at work, Arana concludes that he is concerned with "what his costumes *give* to the movement, not what the movement *does* to them".

Joffre is known for his inventiveness and elegance of line—and always has been. From the age of 13, he engaged in regular sessions with the sewing machine—adding to his own wardrobe, dressing high-school productions, apprenticing with tailors and working part-time doing alterations.

For a while, he was a dancer, performing as a soloist with a semi-professional ballet company in Dayton, Ohio.

By the time he met up with David Earle and Toronto Dance Theatre, he was a successful Toronto-based fashion designer with a private label and a growing clientele.

Until then, professional fashion design and dance had not overlapped in his life in terms of bearing artistic offspring. The two came together to produce a potent and unique combination as choreographer Earle and designer Joffre discovered a mutual affinity for Japanese design. This discovery led to the floor-length skirted costumes for the mourning man and woman in Earle's agonizingly powerful *Frostwatch* (1980), part of their first collaboration, an evening of Earle's works.

Joffre juggled costume and fashion design for more than four years. He explains the ease of finally bidding farewell to what he calls "the personal expression of fashion design", relating that he was "becoming more and more interested in research for the stage. More intrigued by the possibilities . . .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Over his cutting-board at Toronto Dance Theatre, he discusses his current fascination in design—not line, but colour. "Colour really interests me. Because my lines are so simple, I have to be very specific with what I do in colour in order to get across what the choreographer is trying to say."

No more concise example exists in Joffre's repertoire than the minimalist unitards he created for Christopher House's *The Excitable Gift* (1982). Its three unrelated movements portray severe and sparse mobilizations of warders and prisoners, a tender pas de deux and a punchy, exuberant finale. For Joffre, it was as much a work about colour, moving appropriately from dark burgundy and blue—what he calls "colours of repression"—to intimate pastel peaches and ending with dazzling explosions of sunlight yellow and what he describes as "French blue". His words are a telling reminder of his couturier background.

The choices may seem obvious enough, but many a modern dance work muffles its intentions and potential by being even just slightly off the mark in choice of costumes and colours. More often, modern dance wobbles off in plainly inappropriate wardrobe directions—sometimes overdressing, sometimes looking like afterthought.

Radical new art forms are born and nurtured in a spirit of abandoning classical forms and everything connected with them. But they must eventually grow up—or stagnate. And modern dance continues to underestimate the importance of fine costume specialists.

Denis Joffre is in demand full time—which places him virtually in a category by himself in modern dance.

David Earle has said that modern dance is "a very challenging *métier*. How many ways can you clothe the body and still have it be seen? It's always miraculous when someone comes up with a costume design that allows the dancer to move and be seen and still looks like an original notion in clothing. It should be impossible, but Denis does it regularly!

"And," he continues, "it's perhaps unique to modern dance that you can have dancers within a work who are completely opposite body types that one design wouldn't apply to. Denis can come up with an absolute look, successful on a wide range of bodies."

Joffre himself says of the role of the costume designer: "Of course, it's the choreographer's inspiration, his mood, his theme—then you try to apply your own image and come at it from a different angle. I get to put a bit of what I'm about into each piece."

Toronto Dance Theatre's four choreographers are fond of "what [he's] about". Says David Earle: "I like designed things. I like formality in movement, and Denis' work as a fashion designer gives him a strong formal sense." He speaks of Joffre's designs as "solutions"—while Joffre sees each dance piece as a "challenge".

Christopher House observes that "Denis always takes the extreme position. That way, you fight it out and come out with something extremely good."

For House's *Glass Houses* (1983) the inspiration for the costumes came from unexpected sources. Joffre describes the route he took: "It's an extremely formal dance in structure. There's a certain shaping to it as far as ongoing movement is concerned that, for some reason, spoke to me of the 1950s—the Bohemians, the poets, the jazz musicians. I started researching the cut and line of what they wore—the sleeveless turtleneck, for example.

"And the colours!" He suddenly laughs. "*The Jetsons*! The animated peach, the Windsor purple, the aqua. I said to Christopher, 'This dance talks to me of this period.' And he said, 'Oh, that's interesting. Let's see what we get.' Because he hadn't thought of it at all."

To audiences, the inspiration isn't obvious. "What's obvious is that the costumes work for the piece," Joffre says confidently. "If inspiration was too obvious, it would impose the wrong kind of impression."

As unobtrusive is the enormous influence of abstract expressionism on Joffre himself. *Colour*, again. "The colour [used by the expressionists] is so intimate and sophisticated," he explains. "Figures, forms—they're way down the line of what they're trying to do. They go for emotion. Textures are phenomenal!"

He singles out "the Canadian boys—William Ronald, Graham Coughtry and Gordon Raynor". Joffre worked with Coughtry and Raynor on Patricia Beatty's *Painters and the Dance* (1983). "They have an aesthetic that strongly influenced me," he declares.

Beatty observes that Joffre "loves working with artists. He learns from them."

Denis Joffre's costume sketches for (top) Christopher House's Goblin Market (Toronto Dance Theatre, 1986) and (bottom) Luc Tremblay's Chiaroscuro (Danse Partout, 1980).

Frank Richards

Joffre's own designs for Frostwatch *(1980) provided the inspiration for his costuming of* In Paradisum *(1982).* Left: *Grace Miyagawa and Charles Flanders of Toronto Dance Theatre in David Earle's* Frostwatch. Below: *Edward Hillyer and members of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in James Kudelka's* In Paradisum.

Robert Etcheverry

For Christopher House's *Goblin Market*, commissioned for Expo 86, Denis Joffre's learning process entered a new phase—"a continuation of a new direction for me," he comments. "I was painting and fibre-sculpting. Aiko Suzuki [set designer for *Goblin Market*] is a master of fabric-sculpting, and I was inspired by her work."

He points to the strange, leafy green headdresses and costumes on hangers. "I had to abstract the image, as well as paint the main body underneath. But I *go* for an abstract image, unless I'm given a certain time period. *Then* I go for the general shape of an era—the silhouette—and pare it down and get rid of unnecessary detailing."

Veronica Tennant, principal dancer with the National Bal-

let, danced in Toronto Dance Theatre's *Court of Miracles*. She recalls that her dress was "brilliantly cut. Incredibly simple, yet suggesting heritage—Renaissance, medieval, all of that. And it felt wonderful. One of [Joffre's] strongest points is the comfort of his costumes. Never inhibiting, as if you can't move—which happens all too often!"

Denis Joffre is now in the process of tackling a new challenge. "A lot of what I do is determined through the process at the [sewing] machine," he explains. "But, for my career to evolve, I'm going to have to come to terms with not having quite the same sort of hands-on [control]. And to find the time to expand the field of companies I work with."

Towards that end—"to get to the point of a Desmond Heeley," he says—Joffre is embarking on more large-scale collaborations.

His first encounter with a wardrobe department with more than one member was with *Court of Miracles*. "Co-designed with Susan Rome and one seamstress" is how he describes the process. "But [some] 50 performers and more than 300 costume pieces! It was an excellent exercise in working with other people, in having to refine my images more quickly in order to delegate the workload."

His first major project away from Toronto Dance Theatre offered, at its core, a small element of security. In 1982 James Kudelka—with whom he had already worked during the creation of *Dido and Aeneas* for Toronto Dance Theatre—approached him to costume his new work, *In Paradisum*, for Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

He describes the design process for *In Paradisum*: "I had been toying with fairly civilian images. I was in Stratford for *Dido and Aeneas* [at Stratford Summer Music]. I felt bombarded by the creativity around me—the location, the spectacular singers in *Dido*, the exhibit of [British designer] Leslie Hurry's work [at the Gallery]. Then I went to see *The Mikado*, designed by Susan Benson for the Stratford Festival, and got to see what someone could do with a real budget!

"I swear to you—and this is too cliché not to be true—I went down, very early in morning, to the river. There I was, soaking up the sun, jotting down some sketches, trying to think—amidst the swans, with the mist rising off the water," he recalls.

"Suddenly, this drawing I was doing took me back to an early Toronto Dance Theatre piece I did, *Frostwatch*—very abstract, very Oriental. The concept of giving an androgynous flavour to the cast came to me—the different personalities expressed through the necklines, the unitards with skirts giving James the option of removing the skirts when he wanted. The skirts would give this amazing mass of volume across the stage. And, then, with different shades of grey, they could highlight the more major characters, [using] more sombre tones for the others.

"Inside of an hour, I was going crazy, writing down all these ideas and drawing. Suddenly, everything was fitting together."

He reflects on the work: "I think I took it further than anyone expected. I was nervous as hell when I went to Montreal. I was apprehensive about them not understanding where I was coming from."

Joffre made his entrance into the "big league", toting his own very specific designs for unitards into a company accustomed to using its own. He shrugs over the wardrobe department's reaction to men in skirts: "They were feeling a little strange about that!"

Despite some early sticky moments, Joffre declares that "we ended up teaching one another things. [There were] techniques I didn't know, and there were different approaches I brought to their work."

He feels that *In Paradisum* is not only his finest work, but Kudelka's and composer Michael J. Baker's best as well. "A perfect collaboration," he says. He once described it as "more than the sum of its parts. We all knew something very special was going on. *In Paradisum* marked a change in all our careers."

The following year, the trio joined forces again for *Dracula*. Deirdre Kelly wrote in Toronto's *Globe and Mail* that, in Joffre's costumes, "each original design serves to delineate character, advance plot and develop Kudelka's theme".

In 1986, Christopher House's *Indagine Classica* brought Joffre back to Les Grands Ballets Canadiens yet again. "He did the most extraordinary colour schemes," declares House. "Odd juxtapositions, like royal blue with purple. His choice of colours is so successful—it's one of his best things."

David Earle's *Realm* brought Denis Joffre to the National Ballet of Canada. He recalls that "the wardrobe department at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens is smaller, and it was at least easier to walk into the National after working there, rather than the other way around. It was quite odd to have more than 20 wardrobe people. And there are the wardrobe maintenance people, as well!"

Referring not only to the very distinctive cut of the *Realm* attire, but also to the colours—*Realm* is a palette of subtly graded hues—Joffre declares, "It took them a while to understand what I was talking about."

He explains: "I don't think [the National Ballet wardrobe staff] ever had to dye quite that many colours—colours *so* specific, *so* unique. There was no way we could have bought them. We had a certain amount of time; we were pressed. There were the 20 people upstairs, waiting for the fabric to be dyed so that they could sew it.

"They did an excellent job of duplicating the colours. Phenomenal, beautiful! But they didn't get *quite* what I wanted. Now, that's something *I* would probably have played with 'til four in the morning." He hesitates, and then slowly repeats, "I *have* to come to terms with not having quite the same sort of hands-on [control]. But right now, I don't want to do that. I enjoy it."

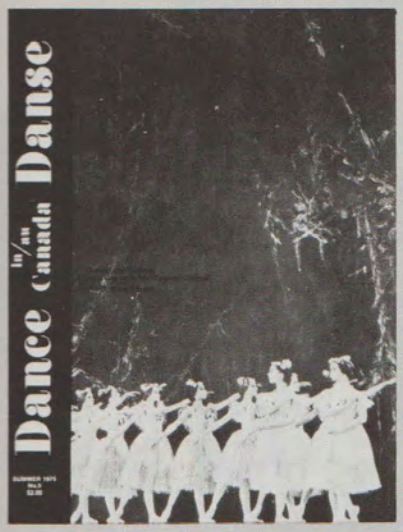
Asked to define himself, Denis Joffre says, "I'm a dance imagist." He pauses, then says, "I guess I'm an artist. Hey, it's taken me a long time to say that! I'm an artist!"

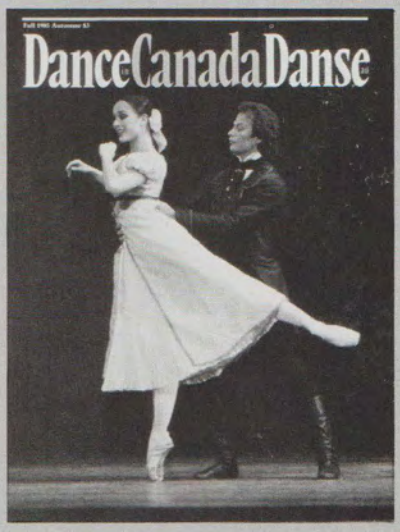
On the other hand, Desmond Heeley has said, "Design is not a great art. It's a very, very wonderful craft. *Maybe* art comes into it."

Costume and set designers have more than enough people willing to undervalue them. They hardly need to do it themselves.

Design is an extraordinary and indispensable art. Just ask the choreographers.

And, finally, ask the members of the audience. They might be vague on the parties responsible, but, as memory inevitably clouds the specifics of the choreography, the dancegoer will recall the magic of Bruhn's *Swan Lake* and Hynd's *Merry Widow*, and the power of Kudelka's *In Paradisum* and Earle's *Realm* by the distinctive images created by Desmond Heeley and Denis Joffre. •





Dance in Canada salutes

THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

on its 35th anniversary season

Claudia Moore and Robert Desrosiers
in Brass Fountain.

Claudia Moore

Finding the Right Balance

by Mary O'Connell

Claudia Moore, a haunting, powerful dancer with Desrosiers Dance Theatre, has a life that reflects her work, full of sudden, dramatic shifts that seem to change everything.

She has been with Robert Desrosiers from the beginning, the *very* beginning. As students, they met at the National Ballet School, where Moore had studied from the age of 12. They went on to dance together with the National Ballet of Canada, then across the globe—with Felix Blaska and Lindsay Kemp in Europe, Hugo Romero in Montreal and, back in Toronto, with Toronto Dance Theatre. In 1979 they married, but three years ago began living apart.

Moore has danced with Desrosiers Dance Theatre since it began in 1980—and *more* than just danced. As she puts it, "Even if he doesn't want to hear it, I usually have something to say to Robert about the work."

She is a collaborator and a contributor. All members of the company contribute to some extent, but Moore's connection to Desrosiers brings out special work. Their duets highlight a number of the company's pieces. She says that when they make a duet she creates some of the material, he creates some, and they put it all together.

Ultracity, which Desrosiers created in 1984, is a group piece that used this method. "I loved working on *Ultracity*," says Moore. "Usually Robert improvises to find the material, but with that piece the dancers improvised—sometimes for hours—and he developed the material from their improvisations. In the 'Moon Duet', Robert and I improvised in some men's clothes we'd found and came up with our best work."

