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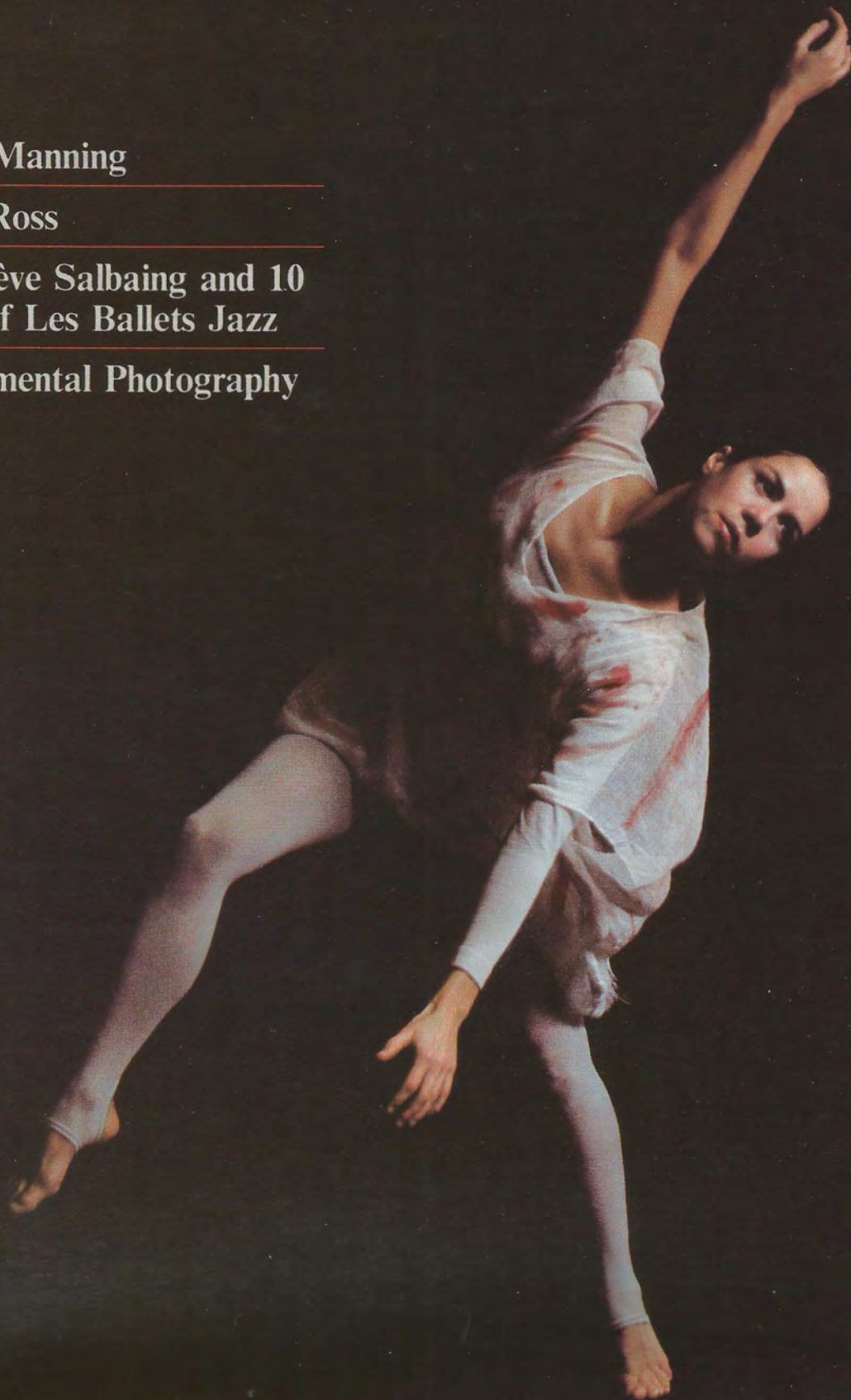
Dance in Canada au Danse