Desrosiers creates densely imagistic work, with a surreal quality. Moore's own choreography points up the beauty of the small, mundane things in life and is peopled with odd characters that she bravely pulls from inside herself.

The theatricality of Desrosiers' work allows room for Moore's abilities as an actor—her sensitivity to gesture and her power to project her presence. She has a range of roles in his pieces and can play the wood nymph, the clowny man or the tragic Spanish dancer heroine; but her languorous use of time, the way she can fill stillness with rich expression and bare her guts, showing us her vulnerable secrets, isn't always given a full chance in Desrosiers' jumble of images and dynamic moves.

She enjoys working with the company. She likes the group of people, contributing to the choreography and, especially, the chance to perform often. "We communicate," she explains. "It's not a company where you just do what you're told. People have something to say, and they say it."

Cylla von Tiedemann

Claudia Moore and (left to right) *Eric Tessier-Lavigne, Jean-François Maccabee, Daniel Tremblay and Tom Brouillette in Robert Desrosiers' production of* Ultracity.

It hasn't always been so, however. The recent recognition that Desrosiers has gained has made things easier. "It was difficult for many years with Robert. He [has] a strong, creative energy, and sometimes it's hard to fit into that. We had some tough times. You just have to watch some of the old videos to recognize the manic energy. Now he's much more open, positive, much lighter than before."

After a car accident in 1985 that left her temporarily unable to dance, Moore realized that the company could cover for her for two to three months, if need be. Now she is considering taking some time off to pursue her own work and to teach.

"I've found, as I get older, that I need to feel like I'm really

Frank Richards

Claudia Moore in Toronto Dance Theatre's production of Mythos, *choreographed by David Earle.*

Rudi Christl

working," she relates. "I love working on new pieces like *Ultracity*—I like that intensity. It's difficult for me to do a program now where I only have a small part. Some of the tour programs are like that. I do *Brass Fountain*, which is a meaty piece, but that's about it."

During the early years there was time for other things, but now that Desrosiers is better known, and the company is getting more bookings, Moore has to find a way to fit her own work in. (She first choreographed for Toronto Dance Theatre's choreographic workshops and has pursued her independent work ever since, juggling her schedules as a company member and an independent choreographer.)

Compared to doing her own work, she says being in the company is like being on holiday—freed of responsibility for every aspect. "When I'm working on my own stuff, it's all-consuming," she explains. "I enjoy the process, the interaction with other people and the coming-together of my own ideas. It takes more of yourself to do your own work. It's a different job than being a dancer in someone else's work."

Moore is a positive and inspiring teacher. After years of ballet training—which is often based on a negative "that's not good enough" tone—Moore drew her influence from such modern dance teachers as ex-Cunningham dancer Mel Wong, who uses positiveness and respect for his students to help them work beyond the limitations they think they have.

It's that same positive interaction that Moore likes so much about choreographing. She enjoys collaborating with artists in disciplines other than her own—writers, musicians and visual artists. Movement is just one facet of expression, and she wants to explore all aspects of theatre.

Steal Threads, which she made in 1982, was a collaboration with musician Miguel Frasconi and poet Albert Gedraitis. Dressed in an old black dress and little hat, Moore played a woman jewel thief. It was cinematic, but had an intimacy that only a small chamber piece could give. "I'll see an image," she says, "and it will go off in its own direction. The woman jewel thief was someone I dreamed up.

"With *Escape and the Lights of Macao* [1983], it was a poem of Albert's about a boy who escaped from Vietnam. That set me thinking about all kinds of escape, and the piece grew from that."

She has also collaborated on bigger works. Two years ago she put together a large outdoor piece with six dancers, a group of sound poets called the Profit Motive, musician John Oswald and a sci-fi Chinese dragon. She liked experimenting in the city environment, without the tricks a theatre allows. "It was so wonderful to be outdoors," she recalls. "Toronto is a pretty straight city, and suddenly there was this creature from a different planet amid the downtown business suits!"

Moore contributed to Margaret Dragu's summer solstice piece, *X's and O's for the Longest Day of the Year*, which took place at Hamilton's Royal Botannical Gardens and went from dawn to dusk. Moore was impressed with Dragu's ability to create a piece that took hard work from a lot of different people and was complex to organize, but was genuinely enjoyed

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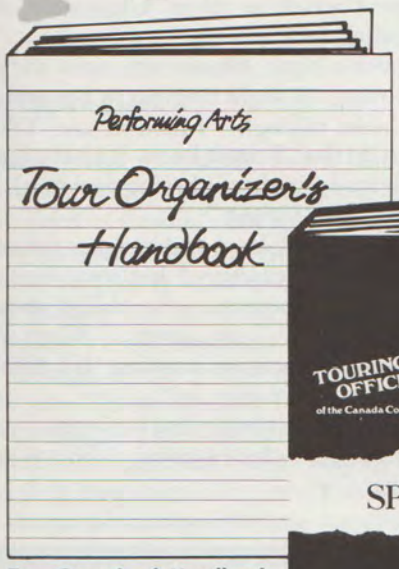

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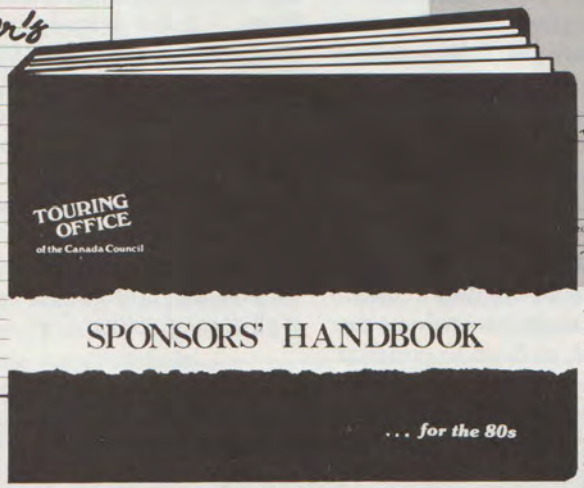

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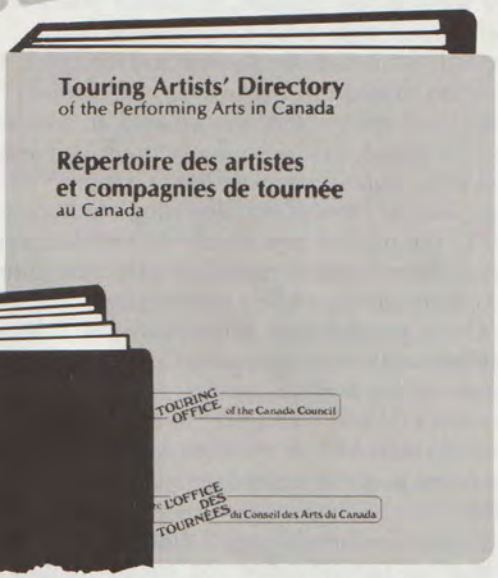

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by the performers and members of the audience, who were from all walks of life.

"It's getting harder for me to just throw something together now," she declares. "I want to work my pieces more and let them grow. *Escape and the Lights of Macao* was performed in Toronto at the Music Gallery and then toured to Montreal a few months later. I had a chance, in between, to look at it, think about it and change it. I realized that it was too serious, so I incorporated more humour into it. That improved it and gave it more range. Humour communicates well. If a work is too obscure, audiences will lose interest. They can respond right away to something funny."

Moore will let herself be foolish and exposed, if that is what is needed to learn. In a clowning workshop in Paris, she played children's games and was amazed at how much she had lost. "As a child, you're so sharp, quick and agile. Then, when you grow older, you specialize and lose so much."

Philippe Gautier, one of her clowning teachers, once told her, "Go to the market and watch the shopkeepers. *That's* performing! They have to incorporate the most mundane, [such as] asking after people's children, into showing their wares." Good performance does touch on the mundane, Moore believes. It is tied to the small, simple things in life, as well as to the big and spectacular.

Gautier also told her, "You have to be strong as spring. Go walk in the woods, look at the trees and nature. If you want people to come to the theatre to see you, you have to be *that* compelling."

A workshop she did with actor Yoshi Oida had her walking slowly around a room, chanting, for 20 minutes. It taught her a new kind of concentration. He taught his students that they couldn't perform without knowing themselves first.

After the accident, which left her with a cracked vertebra in her neck and a bruised spine, Moore found out just how strong she was. It was a harrowing experience, but it taught her about her will to survive.

She lost the use of her arms and was completely dependent on others to feed her. She was told she might never dance again—frightening to someone who had never worked outside the dance world.

Over several months, she discovered new disciplines—drawing, painting and reading—that could be a path of growth for her.

The vertebra healed on its own, and, through Mitzva technique, she retrained herself to move. Ultimately, she recovered—in a miraculous four months.

Since having such a scare, Moore says now she gets great pleasure from moving. A slight tingling in her arms reminds her of what she went through. "I used to say, 'Oh, I'm not sure I'll be able to do that, I don't know if I have the energy.' Now, I know I made it through [the accident], so I can pretty well do anything I want."

The same drive keeps Claudia Moore confident that she can work out the right balance of her own work and her work as a performer. "There are other things about life besides dancing that I enjoy," she asserts. "When you work with a company, you sometimes wonder, 'If I didn't put my energy into that, where would it go?'

"I think performers have to be true to themselves. I know I'll find the right balance—there's going to be a way to make it all come together." •

The State of Dance in Montreal:

Terpsichore is Restless

by Linde Howe-Beck

Dynamic and inventive! Fertile and explosive! Repeatedly during the past few years, Montreal has been heralded as Canada's hot spot for innovative dance.

This was underlined again in August when Ginette Laurin was awarded the Jean A. Chalmers award for choreographic excellence, making her the third Quebecer in five years to win the country's most important dance prize.

Laurin belongs to the young generation of dancemakers who in the late '70s sprang fully formed from the bosom of Groupe Nouvelle Aire to take their hometown by storm with their revolutionary personal energy and style. Quickly they broadened their base across the country and abroad, knocking the wind out of spectators with their daredevil feats.

Their success has had a springboard effect on others, and every year or so there is another crop of choreographic aspirants doing their zany, acrobatic and often derivative best.

The result of all this is that dance has finally come of age as the fastest growing performing art in Canada.

In some circles, the whispered words "La La La" or "O Vertigo" or "Margie Gillis" elicit voluble praise and a flurry of ticket-buying. Soloist Gillis is the country's top-selling dance property; in Montreal, she inevitably sells out early and extends her season.

Yet Terpsichore is restless in Montreal. The ballet scene lags considerably behind the independent innovators—ballet choreographers being slower to develop.

But although Les Grands Ballets Canadiens tries to be all things to all people with a smorgasbord repertoire that some say is needlessly—almost heedlessly—eclectic and unfocused, it is the skyrocketing instant entertainment popularity of the independents that signals cause for alarm.

They are threatened with a high burnout rate simply because they strive daily to shock themselves as well as others, pushing to expand their individual dance vocabularies with risky, violent physicality.

Already the formidable talent of Paul-André Fortier, darling of the Canadian dance world in 1981, has shown signs of wilting, although he will launch a new repertory company, Montréal Danse, this winter to showcase the weird and wonderful Montreal post-moderns of the '80s.

After a brilliant start, Daniel Léveillé dropped out a couple of years ago, dumping his company into the lap of the capable Ginette Laurin. She picked it up, called it O Vertigo and ran it in a blaze of critical and popular glory.

Edouard Lock of La La La has abandoned his reclusive and elusive lifestyle in favour of a structured schedule and international raves. His group left [in September] on a two-month tour of Europe, which for the sake of the dancers was limited to 30 performances, despite pressures from presenters to do more.

To get a fix on Montreal dance, it's best to take a glance backward. But first, keep in mind that while most centres have developed three parallel streams of dance—ballet, modern dance and experimental or post-modern movement—Montreal has only two. There has never been a tradition of modern dance here.

Formalized theatrical dance is barely 300 years old. But dance in Montreal dates back only 38 years, to a small production staged in 1948 by experimentalists Jeanne Renaud and Françoise Sullivan and their artist friends. That was short-lived, and the two innovators went their separate ways, to impact on dance again at later dates.

Ten years passed before a different style—classical ballet—was introduced by Ludmilla Chiriaeff, founder of Les Grands

Margie Gillis, whom Linde Howe-Beck describes as Canada's top-selling dance property.

Pierre Zabbal

Members of O Vertigo danse in Timber, *choreographed by Ginette Laurin. Recipient of the 1986 Jean A. Chalmers Choreographic Award, Laurin is the third Quebecer in five years to win the Award.*

Ballets Canadiens. Up to this point, Montreal had been content with American and European ballet touring companies.

Les Grands faced an uphill struggle in the face of opposition from the Roman Catholic Church. But it succeeded, largely because the little group of dancers became popular through a new medium—television. Regular dance productions by Radio Canada's Pierre Mercure, a far-sighted and gifted musician-producer established the company.

So there you have it. Dance in the 1960s really belonged to television, although Renaud returned to co-found Le Groupe de la Place Royale in 1960. This company is now based in Ottawa.

Although Montreal had finally got its own dance companies, these and others gave very short seasons, generally not more than two days at a time. Touring companies attracted greater attention.

The importance of these visits by foreigners cannot be overlooked. Committed and knowledgeable impresarios like the late Nicholas Koudriazeff helped create an appetite for quality dance. This coincided with the 1960s' socio-political movement known as the Quiet Revolution that swept Quebec free from the restraints of the Church, allowing for experimentation and rapid change.

The effect on the artistic community was swift—particularly in dance, which had been in the Church's bad books. The boom that exploded in the U.S. a decade earlier caught up with Canada by the '70s and triggered an unparalleled plethora of activity in Montreal.

All sorts of companies appeared: Les Ballets Jazz, Groupe Nouvelle Aire, Eddy Toussaint and Pointépiénu came first, along with others that died after a season or two. It was at this time that traditional modern dance might have had its beginnings in Montreal. But although Groupe Nouvelle Aire was likely best-equipped to pass on a tradition, it chose to foster independence instead.

It produced remarkable graduates—Fortier, Lock, Léveillé and Laurin, and any number of excellent dancers. As well, there were the true independents, owing little to any Montreal channel—Linda Rabin, who gleaned her solid basis at the prestigious Juilliard School of Music in New York, Jo Lechay, Marie Chouinard and Margie Gillis.