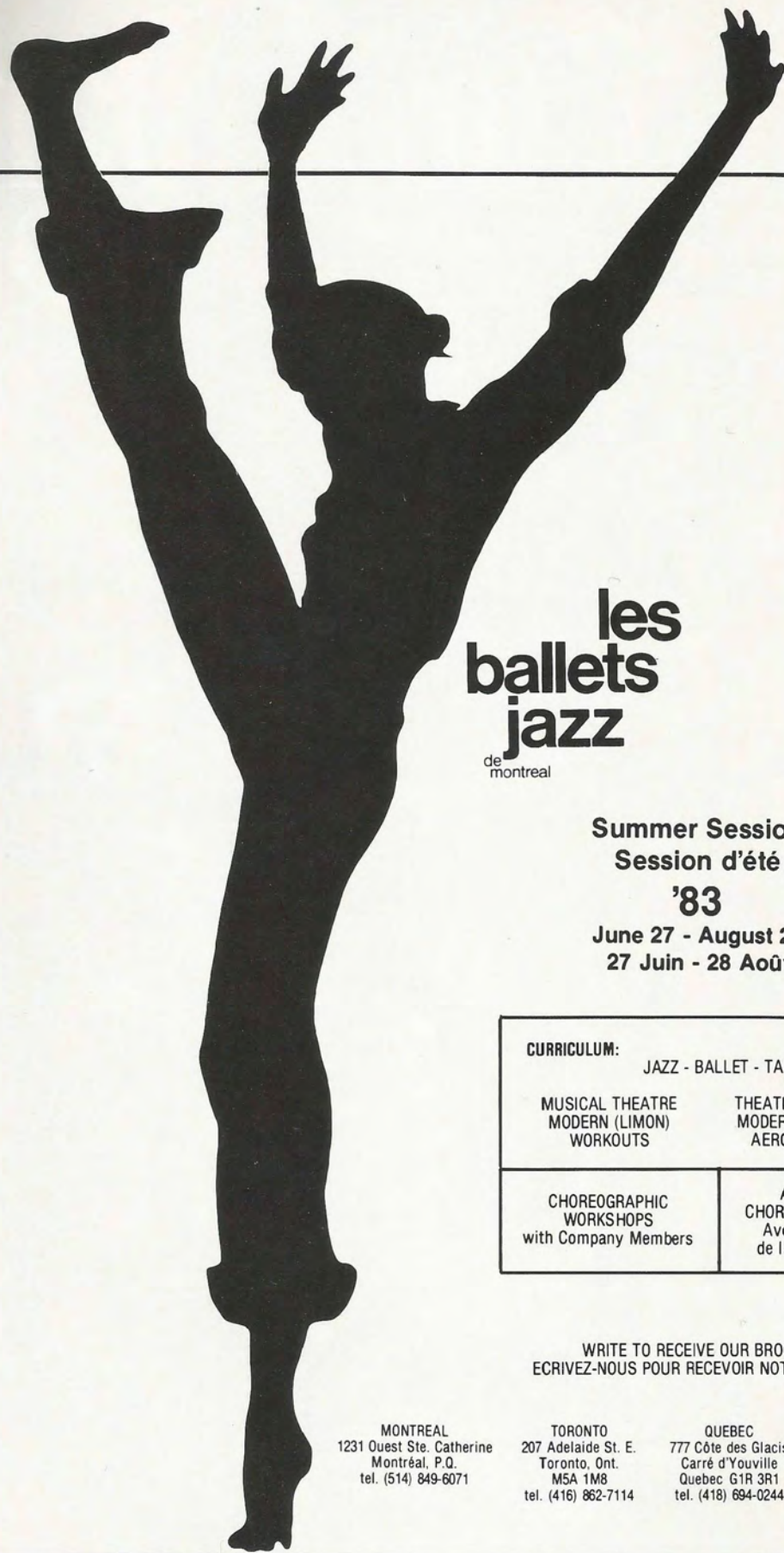
Leslie Manning

Paula Ross

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Leslie Manning in Paula Ross's *Space Platform* (1982), photographed by Ismail Farahani.