All of these people have produced exciting dance. As they developed, so have university programs training stronger dancers and more discerning audiences. All four universities—McGill, Montreal, Concordia and Université du Québec à Montréal—have dance departments. Concordia and UQAM, particularly, emphasize dance composition and innovation.

But companies, dancers and institutions alone were not responsible for the growth of Montreal dance. The 1976 Olympics, with its accompanying cultural program, played an important role. A variety of dance companies from across Canada was featured, and for the first time Montreal choreographers got a condensed, close-up view of what was happening elsewhere.

Next, Place des Arts launched its Thursday-noon *L'art du mouvement* series, where, for $1.50, audiences saw snippets of dance styles in a lecture-demonstration setting. Then, in 1978, came a tidal wave festival of movement organized by the late Jacqueline Lemieux, one of the most courageous and creative administrators in the country. *Octobre en danse* brought all types of visual artists, musicians, dancers and mimes to Montreal for a *grande bouffe* of movement.

But perhaps the single most important development in furthering the advance of post-modern dance was the emergence of Tangente: Danse Actuelle in 1980. Set up to be a resource centre and performing space by American expatriate Dena Davida, it became a home for independent dance.

Davida brought talented dancers out of their closets and exhibited foreign artists in a variety of dingy locations (Tangente is currently on the lookout for new headquarters).

It may have attracted only a few diehard danceophiles in its early days, but today Tangente's careful, juried programming brings spectators from all age groups and walks of life.

All this recognition, this growth and success, doesn't negate the fact that something is still missing here. That element is modern dance. The fact that the city has by-passed it is a problem some feel may be disastrous to the future of dance if allowed to continue.

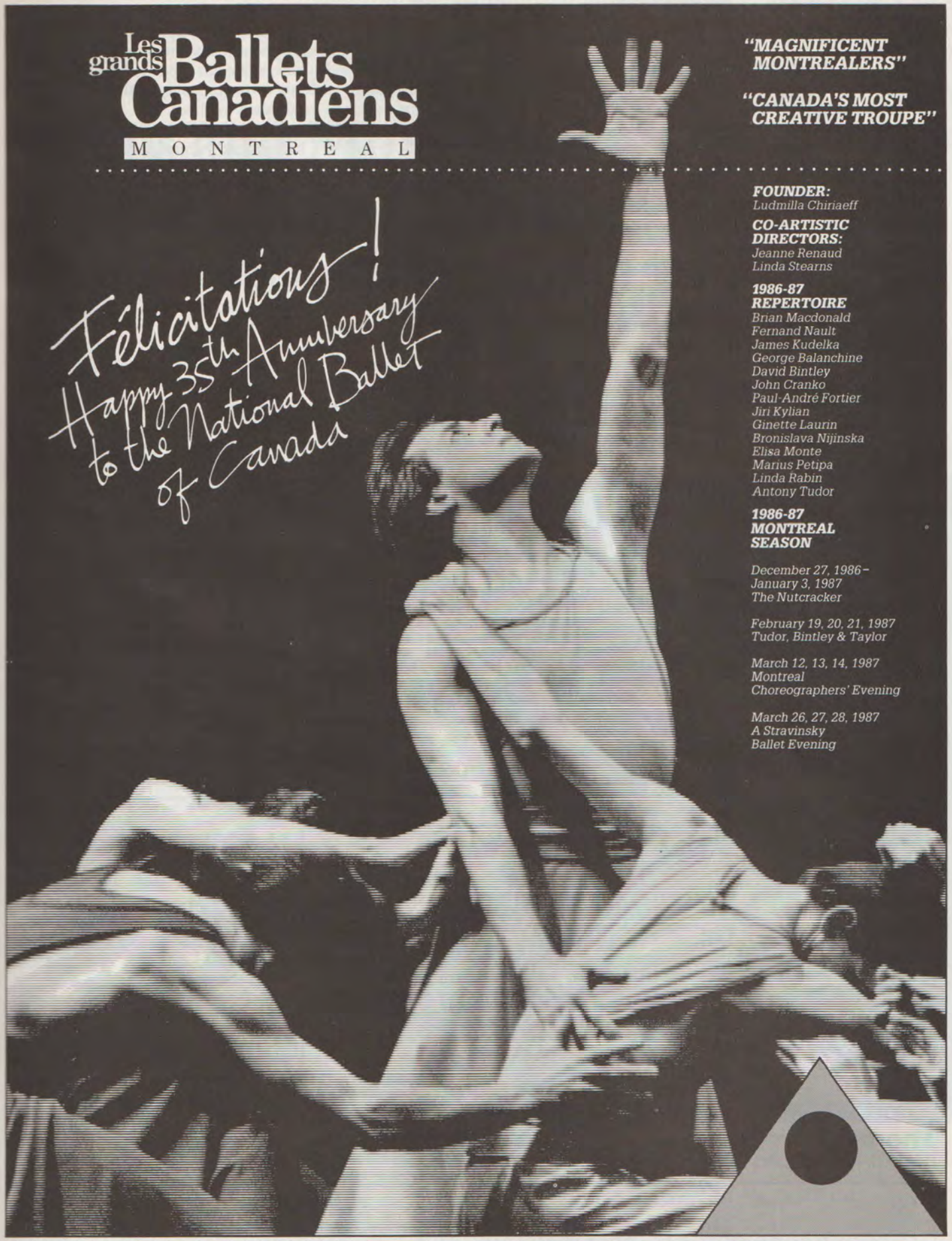
That idea makes Iro Tembeck shudder. Tembeck is a dance historian and professor at UQAM, a choreographer, dancer and instigator who worked with Groupe Nouvelle Aire during its heyday and who identifies closely with the post-modern choreographers.

"I'm scared," she says flatly. "There's been so much independence and explosion, we have cancelled out tradition. We end up by having to be inventive all the time.

"It's a tremendous burden for creators. We're in a period of 'anything goes', and that's a huge responsibility."

Tembeck wants the post-moderns to turn back and get to understand the modern dance they circumvented.

Former modern dancer Jeanne Renaud, who has spent



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nearly 40 years influencing all facets of dance in Quebec and who is now with Les Grands Ballets, echoes Tembeck in a softer way.

"I'm very scared for the young dancers, the new young generation."

That is the group who came on stream after Fortier, Laurin and Lock, and who appear in greater numbers each year.

Renaud says they are at a disadvantage since the older group shunned tradition, taking its vocabulary from everywhere in a highly individual fashion.

"This next group can't fight. The older ones didn't have anything to give them, and they don't know where they're going."

Renaud agrees that these new choreographers need to go back to the basics to discover the meaning of modern dance before creating on their own terms.

If they don't, she says, they'll keep reinventing the wheel and will "kill their art".

On the ballet side, growth and change happen more slowly. The three major ballet companies, the National, the Royal Winnipeg and Les Grands, perform regularly at Place des Arts and have all introduced modern dance elements into their repertoire.

Montreal has another ballet company that won't—the neoclassical group known, after several name changes and a dramatic switch from *ballets jazz* to pure ballet, as Ballet de Montréal Eddy Toussaint.

Artistically, Toussaint dislikes modern dance and holds out for pure neoclassical ballet with a Quebec flavour.

As Jeanne Renaud sees it, the future of ballet, particularly at Les Grands, is to follow the lead of choreographer James Kudelka, a rare and gifted man who, despite his strict National Ballet schooling, incorporates many modern and post-modern elements into his ballets. He has expanded the neoclassical dance language with his own originality, although he structures his dances by established methods.

Despite his innovations, Kudelka's ballets reflect his strongly traditional background. Emerging ballet choreographers Edward Hillyer and Jacques Drapeau share the same sort of formation and also set their dances on the firm foundation that they understand well.

So, from that point of view, ballet seems safe. It's the post-moderns that cause concern.

Jeanne Renaud is confident that the emerging dancemakers will one day wake up and see that they're continuing to reinvent the wheel and demand exposure to the modern dance principles that carried the U.S. to the forefront of world dance.

When that happens, she and others like Tembeck and Linda Rabin, with her strong grounding in Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey and José Limón techniques, will be ready for them.

"You have to put them [aspiring choreographers] in a world to make them discover what they themselves can do, and then let them free to create," Renaud says.

"That's why I'm here [at UQAM]," Tembeck adds. "This fast-food dance of the '80s—easily consumed and easily forgotten—has got to stop.

"We've got to find out what's happening and what has happened before we put the blinkers on." •

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Words and Movement

The 1986 International Dance Critics Symposium

by Deborah Meyers

Deborah Meyers is a Vancouver-based writer, critic and broadcaster. She is also a contributing editor of Vandance. *In August 1986 she participated in the International Dance Critics Symposium held in Vancouver.*

"It's facts we must care about: facts of history, facts of performance, facts about our own ways of seeing." Deborah Jowitt believes deeply in facts, and her believing has translated into some of the most illuminating dance writing of this quarter-century (much of it for New York's *Village Voice*, for which she has written since 1967). It has also galvanized many of the writers fortunate enough to have studied with her (for many years she directed the annual Dance Critics Conference at the American Dance Festival).

This past summer, I was one of those fortunate writers, a participant in the International Dance Critics Symposium held in Vancouver, concurrent with the 14th annual conference of the Dance in Canada Association.

Together with John Mueller (dance film archivist at the University of Rochester and author of *Astaire Dancing*, the recent, definitive book on the film work of Fred Astaire), Jowitt led a group of 15 writers from across Canada, the United States and from points as far afield as New Zealand and Australia through a week-long fact-finding mission, a sleuthing out of keenly observed dance premises.

Observed reality is coloured by the prism of individual vantage point, which is, in turn, shaped by cultural, political and aesthetic sensibilities, to name only a few. Jowitt's concern with the effects of this colouration on dance writing was evident from our first contact with her, a letter sent to the participating critics just prior to the conference week. "Some years ago," she wrote, "projects that Marcia Siegel and I had been doing with movement convinced me that there are connections between how we move, how we perceive movement and how we write about it." Something registered in me when I read that, and it went on registering each day of the Symposium during our daily early-morning movement sessions.

The discoveries came quickly. During the first session, half

Martha Swope

One of John Mueller's video sessions featured side-by-side screenings of two pas de deux from George Balanchine's Chaconne. *The first featured Suzanne Farrell and Peter Martins* (above); *the second, Farrell and Sean Lavery. According to Deborah Meyers, Mueller's "incisive commentaries contrasting both the pas de deux themselves and the performances of them helped to underline the subtleties—and surprising clarities—in Balanchine's choreography".*

the group built a human sculpture, starting with one person and building up to a complex cave of heads, torsos and limbs. The second half of the group then made its way through the sculpture, one by one. Some of us proceeded gingerly, others daringly; some went quickly, in a hurry to get it over with, others took their time, enjoying the journey; most went head-first, but one ventured in backwards.

It was amazing how much each of us revealed about ourselves and our way of relating to the world—including looking at it and writing about it—by the way we approached this exercise and others. By the end of the week, the link between the power of movement to reveal the mover and the ability of words to reflect their writer was irrevocably made.

Observing accurately what was happening around us was as important during these sessions as getting in touch with how we felt about moving in different ways. Jowitt prodded us to get at the bottom-line truth of each movement or movement phrase we described. Most of us jumped to the "they're playing hopscotch" phase before noting that the players were, in fact, hopping sequentially, twice on one foot and then once on two feet, in a forward-moving, straight line.

The dangers of bypassing the concrete for the interpretive continued to crop up in our critiquing sessions. Often, we would neglect to mention the obvious when describing how someone was moving, or we would observe inaccurately because we had transposed our own style or preference of movement on to the observed action.

New insights which took root during the movement sessions were developed by daily writing assignments. These were designed by Jowitt to narrow our focus, forcing a new and, therefore, Thus, we started by gesture, colour, spac We wrote about a n its movement conte of several works, or nally, our focus on whole evening's pro

Our dance-watch comprising as many and always involvin over the typewriter. during daily critiqui vided in two—the either Jowitt or Mue

Jowitt's sessions v review of mine (of that "a negative opi accurate way. Don' given genre, ask yo genre?' Don't let an initial negative response interfere with your ability to see." On another occasion, she advised against "going after small targets with heavy ammunition".

In other sessions, we were cautioned about using generic words like "move" and "movement", which don't tell the reader anything about the *quality* of the movement. We were urged to "say what it is and what you feel about it, not what it should be".

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the group built a human sculpture, starting with one person and building up to a complex cave of heads, torsos and limbs. The second half of the group then made its way through the sculpture, one by one. Some of us proceeded gingerly, others daringly; some went quickly, in a hurry to get it over with, others took their time, enjoying the journey; most went head-first, but one ventured in backwards.

It was amazing how much each of us revealed about ourselves and our way of relating to the world—including looking at it and writing about it—by the way we approached this exercise and others. By the end of the week, the link between the power of movement to reveal the mover and the ability of words to reflect their writer was irrevocably made.

Observing accurately what was happening around us was as important during these sessions as getting in touch with how we felt about moving in different ways. Jowitt prodded us to get at the bottom-line truth of each movement or movement phrase we described. Most of us jumped to the "they're playing hopscotch" phase before noting that the players were, in fact, hopping sequentially, twice on one foot and then once on two feet, in a forward-moving, straight line.

The dangers of bypassing the concrete for the interpretive continued to crop up in our critiquing sessions. Often, we would neglect to mention the obvious when describing how someone was moving, or we would observe inaccurately because we had transposed our own style or preference of movement on to the observed action.

New insights which took root during the movement sessions were developed by daily writing assignments. These were designed by Jowitt to narrow our focus, forcing a new and, therefore, not always comfortable concentration. Thus, we started by writing about one aspect only—rhythm, gesture, colour, space (our choice)—of a dance performance. We wrote about a non-dance event from the point of view of its movement content, about one dance work on a program of several works, or about one choreographer's style. And finally, our focus once again widened and renewed, about a whole evening's program of dance.

Our dance-watching schedule was grueling, sometimes comprising as many as three performances in a single day, and always involving late-night, post-performance struggles over the typewriter. These efforts were given close scrutiny during daily critiquing sessions, for which the group was divided in two—the halves changed daily—each half led by either Jowitt or Mueller.

Jowitt's sessions were especially penetrating. Critiquing a review of mine (of a performance I'd disliked), she warned that "a negative opinion can smooth out differences in an inaccurate way. Don't overstate it; if you know you hate a given genre, ask yourself, 'Is this a good example of this genre?' Don't let an initial negative response interfere with your ability to see." On another occasion, she advised against "going after small targets with heavy ammunition".

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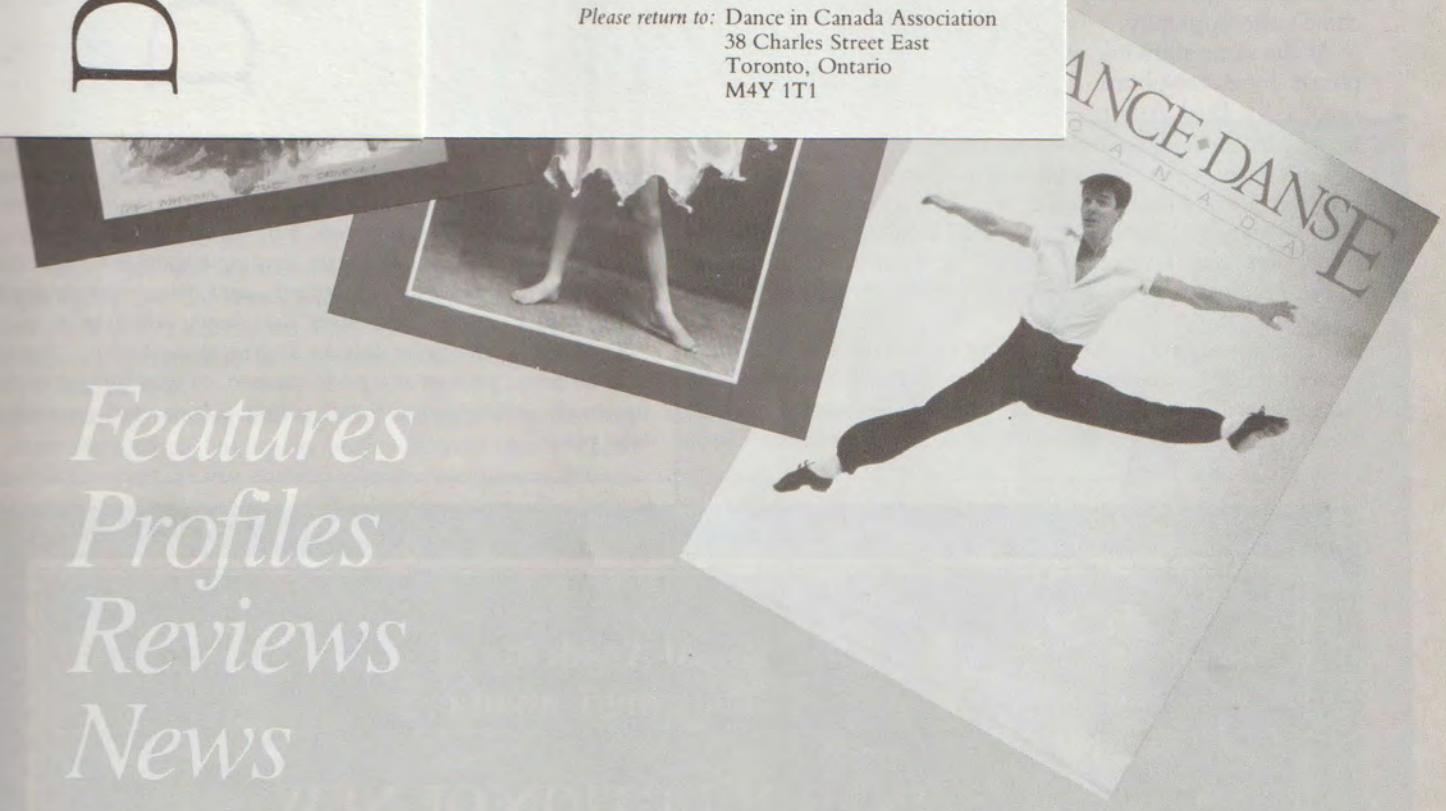

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dance review has to be transparent: it must not call attention to itself."

Jowitt's pedagogical style doesn't call attention to itself either: it asks the student to listen as carefully as he or she observes and not to expect paint-by-numbers solutions to mysteries that only writing—the daily grind of it—can solve.

Listening and observing were the cornerstones of afternoon film and video sessions organized by John Mueller. The first of these featured side-by-side video showings of two pas de deux from George Balanchine's *Chaconne,* created for the New York City Ballet. On the right-hand screen, Suzanne Farrell and Peter Martins; on the left, Farrell and Sean Lavery. Mueller's incisive commentaries contrasting both the pas de deux themselves and the performances of them helped to underline the subtleties—and surprising clarities—in Balanchine's choreography.

At the same showing, we were treated to Mueller's dance-phrase by dance-phrase illumination of classic film choreography by Fred Astaire—pas de deux for him and Ginger Rogers from *Top Hat* and *Follow the Fleet.*

Later in the week, in a session also open to delegates attending the 14th annual Dance in Canada conference, John Mueller showed a series of rarely seen archival films including a selection from Leonide Massine's *St. Francis* and a series of motion pictures of the Royal Danish Ballet shot from 1902 to 1906.

Also shown, in its Canadian film premiere, was Massine's one-act ballet *Gaîeté Parisienne*, composed of footage shot by Victor Jessen from 1944 to 1954. The film featured Alexandra Danilova as the Glove-Seller, Frederic Franklin as the Baron and Leon Danielian as the Peruvian, a role first danced by Massine himself.

The sense of history brought to life was startling, and the film was remarkably vibrant—in spite of having been edited to conform to a recording of the Offenbach score (ca. 1954), which meant, therefore, that the synchronization of choreography and music was not always exact.

Mueller also collaborated with Jowitt on two film-lecture presentations: Jowitt's talk on "Changing Styles and Body Image in American Solo Dancing"—featuring film clips of Ruth St. Denis, Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown and others; and a simultaneous screening of two performances of Graham's *Appalachian Spring*, the one featuring Graham herself in a 1958 black-and-white version, the other a 1976 *Dance in America* colour production.

Between the Symposium programming, the Dance in Canada conference and Expo 86, the week was exhausting. There was always something you felt you just *had* to see or hear, but ended up missing.

There was no time to reflect. But reflection, as it usually does, has come later—a time-lapse photograph developing, slowly and gradually, its shadings, its contours, its colours.

There are lots of memories. But what I'll remember most is the feeling of kindred spirits coming together to reflect on and refine a uniformly underpaid—and often undervalued—craft. And to remind ourselves that dance criticism at its best can evoke, as the great Edwin Denby described it, "the illusion of being present at a performance, of watching it with an unusually active interest and seeing unexpected possibilities take place".•

The Dancer Transition Centre

Bridging the Gap

by **Maureen Lennon**

For a dancer, the end of a career is an inescapable reality of life. Dancers know, logically, that they should be prepared in advance for it, but, in reality, no one dwells upon the end while the dancing is still good.

For some, the end comes suddenly and unexpectedly, through injury; but for most, it comes gradually. The cruellest cut of all is that dancers are not old when they are forced to retire; they are stranded in the prime of life. It is this reality that is so wrenching.

After years of training and striving for achievement, they are often reduced to having to begin all over again. Faced with this prospect, many dancers plunge into severe depression. Some struggle, undirected, for years, plagued by financial problems, isolation and despair.

Over the past 20 years, as the dance community in Canada has grown and developed, people connected with the field—both as artists and administrators—have recognized the need for a bridge-like resource that would help dancers to make the transition from one career to another by helping to minimize the attendant frustrations.

Having lived through the demise of her own career, Joysanne Sidimus, a former dancer with the New York City Ballet and principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada and the Pennsylvania Ballet, decided to try and build that bridge for her colleagues.

The idea for some sort of centre had been around for a long time, but it wasn't until Sidimus had a discussion with Betty Oliphant, artistic director and ballet principal of the National Ballet School, that the plan began to crystallize. Oliphant suggested that Sidimus write to Monique Michaud, head of the Dance Section at the Canada Council, with her ideas for a centre.

Mme. Michaud suggested that the Dance in Canada Association and the Canadian Association of Professional Dance Organizations (CAPDO) be approached to co-sponsor a research project. This was done, and they agreed.

Funding for this project was obtained from the Department of Communications, the Canada Council, the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture of the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Arts Council and the Laidlaw Foundation.

Steve Dymond (executive director of the Dance in Canada Association), William Poole (administrative director and academic principal of the National Ballet School, and treasurer of CAPDO) and Robert Johnston (administrative director of the National Ballet of Canada and, then, president of CAPDO) offered their advice and considerable expertise to Sidimus. They are quick to point out, however, that it was Sidimus who did all of the research and development in terms of concept.

David Street

Joysanne Sidimus, executive director of the Dancer Transition Centre.

In December 1984 the Dancer Transition Project was established to research the need for a dancer transition centre. Sidimus conducted a nation-wide survey of 258 dancers, questioning both independent artists and members of 23 companies. She found a strong mandate for the establishment of a centre.

The results of the survey were published in a report in February 1985, and a two-day conference that brought together professionals from both Canada and the United States who had experience with dancers in transition was held in April.

The board of directors was formed: Miriam Adams (inde-

pendent artist); Lynda Hamilton Bronfman (president, Hamilton Grauer Management Consultants); Rachel Browne (founding artistic director, Contemporary Dancers Canada); Stanley E. Greben, M.D. (professor of psychiatry and psychotherapy, University of Toronto); Karen Kain (principal dancer, National Ballet of Canada); Catherine Keats (president, Churchwell Holdings Limited); Gary Maavara, B.Sc., L.L.B. (Bordon and Elliot); Susan Mackle (director of development, Wellesley Hospital); Colleen McMorrow, C.A. (Clarkson Gordon); William Poole (administrative director and academic principal, National Ballet School); Wendy Reiser, M.D. (family physician and former soloist, National Ballet of Canada); Joysanne Sidimus (executive director, Dancer Transition Centre); Jacques Vezina (senior co-ordinator, Petro-Canada); and Nan Wiseman.

In September 1985 the Dancer Transition Centre opened. The main office is in Toronto and is staffed by Sidimus and administrator Michele Lynn Danesh, a former soloist with the National Ballet of Washington and, for 15 years, director of the Ballet Shayda Company and School of Dance in Ottawa.

The Centre has regional representatives in Edmonton—Clinton Rothwell (director, Edmonton Festival Ballet, and former principal dancer, National Ballet of Canada); Montreal—Christina Coleman (independent dancer and choreographer) and Manon Levac (dancer, Montréal Danse); Ottawa—Fabyenne Gosselin (former dancer, now a teacher, Ottawa Board of Education); Vancouver—Betsy Carson (dancer, Repertory Dance Company of Canada) and Betty Kovacs (former dancer, now a teacher, Terpsichore Studio of Dance); and Winnipeg—Patti Caplette (soloist, Royal Winnipeg Ballet).

It is funded primarily by a major grant received through the "Innovations" program of Employment and Immigration Canada. Additional funding comes from the Canada Council, the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture of the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Arts Council, the Allan and Lucy Bronfman Foundation, the Laidlaw Foundation, the McLean Foundation, the Edwards Charitable Foundation, the Bennett Family Foundation and the Eaton Foundation.

Since the Centre opened, more than a hundred dancers have been helped.

Who can use the Dancer Transition Centre? Any professional dancer. Members of the Centre, however, enjoy special privileges. In order to qualify as members, dancers who belong to companies pay a membership fee of one per cent of their annual salary, to a maximum of $250—which is matched by their companies. An independent dancer pays one per cent of his or her salary, if the salary is $5,000 or more per year; if it is less, the dancer pays a flat fee of $25 per year.

The Centre offers career, financial, legal, academic and personal counselling. "The dancers we have seen at the Centre seem, basically, to want three things from a career: creativity, passion and fulfillment," explains Sidimus.

She says that the first priority, when a dancer comes to the Centre, is to sort out which needs are the most pressing; then they begin to work on other details. If, for example, a dancer is having difficulty coping with the emotional aspects of retirement, he or she can be referred, confidentially, to a psychologist or psychiatrist for help with that particular difficulty. For members, the bills are paid by the Centre.

If a dancer is coping well emotionally, but needs some career ideas, he or she can use the Centre's extensive library to

Morris Dash

Neil Christopher Wortley, making the transition from dancer (seen here in Anna Wyman's production of Tremolo*) to stage manager.*

From Dancer to Stage Manager: Making the Transition

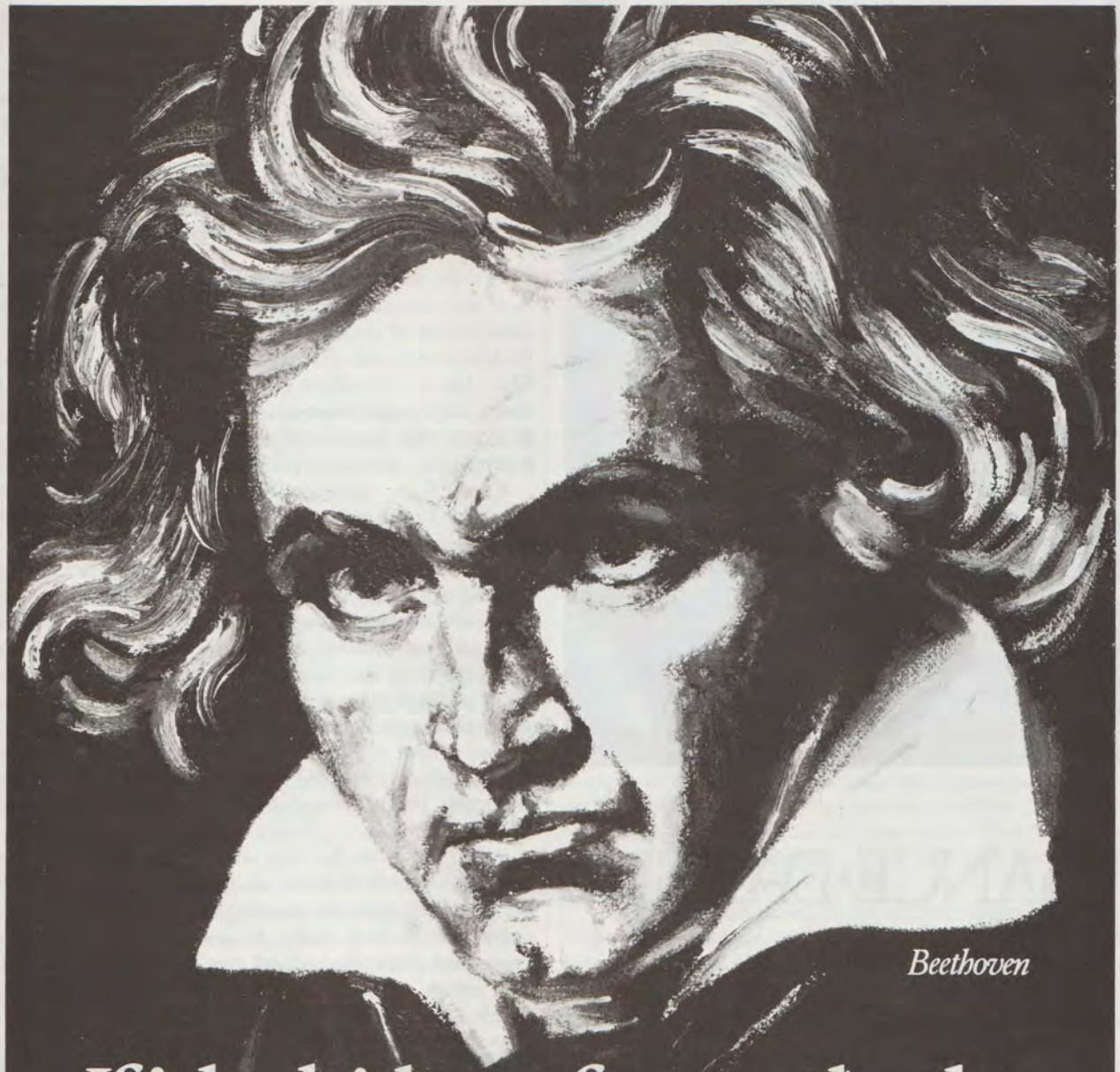
In October 1985, the night before Neil Christopher Wortley was to make his New York debut as a member of Anna Wyman Dance Theatre, he was hit by a bus. Although he didn't realize it until a few weeks later, that one miscalculation which had caused the accident had also cost him his career. He had become a dancer in transition.