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“As God and the Spirits Would Have It”

Paula Ross and Company

By Peter Ryan

“I could afford being a snark when I was twenty-five. I could even afford to be defensive when I was thirty-four. At forty, I think I'd like to be a recluse with the work and stay away from the rest of it.”

Paula Ross laughs when she admits this, but it's not that far from the truth. Dances have been pouring out of Ross for almost two decades now, but she feels that she's done her best work only in the past few years. Her present phase dates from the first performances of *Coming Together*, the work that has become the best known and most powerful piece she's ever done. Inspired in part by the plight of native people, who form a disproportionate segment of the penal population, *Coming Together* is about edges, madness, about how much abuse a human being can endure before the internal systems break down. Basically it's about survival, and thus refers indirectly to Paula Ross's own battles for the freedom to do what she wants most in this life: to make some dances and simply to live with them for a while.

Coming Together is one extended body-punch, a lung-searing crescendo of energy that achieves its effect without resorting to graphic displays of violence. No pretty stuff here. It's a jabbing array of kicks and jumps, of self-protective spins, of movements repeated to the point of exhaustion, of erratic irrational behaviour brought on by life in a static irrational environment. The dancers assault each other, they lose their humanity, becoming hyperactive masses of muscle and sinew. It's like witnessing an execution.

A person has one main thought in a lifetime, maybe only one story to tell. Perhaps a choreographer creates one life-long dance. Paula Ross wrote the following notes for a concert of her recent dances: “The images and perceptions I am dealing with in these pieces are meant to relate and entertain the audience as coloured pieces of glass put together to delight and



Paula Ross

Paula Ross est chorégraphe depuis bientôt vingt ans. Elle a une personnalité intense et complexe et une attitude directe ne laissant aucun compromis sur ses opinions et ses aspirations artistiques. Après des études de ballet à Vancouver, sa ville natale, elle est devenue danseuse de cabaret et s'est presque lancée comme comédienne humoristique. Paula Ross a une grande compassion pour les victimes de malentendus et de l'injustice humaine, elle-même ayant connu des périodes de souffrance et de difficultés. Ce n'est que maintenant, par exemple, qu'elle se sent totalement rétablie d'un accident de voiture qui a failli lui coûter la vie il ya dix ans. Elle travaille avec une grande rapidité et bien qu'elle ait établi son propre vocabulaire du mouvement, son imagerie s'inspire de sources diverses. A son avis, ses meilleures chorégraphies sont celles qu'elle a créées dans les dernières années.

intrigue the spectator. They are meant to be thought over and played with, hopefully for future recall”.

But even if the teller has only one tale, the choreographer has to use human bodies to tell the story. Paula Ross has told her story on the bodies of scores of dancers over the years, and a handful have remained as constants. The majority have simply come and gone, some more than once, some cursing and crying, some with quiet resignation. These are facts of life when a dancer chooses to work with a strong choreographer.

“Some claim she has a tendency to sabotage her own progress.”

Predictably, changes in personnel have resulted in changes in the quality of the dancing. At times the company has been tight and tuned, executing the work cleanly, but at other times it has had a distinctly ragged look, its balance and timing inadequate for the choreography. Until recently, the company has appeared to be an on-again off-again affair. True, they're the oldest modern dance company in Vancouver and have shown brief bursts of promise, but they've never really taken off. Some blame Ross for this, claiming she has a tendency to sabotage her own progress because of her behaviour in situations demanding diplomacy. But Paula Ross has never played the political game with any degree of commitment. Her insight into those activities is heavily tinged with irony. She's to be admired for this, perhaps, but also criticized. There's more to a dance company and its fortunes than making dances, as Ross may finally be realizing. Street dealings, the cut and thrust without the veil, have their limitations. Ross admitted recently that the company had to be organized so that the pattern of the past years wouldn't recur. (To this end, Paula Ross and Leslie Manning now share the post of artistic director, while former arts journalist Lana Hills is company general manager.)

Ross calls herself a Scots Indian, a breed. One of her favourite phrases, “As God and the Spirits would have it”, reveals a dual faith and also illuminates an essential trait. She assigns the power of events to forces, conventional or otherwise, beyond herself. Yet this isn't always so; the woman can be powerfully personal and specific when it suits her. It could be Paula Ross speaking in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*:

Do I contradict myself?