After returning to Vancouver and recovering from his injuries, Wortley turned to the newly opened Dancer Transition Centre for help.

He decided that he wanted to remain working within the dance community and chose to retrain as a stage manager. A one-year apprenticeship with the stage manager of Anna Wyman Dance Theatre, his own company, was arranged, and the Centre awarded him a subsistence grant of $1,000 per month, for a maximum of 12 months, to assist him through his retraining period.

"Without that money," Wortley explains, "I would have had to work at something I didn't like and try to retrain in my spare time."

With the help of the Dancer Transition Centre, he will be retrained and ready to become a productive member of the workforce within one year. And, in addition to his new skills, Wortley will bring the experience of his 12 years as a performer to his new career.



Beethoven

If it hadn't been for people who supported the arts, he might have stayed a piano teacher.

A desperate Beethoven was forced to support his family by giving piano lessons to the sons and daughters of the wealthy families of Bonn.

He might never have done anything more if a patron, Count Valdstein (on the advice of Haydn), hadn't come forward.

We're not suggesting that everyone find a struggling musician, dancer or composer and support him, but we are reminding Canadians that when you attend a play, a concert or a ballet today, you're doing basically the same thing.

Please remember: we need the arts. And the arts need us.

TEXACO

investigate career options. Dancers are also referred to career counsellors for guidance.

Others coming to the Centre may have a second career already picked out, but may need grants to pay tuition or other retraining costs. This type of vital assistance is also available, provided certain criteria are met. Sidimus is careful to point out that the Centre will not finance an entire university education, but will grant money for the first year. "We always make sure," she explains, "that they know what other resources are available, such as scholarships and student loans, to help them after they use up our grant money."

On the whole, dancers are highly motivated, self-directed and resourceful people. When they emerge from the insular world of dance, however, they are often out-of-touch with the resources that will help them to find a new career. The Dancer Transition Centre is there to help put them in touch with those resources. Once pointed in new directions, it seems that the discipline and drive that steered dancers through their first careers begin to pilot them again.

Karen Kain, president of the Dancer Transition Centre's board of directors, thinks the Centre is extremely important. Although it is unlikely that a dancer with a profile as high as hers will ever have to use the Centre, Kain is committed to helping out wherever she can. When she is in town, she attends all board meetings and participates in the fund-raising and decision-making processes. "I've seen dancers go in many different directions and be successful," she says. "The point of the Centre is to make sure that dancers don't suffer when their careers end."

One ardent supporter of the Centre who had to make the transition to civilian life without the aid of a transition centre is Angela Leigh, former principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada.

When she broke her foot and eventually had to leave dancing, she embarked upon an emotional journey to find out what could replace her dancing. She explored Eastern philosophy, travelled to India, learned to meditate and practise yoga, and gradually realized that she wanted to paint. Now she works as an artist and interior designer. "Life," says Leigh, "gives you what you need, if you let it."

In the beginning, though, she wishes someone could have taught her some of the basics of marketing her art work. She had to learn by trial and error.

Although Angela Leigh has come through her transition a stronger person, she feels that the Dancer Transition Centre will save others from making time-consuming, unnecessary mistakes.

Because the Dancer Transition Centre will never be a self-supporting venture, future funding must be found to keep it afloat. The dancers and their companies have accepted some of the financial responsibility. The National Ballet's Robert Johnston says that most companies view the Centre as a priority important enough to be budgeted for on an ongoing basis.

Additional funds, however, will have to come from arts councils, and corporate and private sources. Members of the private sector should support this venture—and be proud to do so. After all, they constitute a demanding and critical audience, and gladly avail themselves of a dancer's artistry for their personal pleasure. They cannot then ignore the dance community's request for help when its members seek access to the general walk of life. •

In Review: Television

Onegin
Adapted by Norman Campbell and Reid Anderson
Directed by Norman Campbell
Produced by W. Paterson Ferns
A CBC Television Production in association with
Primedia Productions, 1986

Reviewed by Pat Kaiser

Since the early 1950s, Norman Campbell has been amassing a collection of artistic hats. Working in the arts, both fine and popular, above and below the 49th parallel, he has displayed a versatility that is mind-boggling.

He dons one hat to direct *Fraggle Rock*, a children's television production—and quite another to share credit for musical composition, with Don Harron, of the Charlottetown Festival's perennial favourite, *Anne of Green Gables*. He switches hats again to direct a stream of televised Gilbert and Sullivan operettas—changing only the tilt of the brim for such mighty operas as *Norma* and *La Rondine*. He has directed *The Unselfish Giant*, a salute to Tyrone Guthrie and the Stratford Festival, as well as episodes of *All in the Family* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.

But he pulls out the largest hat of all for a long list of televised National Ballet of Canada productions, including *Romeo and Juliet, Swan Lake, Cinderella, Giselle* and *La Fille Mal Gardée*.

His finished products all have considerable polish; but, generally, the finer the art, the more distinguishable the Campbell stamp—which may suggest where his heart lies. He cannot be stuck with the label Jack-of-all-trades—and everything it infers—for he is *definitely* Master-of-some.

People regard Campbell's handling of the classics either as minor masterpieces or major desecrations. Certainly, he can be faulted, at times, for gilding lilies and adding extra dollops of unnecessary special effects.

And, good intentions aside, he has often overlooked the simple wisdom that dance, an art form best seen in its artificial stage surroundings, is unlikely to be at home in a more naturalistic setting created in a television studio. Ultimately, the successful transfer of a ballet from stage to screen rests with the original magic of the ballet itself—not with the flashy, albeit well-meant, interpretation of the director.

When all is said and done, though, Norman Campbell has brought *Swan Lake* to an at-home audience which might otherwise never have seen it. And the Emmy Awards that his productions of *Cinderella* and *The Sleeping Beauty* have garnered—and the Prix René Barthelemy that he received for *Romeo and Juliet* at the International Television Festival in Monte Carlo—attest to his achievements.

1986 marks the 30th anniversary of Campbell's first televised ballets for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. And this year's production of *Onegin*, danced by the National Ballet, is a dazzling celebration.

Campbell's handling of John Cranko's magnificent narrative ballet is probably his finest work to date. He approaches the task with a finely tuned, inspired subservience to the stage reality of the ballet. And he prizes the dancers' abilities.

Onegin, an intense tale of unrequited love based on the poem by Alexander Pushkin, speaks through the small screen from the stage, its natural habitat.

Focusing from the back of the theatre to establish the entire vista of Jürgen Rose's exquisite Chekhovian décor and costumes in the first scene, the camera glides gracefully in, taking its cues from the patterns of the extraordinarily rich Tschaikovsky score and Cranko's tight, to-the-point structuring.

In rehearsal for the taping of Onegin: (left to right) *Norman Campbell, Reid Anderson, Frank Augustyn, Sabina Allemann and Victoria Bertram.*

Frank Augustyn as Onegin.

Fred Phipps

From that moment, the camera eye becomes the audience's eye. The television audience comes as close to forgetting that there is a lens acting as go-between as any television audience possibly can.

Campbell may adore and respect the dancing, but he also senses exactly when to forsake the moving body if close observation of a dancer's face is more interesting and important to the story. Those yearning glances of Tatiana's, Lensky's agonized stares and Onegin's long, empty glare are crucial ingredients that close-up shots can clearly highlight—like a visual shout.

The director's finest moment arrives in the second act ballroom scene. By cleverly cutting from camera to camera, he makes articulate sense of a potentially confusing emotional maelstrom—the jealousies that lead to Lensky's confrontation with Onegin and their subsequent duel.

Some disappointments cannot be avoided. In the first act, the naive Tatiana dreams of Onegin's arrival in her bedroom—nothing more provocative than a lot of good partnering. But the moment that precedes the dancing—the fantasy Onegin's entrance through the mirror—is an amazingly erotic moment. Onscreen, the only way such a powerful effect could be achieved, or even approximated, would be if he were to step through the television screen.

Disappointing as well, the medium again fails Frank Augustyn. Augustyn is strictly a stage creature. In the theatre, where distance allows an audience's imagination to meet a character halfway, his Onegin managed to convey a fairly convincing aura of intrigue; but his screen Onegin is no compelling, *ennui*-laden enigma. His spasms of emotion are played to a non-existent back row—and are too large for credibility on the small screen.

The camera's intimacy is, however, a boon for the rest of the cast. Such dancers as Sabina Allemann (Tatiana), Cynthia Lucas (Olga) and Jeremy Ransom (Lensky) appeared, in the stage production, to deliver just enough in characterization. Onscreen, though, they are precisely right—heart-wringing, with great depth.

Norman Campbell's excellent production of *Onegin* can be thought of as yet another installment in the televised history of the National Ballet of Canada, recorded for posterity. The unfortunate reality, however, is that while it may be seen a few more times, when there is a scheduling vacancy to fill, it will, like the other Campbell works that preceded it, be laid to rest in some locked vault—remembered fondly and proudly logged in the CBC annals, but, in all likelihood, not seen again. •

In Review: Performances

Kent Kallberg Photographics Ltd.

*Members of Anna Wyman Dance Theatre (*left to right, *Marie-France Lamoreux, Julie Emond, Francis Nash, Robert Russell, Desiree Zurowski and Danielle Sturk) in* Exos, *a collaborative work by Wyman and video artist Tony Papa.*

Vancouver
Reviewed by Susan Inman

While Expo 86, with its multitude of stages and theatres, provided a venue without parallel for the viewing of an extraordinary range of dance companies, the performing conditions were often difficult.

Although outdoor stages meant that people were spontaneously attracted to events they might not ordinarily choose to attend, these performing spaces also meant that dancers had to contend with considerable noise and distraction. In one particularly awful moment, a toddler, energetically licking an ice-cream cone, stopped at the edge of the outdoor stage at the Canada Pavilion to stare at the sombre solo being performed by a member of Toronto Dance Theatre; the emotional seriousness of the piece vanished immediately.

Even the indoor performing areas had their special challenges. In August, Anna Wyman Dance Theatre performed at the Canada Pavilion's Amiga Theatre. This small theatre, while providing opportunities for great technological feats, did not give audiences the distance from the stage needed to appreciate the spatial patterns and dramatic effects that are Wyman's forte. Being so close to the performers in *A Dancer's Circus*, an older work in the company's repertoire, highlighted flaws in the performance.

Though the company has nicely integrated new dancers, and the quality of the dancing was generally excellent, there were moments in *A Dancer's Circus* that lacked the requisite finesse. A gymnastic episode, either because of an inherent problem in the choreography or because we were just too close to the action, seemed especially weak. Clearly, we were supposed to be getting a thrilling spectacle of quickly flipping, somersaulting bodies, but, instead, we received a sense of strained dancers, plodding where they should have been flowing.

A Dancer's Circus is a colourful, lively dance view of circus motifs, replete with silly clowns, prancing ponies and tightrope walkers. It was a wise choice for Expo. With its gorgeous hand-painted costumes, its range of spirited music and fast-paced, easily understood vignettes, it is a sure crowd-pleaser. This was crucial; the somewhat carnival-like atmosphere pervading Expo gave people the idea that it was perfectly acceptable to leave events at will.

Exos, the second work performed, is Anna Wyman's new video piece. It was put together in three days. Although not billed as a work-in-progress, it appeared raw and uneven.

The collaboration between Wyman, video artist Tony Papa (who used multi-image video screens) and electronic-music composer Tim McGuinness seems promising; somehow, the elements of an interesting dance appeared to be present.

Several everyday characters eventually become a group—

and witness visions of primal power. The videos intersplice scenes of majestic nature—at one moment, we get the rush of an eagle-eye journey above the B.C. coastline—with images of destruction—shots of gigantic buildings tumbling into ruin, continually replayed.

While Expo's performances were catering to and, it is hoped, cultivating more mainstream audiences, the second annual Vancouver Fringe Festival had other aims during its 10 tightly packed days of performances in nine locations.

The quality of performances of the dance and dance-related events varied enormously. This unjuried collection of works allowed some embarrassingly amateurish local works to be shown; but, certainly, not all the local works were dismal.

Simon Fraser University graduate Joan McKinley demonstrated potential in *Mexcla de Campeche*, her danced reflections of a recent Mexican journey.

The strongest work I saw was presented by one of the many international companies attending the Festival this year. Dramadillo, a pair of highly accomplished performers from New Zealand, presented *The Odyssey*, an intriguing yet accessible blend of story-telling, mime, dance and music. Maybe the current rebirth of story-telling occurring in North America will also encourage dancers here to consider the possibilities of this very appealing genre.

Presenting works of such quality in this kind of context is short-sighted; there is less probability that audiences will take chances on unknown companies in the future if some kind of selection process has not screened out works that really are not ready to be seen by any but the most devoted of family members.

It is to be hoped that the Fringe will realize that alternative theatre does not have to include incompetent theatre.

Vancouver
Reviewed by Jamil Brownson

During 1986 Vancouver was host to an extraordinary quantity and variety of dance activity—both Canadian and foreign—at Expo 86 and the Dance in Canada conference. In an upcoming issue of Dance in Canada, *Jamil Brownson will examine this myriad of dance activity and its significance and implications for the future of dance in this country.*

In the following review, he looks specifically at two major events of the summer dance season in Vancouver: Dance in Canada! *and* Ballet Gala.

The five modern works commissioned for *Dance in Canada!*, a "Canada Presents" feature attraction of the Royal Bank/Expo 86 World Festival, drew a generally enthusiastic response in three nights at the Vancouver Playhouse in mid-August. Although representing a limited cross-section of Canadian dance—the Paula Ross Dance Company, Jumpstart and EDAM (Vancouver), O Vertigo danse (Montreal) and Toronto Dance Theatre—*Dance in Canada!* created an important frame of reference for discussing trends in dance in this country.

O Vertigo danse dazzled us with spectacle and risk in Ginette Laurin's *Chevy Dream*. Laurin used physically powerful movement to comment on the social mystique and power of machines in society, working with objects as icons.

A 1958 Biscayne automobile is driven towards the audience. Through swirling fog, Kenneth Gould emerges—a James Dean parody of Calvin Klein ads celebrating jeans and sex. Laurin, popping out of the trunk of the car, strikes poses of '50s symbols—sexy hood ornaments, pin-up and drive-in bobby-sox coquetry.

Chevy Dream spoke to us of personal memories and societal romances wrapped in the currency of '50s nostalgia. It restructured fragments of those images into movements and rhythms evoking the seductive style and power of automobile culture.

Meaningful, yet humorous, with precise choreography and a contemporary concept (authentic in referential detail), Ginette Laurin's *Chevy Dream* was memorable, significant and, it is to be hoped, will prove influential.

In *It Sounded Like Cry*, members of Jumpstart worked with John Gray's complex texts, spoken and sung as jazz vocals set to John Celona's upbeat electronic arrangements. Lee Eisler laid down a basic choreography—new-wave Motown for the vocal group, a controlled frenzy for the dancers. For both Gray and Eisler, the work is the latest development in a highly interdisciplinary, experimental style.

Their pop style glowed with high-tech—computers, cordless microphones and costumes for strenuous Japanese fashion shows (baggy pastel suits). Strong cross-lighting accentuated Eisler's sensuous use of time and space. Across the whole stage, sculptural shapes of swirling dancers and posturing vocalists formed structures commenting on triangles—*three* vocalists, *three* dancers.

Taken with other work by Jumpstart, *It Sounded Like Cry* becomes part of an upbeat musical revue for the urbane 1980s—fast-paced, high-tech, with high-fashion themes of contemporary life.

Together, Jumpstart and O Vertigo danse represent a dramatic pop genre, creating spectacles and setting high standards for a strenuous and imaginative dance-theatre, uniquely expressing Vancouver and Montreal sentiments.

Mobile, a collaborative effort by Paula Ross and designer Bodo Pfeiffer, was a spectacle of stagecraft. A plastic rainforest created powerful regional metaphors—a kinetic, sculptural soundscape, its echoing, swinging tiers of hydraulically descending white tubes overshadowing any human activity.

Abstract choreography emphasized loose interaction, a laid-back 1960s impression of minimalist performance art. Eclectic and eliptic, *Mobile* rambled through singularly interesting elements; yet, no recognizable coherence emerged beyond a playful yet strenuous installation. Creative chaos filled the space with props and action. Focus was lost in spectacle—too many elements competing without any clearly accessible theme or reference.

Toronto Dance Theatre's offering departed from choreographer Christopher House's usual abstractions. The silent narrative drama of *Goblin Market* was a well-executed morality play, its interpretation alternating between serious and tongue-in-cheek moods.

The work used classic Graham moves; yet, despite several circular charges of leaping green goblins, stayed mostly on the ground. Little of the powerful technique and eloquence of the company's dancers was shown in the choreography—except for the slow and poignant gesturing of Grace Miyagawa and Karen duPlessis.

Colourful staging and solid music matched the dancing, but the choreographic intent and mood of *Goblin Market* remained obscure.

In most of the works presented, text, or the visual and kinetic semblance of text, connected the disparate thematic elements. In *Parade*, created for EDAM, Jennifer Mascall made

Mike Slobodian

Betsy Ann Baron and Jean-Hugues Rochette, members of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, in James Kudelka's Collisions, *choreographed for* Ballet Gala *at Expo 86 in Vancouver.*

full use of these possibilities.

She seriously researched the original *Parade*, the cubist fantasy choreographed by Leonide Massine and staged by Jean Cocteau for Serge Diaghilev's company, and interpreted it ambitiously, connecting us with a period in which many of our artistic roots were planted.

Very non-cubist, Mascall's surrealist staging and costumes found more expression in juxtapositions, colour and lighting than in any background. Peter Ryan, as American Manager (costumed in a business suit rather than dressed as the Picasso-designed Skyscraper character of the original work), walked calmly through the circus—a counterpoint to the array of fantasy figures cavorting around him.

The Harlequin figure was lost in the multi-layered levels of action and allusion as the references and commentaries of *Parade* on the history of performance were woven deeply into its choreography. Action-packed and deeply layered with nuances, it avoided critique—turning one instead to the vibrant sense of fun and play that rippled across the stage, catching performers and audience in a mirthful fantasy.

EDAM's improvisation flowered with Mascall's excellent choreography and direction. Snakes and fires flickered; charmers, magicians and jugglers strolled among dancers and acrobats.

Mascall took risks on an emotional level, integrating obvious side-show tricks, EDAM's style of contact and Lola MacLaughlin's innocently grotesque rag-doll gestures into a surrealistic pageant.

Later in the week, *Ballet Gala*, another World Festival production, presented world premieres by Canada's three major ballet companies—the National Ballet of Canada, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet—at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

It raised questions about ballet as Canada's "big-ticket" dance. Why should the National Ballet send a pas de trois? Why present three new, untried works at one time? One answer: it was an experiment, an all-around first. The audiences seemed to approve, despite rustlings from hard-core purists and critics.

Constantin Patsalas' *Twilight*, for the National Ballet, dropped a "noble savage" (Rex Harrington) into a tryst with a golden day (Ronda Nychka) and blue night (Gizella Witkowsky). They shared his embraces until he fell, exhausted; they then exchanged places.

The drape-and-rope set was striking, as was the lighting design. But the choreography, although well-danced, was unimaginative.

James Kudelka's star is rising, but not with *Collisions*, danced by members of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. Ambiguous visual references set the stage for a series of five duets, each couple's costumes reflecting age differences—possibly linking them to the passing of Halley's comet.

The post-minimalist score by Henry Kucharzyk, the modern dancing and near-Broadway choreography lacked authenticity in overall effect. Because of the vagueness of the movement and relationship between vignettes, spurts of dynamic action faded into no more than a comet's tail.

Brian Macdonald's *Steps*, choreographed for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, foundered from Renaissance court references and autumnal folk-rites to an invasion of punk-rockers from space.

Beautifully soft and well-integrated sets, costumes and music flowed nostalgically with choreography that was pleasant, if ineffectual. Then, boom! Amidst heavy-metal sounds, energetic figures, sparkling in metallic astronaut-punk costumes, leaped heavenward.

But this *Star Wars* pastiche did wake up the audience for a rousing ending, followed by the excellent *defile* staged by Reid Anderson.

What went on in this ballet "jam session"? Canada's top companies and promising choreographers didn't fulfill expectations on all the necessary levels. But the attempt does convey a message—Canada trusts its cultural establishment and supports experiments.

Calgary & Edmonton
Reviewed by Karen Sherlock

While it may have been a quiet summer for Alberta dance watchers, it was a busy one for dancers. Several Alberta companies and performers headed west to Vancouver.

Cheremosh Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, Maria Formolo and the Alberta Ballet Company presented performances at the Vancouver Playhouse in August.

Rick Wacko, the Cheremosh company's artistic director and choreographer, had the audience laughing out loud at his comical *Baba Goes to Market*, in which he plays both Baba's lively legs and a stowaway perched precariously in a basket on her back. Wacko's energy added bounce to a piece made lively to begin with by Ukrainian folk-music.

Forest and Arctic, created by Maria Formolo, elicited gasps and appreciative applause from the audience. It is a piece that conjures up all the serenity of nature in the deep forest and the silent grandeur of winter ice. The work builds from darkness and silence, through the growing motion and sound of a forest waking, to a breathtaking vision of a voluminous white robe, shadowed in blues and deep purples, sculpting the air like living ice. The power of Formolo's dancing, though understated in the piece, was clear in the centred solidity of her movement.

Mariane Beauséjour and Claude Caron of the Alberta Ballet Company danced the jaunty *Canto Indio*, choreographed by Brian Macdonald. The two, as usual, made an impressive couple—although Caron's performance seemed a little tight—infusing the dance with the flirtatious fire of a Latin-American folk-dance that depicts a romance between a peasant girl and a proud bullfighter.

In August, the Royal Thai Ballet visited Calgary and Edmonton on its way to Expo 86, thrilling sold-out crowds with a spectacle to which, until the last century, only Thai kings were privy.

The 35-member company transported its audiences to the royal courts of ancient Siam and the village squares of Thailand with hypnotically serene tales of gods and rousing rites of harvest, with glorious shimmering robes and colourful rustic costumes.

This style of dance, preserved and fostered since 1935 by the Thai government, speaks its vigour with a whisper, with movement spellbindingly subtle and precise.

Brian Webb presented his company in farewell performances in Calgary and Edmonton, before declaring himself a one-man enterprise in September.

Open Windows, a collage of five works by five different dancers, including Webb, offered an entertaining range of styles and sentiments. Unfortunately, three pieces were in danger, at times, of disappearing into diaphanous clouds of lyrical music and gushy movement, although two others stood out for tackling the unexpected as theme and for clear choreographic focus.

From the Air, by Yvonne Coutts, is a snappy, quirky take-off on a crash-landing, in which dancers sit, zombie-like, in rows—popping heads and shoulders up and down, snapping perpetually startled eyes right and left, collapsing, rolling and flopping, all in time to the "Simon Says" comands of a flat-voiced flight attendant.

In Bonnie McLean's *Black Widow*, a dark seductress entangles, teases and devours her lover to the squeaky strains of bad tango music—playing humorously on every cliché ever seen on celluloid.

Webb's first concert in his new solo state showed some promise in his decision to work alone, displaying an intriguing mix of moods with a strong theatrical bent. But at times the dance seemed actually camouflaged in props and theatrics, while Webb's choreography and dance technique were generally limited in quality and quantity.

Tsunami (in Japanese: tidal wave), the most intriguing and powerful piece, is an audacious work of surrealism with an outlandish set designed by John Madill. Again, little dance; but lots to keep the eye moving—baby-doll cherubs floating in the air, Botticelli paintings flashing in an elaborate gilt frame lined with red lightbulbs, fluorescent green tennis balls dropping from the heavens.

Eclipse has a much more meditative, internal focus—an understated portrayal of a man's inner struggle and final realization that life's events have enclosed him in a cage he can't break out of.

Amen, a Lambros Lambrou piece, is compelling, especially in the second half. Unfortunately, Webb's dancing didn't have the power or cleanness to do it justice.

Edmonton's Fringe Festival brought a variety of dance and dance visitors to the city. Decidedly Jazz presented the complete version of its Duke Ellington tribute. Elaine Bowman, from Dancers' Studio West in Calgary, presented *Trying to Get Through to You*, a sombre offering of story-dance in which her emotion compensated for what she lacked in technical ability and stage polish. Mile Zero Dance of Edmonton performed *Grace, Grace & Grace* and *Hi-Voltage*, an action-packed exploration of three neurotic people. And Alberta Dance Theatre lured sell-out crowds with its *Notes of a Dirty Old Man*.

The Alberta Ballet Company, which announced in July that artistic director Brydon Paige will retire at the end of the season, opened its 20th-anniversary season in September with *Pineapple Poll*, in a Gilbert and Sullivan collaboration with the Edmonton Opera. Reid Anderson, formerly of the Stuttgart Ballet, staged the work, choreographed by John Cranko in 1959.

The rollicking story of love-crossed mutiny in a little seatown provided an enjoyable twist to the usual ballet fare—an evening of fun, rather than impressive dance, with performances that were adequate but generally unexceptional.

Ottawa
Reviewed by Christine Pappas

Who would ever have guessed that, in a festival dominated by some of Ottawa's finest dance talent, the show would be stolen by a 15-foot pink flamingo (*en pointe*, of course!) and his shorter, eight-foot partner, dancing to Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*? *Bird Ballet*, choreographed by David Secunda of Theatre of Giants, was "danced" by Secunda, on stilts, and Linda Arkelian. It was a hilarious parody of classical ballet.

This was the third year for Dance! An Ottawa Summer Festival, presented jointly by Le Groupe de la Place Royale and Theatre Ballet of Canada.

Other performers this year included Ottawa Dance Theatre, P.M. Jazz, Anjali and Julie West. Guest artists Julie Adam and Pierre Quinn, formerly of Ottawa, now with the National Ballet of Canada, dazzled audiences each evening on the National Arts Centre terrace with the pas de deux from *Le Corsaire*.

Peter Andrews

Timothy Clarkin in A Toast, *Lawrence Gradus' new work for Theatre Ballet of Canada.*

Various ethnic dance groups, including the energetic Dnipro Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, and students from many area dance-schools rounded out a festival that was truly remarkable for its variety.

Theatre Ballet presented new work by Lawrence Gradus. *A Toast*, danced by Emmanuelle Gill-Houpert and Timothy Clarkin, was the perfect piece to open each night's performance. Its upbeat music and clean movement welcomed the audience and encouraged them to settle in for the evening.

The *Choreographers in Performance* program provided an opportunity for local performers to show off new or recent works to each other and to the small, but warmly receptive audience at Le Groupe de la Place Royale's studios.

Two memories stand out. The first, the premiere of a piece choreographed by Katherine Labelle and danced by Cathy Kyle, both with Le Groupe de la Place Royale. The work combined exquisite, searching movement by Kyle and the use of voice, a characteristic associated with the company's performers.

The second, a powerful, moving piece about the joy and sorrow of love, called *White Vision*. It was choreographed by Serge Bennathan, who joins the company this fall—a real find!

Interestingly enough, while most of the pieces presented were characterized by intensity of emotion, they worked best when confined to the intimacy of the dancers' own environment—the studio. When taken out of that environment and brought to the outdoor stage, much of that intensity and depth of feeling was lost.

Dance in a Concrete City, however, was meant for the outdoors. Choreographed this year by Janet Oxley, formerly of Le Groupe de la Place Royale, the commissioned piece—*Ouvertcaricatouratouranale*, or *Where is that Music Coming From*?—attracted very little attention from passers-by in the Byward Market, traditionally a very popular venue. The piece, meant to be fun and lighthearted, sputtered and fizzled out by the second performance.

The most popular program, by far, was *Dance Under the Stars*, held each evening on the terrace of the National Arts Centre. Balmy evenings attracted large audiences to view the entire gamut of dance offerings in the city—from the avant-garde of Julie West and the showy pieces of Paula du Hamel of P.M. Jazz, to the classical work of the National Ballet of Canada and a parody of the classics by Theatre of Giants.

Ottawa
Reviewed by Hilary McLaughlin

Franco Zeffirelli's much-ballyhooed production of *Swan Lake* came to Ottawa's National Arts Centre in July. It was a spectacular finale to a spectacular dance season.

The production was choreographed by Rosella Hightower for La Scala Ballet of Milan to a "libretto" by Zeffirelli, the renowned theatre and opera director and film-maker. It featured the legendary Carla Fracci and Jean-Charles Gil in the roles of Odile and Siegfried. *Odile*, note. One of the Zeffirelli touches in this *Swan Lake* is that Odette and Odile are danced by different ballerinas.

There's another little oddity. There are no swans. Zeffirelli, in the course of his research into the origins of the ballet, has determined that the forlorn and tragic heroines are not swans at night, but more like your basic spirits of maidens. So, he has had them dressed in approximations of nightgowns—sheer, flowing, mid-calf length costumes.

What goes on throughout the performance is quite entertaining, attractive and interesting choreographically, but somewhat less interesting musically. Music has been transposed, re-inserted and cross-patched. The only truly fascinating thing about this score is trying to remember where that bit came from, or where they dug up this bit.

The issue is not, really, so much whether Zeffirelli's *Swan Lake* is good ballet, as whether it ought to have been done at all. It's a vexing question. Should Shakespeare be staged in Edwardian dress? It happens, and it's often dramatically quite effective. There are equally defensible points to be made on both sides of these issues.

What is a classic? A modern piece that is cherished and handed down in its received form from generation to generation? An organic basis for re-interpretation over the years?

There are dangers, as well as benefits, inherent in either approach, but I am wary of the revisionist view, principally because it is just that. The 1960s saw re-interpretations of classics done in order to make them more "relevant", and the danger there is the diffusion of genuine art into something vastly reduced. The road from simplistic to propagandistic is easily travelled.

Anyhow, a revised *Swan Lake* was what Ottawa got. I fear that Zeffirelli's bringing down to earth of the white acts has robbed the ballet of some of its poetry.

Oriella Dorella, Jean-Charles Gil and Carla Fracci in Franco Zeffirelli's production of Swan Lake, *presented by Milan's La Scala Ballet at the National Arts Centre in July.*

Zeffirelli has done interesting things with his colour acts, along with the lively, if not particularly inspirational choreography by Hightower. His first act peasants are a truly proletarian lot, as exemplified by some realistically clumsy movements and a characteristic Zeffirelli clutter onstage. Realism is carried to the extent of having lots of people crossing downstage centre as significant pas de deux begin. (This all follows a prologue, set to the overture, featuring a cloud effect projected onto a scrim.)

Zeffirelli's Benno is your typical lusty gad-about, whose main hobby appears to be the *grand pirouette à la seconde*, a move picked up at one point by half a dozen of the peasants *and* the allegedly aging tutor. Benno is Mercutio to Siegfried's Romeo, and, in case you don't get it in the first act, Zeffirelli has him killed in a duel by Rothbart in the third act.

Late in the first act, Rothbart and Odile enter. She, at this point, is being Carmen-ish—the first of several personae she will emulate throughout the evening. She will be Salome, she will be Semiramide, she may be Cleopatra, she will be Medusa.

She enters into a stunning and gypsy-esque pas de deux with Siegfried, and, whatever its justification for being there, it brings a novel strength to the act. Fracci was superb—her *fouettés* were strong and centred, and her arms were extraordinary.

In the grand tradition, Fracci can act, and her eyes were almost as important as her body in the telling of her identity. Gil was a stately and personable Siegfried, partnering her ably, but his is a relatively old-style—i.e. not much to dance—role.

Rothbart is played as a sort of *diablo ex machina*—we see his demonic support group in the prologue, and they bat around at various interludes thereafter, including early in the second act before they wheel him onstage in some infernal machine. They look ridiculous.

Then the maidens arrive, rather unimpressively, before collapsing onstage with veils over them. The choreography of the act picks up some—there is a nice ensemble *pirouette*, wherein the aforementioned nightgowns drape neatly around the maidens' legs, making them all look like spinning maypoles.

There are strong references to the Ivanov-Petipa choreography in Odette's first solo variation and in the grand pas de deux, but there are also changes. The one thing untampered with, to my personal regret, is the dance of the four Little Maidens, as they are called in this version. Not a new step in sight. Oddly enough, this looks better in the nightgowns than it ever seems to in tutus and feathers!

Hightower's third act ethnic dances are quite attractive and beautifully costumed. The traditional pas de deux is absent, but the one she has created for Odile and Siegfried is a stunner. Fracci, in particular, was deliciously soft in her impersonation of Odette, with huge *arabesques* stretched to infinity.

The fourth act is virtually farce—all "ghosties and ghoulies". The rationale for the two female dancers is a pas de trois for Odette, Odile and Siegfried. It's a typical "evil-twin" scenario that is borderline slapstick in places, but it has the effect of underscoring Zeffirelli's key theme for this production: Siegfried's dilemma, the allure of the sacred versus the profane.

He chooses Odile. Then the whole thing collapses. Odette dives into the lake; Siegfried takes Odile apart, limb by limb; Rothbart crumples and dies; and the true lovers are re-united underwater. It's a wet, but happy ending.

One problem—of many—with this production is that the Prince seems to be such a dope and a ditherer. Another is that the company's dancers are no great shakes. Bruno Vescovo was a charming and vibrant Benno, capable of some very nice *jetés* around the stage. But the corps was consistently sloppy, and Isabel Seabra's Odette was very shaky indeed.

There are a few unresolved mysteries—aside from where-did-they-get-that-music? Who were the grey-clad older ladies who walked around the (formerly) white acts? Who were the cavaliers who suddenly appeared at the end of the fourth act

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to partner the now-submerged maidens? Were those pitchforks or tridents that Rothbart's demons were carrying? This is a production in which the phrase "all hell breaks loose" is not used as a cliché, but as a stage direction.

However, it had its moments. The sets and costumes—with the obvious exception of those for the maidens—are lavish and striking. The production is colourful enough and fast enough in its running time, despite some stultifyingly slow patches, to be an entertainment.

And there was food for thought. The production raises issues about fiddling with the classics, and that's worth doing, I suppose, once in a while.

But is it *Swan Lake*? I think not; at best, it's *Zeffirelli's Swan Lake*. And the most fervent hope I leave it with, aside from hoping that Zeffirelli goes back to opera, theatre and film, is that Steven Spielberg is not getting as restless in his success as Zeffirelli was when he took on this new challenge. After all, sylphides are extra-terrestrials!

Toronto
Reviewed by Paula Citron

During September and October, three vastly different companies, each representing a specific genre of dance, appeared at Toronto's Premiere Dance Theatre.

The Connecticut-based modern-dance company Momix returned for a second consecutive year and again dazzled audiences with its unique blend of movement and experimentation. Co-founded by Moses Pendleton, the company's artistic director and choreographer, and one of the leading lights of Pilobolus, Momix braves new frontiers of dance by utilizing props and constructions which become part of the dancers' bodies and force them to move in new ways.

Thus, *Skiva* has two dancers bound in ski boots and skis, while *Circle Walker* is a gyroscope sculpture through and around which the dancer must move. In each case, the dancers are called upon to perform the feats of athleticism which have become the company's trademark.

As last year, Momix was awe-inspiring. The energy and creativity of this company appear to be unlimited, and even pieces that don't work as well as they should—such as *Medusa*, an obscure solo for a woman, an umbrella, a parachute and a wig—are, nonetheless, noble failures.

The programs are made up of many short pieces that bombard the audience with a barrage of images. Even a simple prop like a flashlight can be transformed, in the hands of a Momix dancer, into a special effect. In *Pre Face to Preview*, the dancers change the shape of their bodies by using the lights to create shadows and an other-worldly existence.

Not all of the company's works are filled with quirky humour, however. A big surprise on the program was *Alone of All Her Sex*. Timothy Latta, on tall stilts, formed the arch of a church door, dwarfing Cynthia Quinn, who portrayed a woman filled with *angst* and religious fervour. The dichotomy between the two was spectacular, particularly when Latta lifted Quinn off the floor during their pas de deux, or when he formed a Christ-figure on the cross high above her.

The National Tap Dance Company of Canada celebrated its 10th anniversary with a program of new and old works, and this unique group has never looked better.

According to co-founder and artistic director William Orlowski, the best way to celebrate the occasion was to add to the Company's repertoire, since there is no body of work to draw on, such as in ballet. So, three prominent artists were asked to contribute to the celebration: Brian Macdonald, Canada's leading choreographer; dancer-choreographer John Stanzel of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens; and Paul Draper, the American dancer who, in the 1940s, pioneered tapping to classical music.

Tapelmusik, set to a suite by Telemann, was a collaborative creation, with William Orlowski translating Brian Macdonald's choreographic vision into tap rhythms. It is a unique work, cleverly using the idioms of the 18th century, with tap

Andrew Oxenham

*Members of the National Tap Dance Company of Canada (*left to right*: Glen Kotyk, Lili Francks, Cheri Gibson, Allan Craik, Leslie McAfee and Stephen Greig) in* Tapelmusik, *a new work choreographed by Brian Macdonald and William Orlowski to celebrate the Company's 10th anniversary.*

as the vehicle of expression. Bedecked in period costumes, the dancers could be right out of the first act of *Giselle* in spirit and movement. This piece could become the National Tap Dance Company's "classical ballet"; it certainly has given the Company a new image.

John Stanzel, the 67-year-old miracle, danced with Orlowski in the first of two of his works featured on the program, *In A Mellow Tone*. His second duet, *You Name It*, was performed by Leslie McAfee and Stephen Greig. Both works have a breezy, laid-back feeling which allowed the dancers to show off and yet have fun.

Paul Draper's piece, entitled *A Work For Tap Dancers*, is a peculiar but ambitious mix of movement set to spoken word and music. Three poems by e.e. cummings form the backdrop to this work that wavers between upbeat and downbeat, ending with a dazzling Broadway finish.

Draper stretched the members of the Company, both as actors and movers—particularly Allan Craik in his solo, "Such Was a Poet", a brilliant rendering by Draper of cummings' subtleties.

In all, the vignettes, although different, blended together to show different aspects of the scope of tap dancing.

The program also included a retrospective of favourite works, such as the Company's signature piece, *A Concert*, set to Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto #3*—which still continues to delight—and a reworking of *Love of George*, Orlowski's homage to the music of Gershwin. The latter work is a trio for two men and a woman. Although its premise is one of sadness, Orlowski has still managed to fill the work with dazzling dancing.

Montreal's Tango X 4 was disappointing to some audience members who came expecting the smoldering Hollywood version of the dance. Instead, the company, under artistic director and musicologist Ramon Pelinski, presented historically accurate renderings of the tango—instrumentally, in song and in movement. The actual dancing was only one part of the total package.

Under Pelinski's direction, the tango was stripped of all the externals, and the true form emerged. What the performance lacked in slickness and sophistication of delivery, it made up in commitment and truth.

And not to be forgotten is that Pelinski had a group devoted solely to the tango long before *Tango Argentino* became a hit on Broadway.

Montreal
Reviewed by Iro Tembeck

It was Philippe Druelle who first came up with the idea of organizing a ballet gala of international superstars at Place des Arts in September. As founder of a three-year old osteopathy foundation, *Fondation canadienne pour l'enseignement et le recherche en osteopathie*, and a person closely linked to the Paris Opéra both professionally and personally—he is married to a French ballerina—he was indeed the perfect person to arrange such an evening.

The foundation is a research organization whose clinics have provided free treatment for disabled children suffering from neuromotor disorders. Many professional dancers have also turned to osteopathy for treatment of work-related injuries when other methods have failed. What better *rapprochement* than to bring together, in a showcase display, some of the world's most skillful ballet artists, whose masterly con-

Patrick Dupond and Jean-Marie Didières, members of the Paris Opéra Ballet, performing Maurice Béjart's Song of a Wayfarer, *part of a gala performance at Montreal's Place des Arts.*

trol of their carefully honed bodies was graciously offered for the benefit of children afflicted by various degrees of immobility.

Thirteen pas de deux constituted the evening's program. The performers came from the United States, France and various parts of Canada.

Among the evening's highlights were Patricia McBride and Ib Andersen of the New York City Ballet, performing Balanchine's melancholy *Sonatine*. And American Ballet Theatre's Marianna Tcherkassky and Danilo Radojevic, who ended the three-hour program with the virtuoso pas de deux from *Le Corsaire*.

Yet, the most spectacular moments of the evening were provided by the luminaries of the Paris Opéra. Sylvie Guillem, whose meteoric rise to stardom occurred two-and-a-half years ago, when she was barely 19, gave us a breathtaking and flawless technical performance of Victor Grovsky's *Grand pas de deux Classique*. The choreography was composed of a series of difficult *enchaînements* that underlined her endless extensions, her perfect proportions and the ease and poise with which she went from step to step. She was partnered by Manuel Legris.

Monique Loudiere, another French ballerina, was also partnered by Legris, in a excerpt from Petipa's *Esmeralda*. This pas de deux reinforced the impression given by Guillem—namely, that the Paris Opéra dancers are trained to be technical wizards.

Equally stunning, but in another, more emotionally charged vein, was Patrick Dupond, also from the Paris Opéra. He brought a sinuous, feline quality to Béjart's *Song of a Wayfarer*, which he danced with Jean-Marie Didières. In an evening jam-packed with bravura performances and intricate partnerings, this male duet offered a stimulating and welcome relief, as well as a much-needed change of pace and tone.

Canada was well-represented at the gala. The National Ballet of Canada's Karen Kain was partnered by Serge Lavoie in a fine, mature interpretation of a pas de deux from *Swan Lake*, while Les Grands Ballets Canadiens chose to present a more contemporary duet, choreographed and danced by newcomer René Daveluy, with Nicole Lamontagne.

Anik Bissonette and Louis Robitaille, from Ballet de Montréal Eddy Toussaint, performed Toussaint's *A Simple Moment*. And Mariane Beauséjour of the Alberta Ballet Company was partnered by Alexandre Seillier of Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal in the Bluebird pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty*.

But it was Evelyn Hart and André Lewis of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet who presented one of the most moving and electrifying moments of the evening when they performed Jiri Kylian's *Nuages*, a choreographic gem that provides a perfect vehicle for a sensitive and strong couple.

The piece is close to the idioms of both ballet and modern dance; it incorporates technique and emotion. Choreographically, it goes beyond technique and set structures; its inventiveness and flow were a pure joy to watch. For the half-shades of emotion which it allowed us to glimpse, the work could easily have been subtitled *Nuances*.

Robert Desrosiers was the only modern choreographer featured on the program. His *Duo de la Lune*, taken from *Ultracity*, although choreographically interesting on its own, seemed out of context in such a ballet-dominated gala. Desrosiers' choreographic experimentation, both musically and gesturally, along with his thematic and compositional structure, spoke a different language from that of the rest of the evening.

In order to better appreciate Desrosiers' artistic contribution, the audience needed more modern works to offset the overloading of excerpts from the classical repertoire in the program. In retrospect, moreover, one cannot help wondering why choreographic inventiveness still generally seems to take second place in classical ballet behind the sheer celebration of technique and linear perfection.

It is hard to plan a gala evening comprised of snippets of pas de deux borrowed from larger works and well-known classics. Daniel Seillier, as artistic director of this marathon event, managed to offer the public a fitting smorgasbord of internationally acclaimed ballet celebrities.

The most pleasing fact, however, remains that this was an unprecedented evening—not only for Montreal, but for the rest of Canada, as well. Benefit galas and fund-raising artistic events usually require the volunteer services of not more than a couple of stars. To have succeeded in gathering such a wide selection of fine performers is a feat in itself. That these dancers would generously give of their talent, energy and time—freely and for a worthy cause—gave an additional edge to an evening called *The Gift of the Stars* (*Le Don des Etoiles*).

Most touching of all was the final moment of the gala, when the first bouquet of flowers was presented to a ballerina by a young boy in a wheelchair. It was a moving tribute, given by an immobile person to a movement expert—and a succinct and efficient reminder of the real reason for this glamorous gathering. •

n.b. What's New and What's Happening . . . People, Performance and Exhibits

Linda Maybarduk, former first soloist with the National Ballet of Canada, has been elected president of the board of directors of the **Dance in Canada Association.**

The Goh Ballet opened its 1986-87 season with a performance at the Vancouver Playhouse in October. The program featured *Ballade*, a new piece by Choo San Goh, set to music by Gabriel Fauré. Other works included Lynn Seymour's *Love is in the Air*, a pas de deux from *Don Quixote, Le Spectre de la Rose* and *Ribbon Dance*.

Kokoro Dance, a new company formed by Barbara Bourget and Jay Hirabayashi, will give its first performances January 28-31 at the Firehall Theatre in Vancouver.

Edmonton's **Ukrainian Shumka Dancers** will tour Canada this spring, with performances scheduled in Calgary (Feb. 21), Vancouver (Feb. 27-28), Toronto (Mar. 13-15), Winnipeg (Mar. 22), Saskatoon (Mar. 28-29) and Edmonton (Apr. 9-11).

The Alberta Ballet Company began its 20th anniversary season by announcing the elimination of its entire accumulated deficit.

The Company was scheduled to present *Encore, A Birthday Party* in Edmonton and Calgary during November. Highlights of the program included the re-staging, by students from the Alberta Ballet School, of *Frolic*, a ballet created by the Company's founder, Ruth Carse. Other works included Lambros Lambrou's *Tzigane* and artistic director Brydon Paige's staging of the pas de dix from *Raymonda*, as well as a new work, *In Passing*, created for the Company by Reid Anderson.

In December the Company performs *The Nutcracker* in Victoria, Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton and Yakima, Washington.

In February the Alberta Ballet Company will pay tribute to its departing artistic director, with performances in Calgary and Edmonton. The program will include Brian Macdonald's *Three-Part Invention* and the world premiere of Lambrou's *Elektra*. Paige himself will choreograph a salute to composer Cole Porter.

From mid-February until the end of March, the Company will be on tour, appearing in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Ontario.

Roy Round

Canadian dancers Wayne Eagling and Jennifer Penney, principals with the Royal Ballet, will return to Canada to perform at Canada Dance Festival Danse Canada, to be held in Ottawa, July 4-12.

New Horizons is a series of dance performances being held in Regina this season. The programs feature works by local and guest choreographers and companies. The first performance, *Confessions of a Romance Junkie*, created and performed by Toronto-based choreographer Terrill Maguire, was presented in November. Future performances will include *STAB (Space Time and Beyond)*, created and performed by Montreal-based artist Marie Chouinard, at the Globe Theatre, Jan. 31; *Human Eclipse*, duet works by Dianne Fraser and Robin Poitras, at the Schnitzel Haus, Mar. 28; and *Saskatchewan Exchange*, works by six Saskatchewan choreographers, at the Open Stage Theatre, May 30.

Contemporary Dancers Canada has announced plans for its 1986-87 season. Scheduled for performance at Winnipeg's Gas Station Theatre are *Camping Out, A Wilde Night with Liszt*, staged by Tedd Robinson and Murray Darroch, Dec. 31-Jan. 10; *With a Twist, On the Rocks*, featuring works by Darroch (*Grey Lipstick* and a new piece, *Emotional Vaudeville #2: "I'm So Fat"*) and Robinson (*Attitudes of Risk and Uncertainty*), Feb. 18-28; and the opening event of the third Festival of Canadian Modern Dance, *Dipped in Circus Red*, featuring new works by Robert Desrosiers and Ruth Cansfield, and Charles Moulton's *9 Person Precision Ball Passing*, May 12-23.

During the spring, the company will perform in Quebec and Ontario, appearing in Rouyn (Mar. 14), Rimouski (Mar. 18), Quebec (Mar. 20), Victoriaville (Mar. 21), Ottawa (Mar. 23), Kingston (Mar. 26) and Brockville (Mar. 27).

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet will travel to the United States this winter, appearing in Florida, South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin during January and February.

Between its March 11-15 and May 6-10 performances at Winnipeg's Centennial Concert Hall, the company will tour Western Canada. Performances are scheduled for British Columbia (Vancouver, Mar. 19-22; Duncan, Mar. 24; Victoria, Mar. 25-27), Alberta (Banff, Mar. 29; Lethbridge, Apr. 2-3; Red Deer, Apr. 4; Edmonton, Apr. 6-8; Calgary, Apr. 9-11), Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, Apr. 14-16; Regina, Apr. 20) and Manitoba (Brandon, Apr. 18).

Murray Darroch has joined **Contemporary Dancers Canada** as assistant artistic director.

Toronto-based classical Indian dancer and teacher **Rina Singha** gave a series of solo Kathak concerts and workshops in British Columbia during November, appearing in Vancouver, Burnaby and Victoria.

Lumière, Robert Desrosiers' latest full-length work, received its first performance at Toronto's Premiere Dance

Paddy Stone

Well-known Canadian dancer, choreographer and director Paddy Stone died in Winnipeg in September. He was 64 years old.

His career spanned nearly 50 years in dance, theatre, television and films.

Stone performed with the Winnipeg Ballet Club, later the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, from 1938 to 1946 and was the company's first male principal dancer.

In 1946 he went to New York, where he joined the chorus of the Broadway show *Annie Get Your Gun*. Later that year, he travelled to England, where he was a principal dancer with the Royal Ballet. He later danced in many theatre productions in London and Paris.

As a choreographer and director, he was active on both sides of the Atlantic. He choreographed five works for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet: *Zigeuner* (1943), *Classico* (1955), *Variations on Strike Up the Band* (1969), *The Hands* (1975) and *Bolero* (1981).

Stone appeared in several films—including *Invitation to Dance*—and television specials, and directed many shows for musical theatre, television and film in Europe, the United States and Canada.

Theatre in November. **Desrosiers Dance Theatre** presented the multimedia spectacle for a three-week run, Nov. 18-Dec. 6.

Dancemakers will present a series of Sunday-afternoon salon performances at the company's studio in Toronto. These informal workshops will be held on the second Sunday of each month, from December 1986 through May 1987.

Angela Leigh, Lois Smith, Donald Himes, Susan Macpherson and Ricardo Abreut will join the Canadian Children's Dance Theatre and students from the School of Toronto Dance Theatre in the **Toronto Dance Theatre** presentation of *Court of Miracles* at Premiere Dance Theatre, Dec. 16-21.

This winter, **T.I.D.E.** (Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise) will perform in British Columbia (Vancouver, Jan. 20, 22-24; Burnaby, Jan. 25); Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, Jan. 28-29; Regina, Jan. 30), Ontario (Toronto, Feb. 2-6; London, Feb. 23-27, Mar. 1) and Quebec (Montreal, Feb. 13-15; Quebec City, Feb. 19-21).

Toronto Dance Theatre will present seasons at Premiere Dance Theatre in January and June.

The January 20-25 performances will include revivals of Patricia Beatty's *Skyling* and Peter Randazzo's *Enter the Dawn*, as well as David Earle's *Sacre Conversazione* and two works by Christopher House, *Animated Shorts* and *Goblin Market*, which was first presented at Expo 86.

The program for the June 2-7 performances is scheduled to include a revival of Peter Randazzo's 1975 work *L'Assassin Menace* and two premieres—Christopher House's *Go Yet Turning Stay*, first seen at the 1986 Banff Festival, and a new work by David Earle.

Toronto-based **Ontario Ballet Theatre** will add several new works to its repertoire this season. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is a full-length ballet for children, choreographed by the company's artistic director, Sarah Lockett, to an original score by John Mills-Cockell.

Shorter works will include *Anthem of a Soldier*, choreographed by Michael Vernon, formerly of the Royal Ballet and London Festival Ballet, and *Anna*

Christie, choreographed by Jeanette Allyn, former artistic director of American Festival Ballet.

Ontario Ballet Theatre will perform at Toronto's Premiere Dance Theatre, March 5-7.

The National Ballet of Canada will return to England, after an eight-year absence, to perform at the London Coliseum, June 30-July 4. The program is scheduled to include Glen Tetley's *Alice*, which the company performed last year in New York at the Metropolitan Opera House, George Balanchine's *Serenade* and another work to be announced.

Last fall, Montreal-based **Les Sortilèges** toured Mexico, appearing at the Cervantino International Festival and in Mexico City, Toluca, Morelia, Guanajuato, Queretaro, Pachuca and Cuernevaca.

During October and November, **Montanaro Dance**, now in its second season, toured Canada, performing in Peterborough, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary and Toronto.

The Jean-Pierre Perreault Foundation presented *Nuit*, choreographed by Jean-Pierre Perreault, in Montreal, Oct. 16-Nov. 2.

Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal has four new members: dancers Sacha Belinsky, Daniela Panessa, Dwight Rhoden and Alexandre Seillier, who is also company ballet master.

The company adds two new works by Argentine choreographer Mauricio Wainrot to its repertoire this season: *Libertango* and *After*, which has been created especially for Les Ballets Jazz and will receive its world premiere in Montreal in 1987—the company's 15th anniversary.

After touring the province of Quebec in February, **Danse Partout** will appear at the Grand Theatre in Quebec City on March 4. The program is scheduled to include *Faces, Chiaroscuro* and other works by artistic director Luc Tremblay and Bill James.

Montreal has a new dance company: **Montréal Danse.** The project was set up by choreographer-dancer Paul-André Fortier, founder and artistic director of Fortier Danse-Création, and Daniel Jackson, a member of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens for 25 years and its co-artistic director for seven years.

The company will have eight dancers: Anne Barry, Raymond Brisson, Marie-Andrée Gougeon, Gary Kurtz, Denis Lavoie, Manon Levac, Sylvain Poirier and Catherine Tardif.

During its first season, Montréal Danse will present works commissioned from eight Quebec choreographers: Fortier, Tardif, James Kudelka, Ginette Laurin, Daniel Léveillé, Jean-Pierre Perreault, Linda Rabin and Françoise Sullivan.

The company will make its first appearance in January, with performances at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa (Jan. 26-27). Further performances are scheduled for Montreal (Feb. 3), Joliette (Feb. 10) and Rimouski (Feb. 14).

In December, CBC television's *Gzowski & Company* featured Halifax's **Nova Dance Theatre**, Jeanne Robinson, the company's founder and artistic director, and her husband, writer Spider Robinson. •

Ford

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1986/87

Premiere Dance Theatre

presented by cfmy fm

Performance Schedule

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September 23–October 4, 1986

TANGO × 4
October 7–11, 1986

MARIA BENITEZ SPANISH DANCE COMPANY with Guest Artist Jose Greco
October 28-November 1, 1986

DESROSIERS DANCE THEATRE
November 18–29, 1986

THE MANHATTAN BALLET presents Gershwin! A Celebration of Music and Dance
December 9–13, 1986

ANN DITCHBURN DANCES
January 13–17, 1987

TORONTO DANCE THEATRE
January 20–24, 1987

NORTHERN LIGHTS DANCE THEATRE
January 27–31, 1987

MARGIE GILLIS
February 3–14, 1987

AMERICAN BALLET COMEDY
February 24–28, 1987

DANNY GROSSMAN DANCE COMPANY
March 10–21, 1987

ALBERTA BALLET COMPANY
March 24–28, 1987

RANDY GLYNN DANCE PROJECT
April 7–11, 1987

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