Very well, then, I contradict myself;

(I am large — I contain multitudes.)
She loves to talk. You sit down over a beer, she with her everpresent cigarettes, and you begin. It doesn't really matter where you start. The conversation takes its own turns anyway. This is both frustrating and appealing. You're looking for facts, details, names, events, but they don't come, or at least not in the order you expected. Instead you find yourself winging it with Paula Ross — ideas, pronouncements, intuitions, a dollop of people, places and anecdotes thrown in for good measure. It's crazy and amusing but it could all be a fabrication, because this woman's a storyteller. In this instance, historical fiction is much more than a literary genre. “I'm telling you the truth”, she says, “but the next time I tell it, it'll all be different...”. Now this isn't to say that she's lying to you. She'll be the first to admit that a person has to lie honestly, which somehow puts it into another context. It all gets very confusing.

Nonetheless, points of reference exist. Paula Ross was born in Vancouver of “red-neck, earn-a-living, Canadian stock”. Even though he found ballet embarrassing, her father took her to class, then stood outside the door so she wouldn't take off. Blind in one eye at age five, somewhat athletically inclined but definitely a dancer of promise, she left home at 15 for the show-dance scene in Montreal. She found herself in New York in her teens with neither money nor work, so it was back to Montreal, then Toronto, then Chicago, all the while learning, absorbing, fighting hard, realizing the facts of life in the big city: God wasn't on the earth for dancers; nobody was looking for anyone with talent; you were just a piece of meat. Success stories are made on earth. You can't get away with anything in show business; someone will get you on it. If you have talent and hustle, you'll still need luck and strength; no one is going to hand you anything. It's tough but true.

Strathcona Park is a power dance, full of swirling capes, masked faces, revolving bodies and sculptural tableaux. There is rarely a single focus; the eye can wander freely because central action isn't the point. All action has its own significance. The dance exerts immediate visual and kinetic appeal, but it has an effect on the mind that accumulates and lingers beyond the blackout.

Paula Ross, in her late teens, in the late fifties, left New York and the big cities of the East because, as she admits,

she was too young, she wasn't yet tough enough, and she had no connections. The Living Theatre and other avant-garde movements were flourishing, and Ross would have loved to be involved, but she felt that she had nothing special to offer, so she left.

With a solid sense of where she wasn't, Ross eventually found herself on the American west coast doing stand-up comedy with Donald O'Connor. She loved it, hearing her voice through a microphone and people laughing in response. It quickly led to an offer to become a comedian, but she realized a couple of important things very early in that game, and it most likely saved her. One was that if you started cracking jokes about yourself, it became a mirror and it could kill; the other was that she'd most likely have drunk her earnings and never made it anyway. Something she also learned as she stepped onto the Greyhound for Vancouver was that once you've said no, you've said it for good. No one invites you back; it's a one-way street, whether you like it or not.

“As God and the Spirits would have it.”

Back in the rain again, she thought hard and decided the only respectable thing to do was to return to ballet. She became company publicist for the fledgling Pacific Dance Theatre, working with Norbert Vesak. A year later, in her own words, she “had it all”. From there it was back to the States and a tryout with the San Francisco Ballet. She made it this time, and this time she lasted six weeks before doing business with the bus company again. She simply couldn't stomach one more chorus line with low pay. She was a fish out of water; her world was different — the difference between the studio and the street. Ross had little in common with the pasteurized ballerinas of the San Francisco corps. In Vancouver, she looked around and said to herself, “choreographer”. She'd never choreographed a thing in her life.

Paulatics is an eclectic ramble through what-is-never-quite-clear-and-it-doesn't-seem-to-matter. The scale of movement ranges from tiny to epic. Its sleepwalking figures, rolling intertwined bodies, soldierly battalions, horses and riders lodge themselves firmly in our imaginations and refuse to move on. It is neither obvious nor obscure. Whole sections arise from another source than externally dictated style.

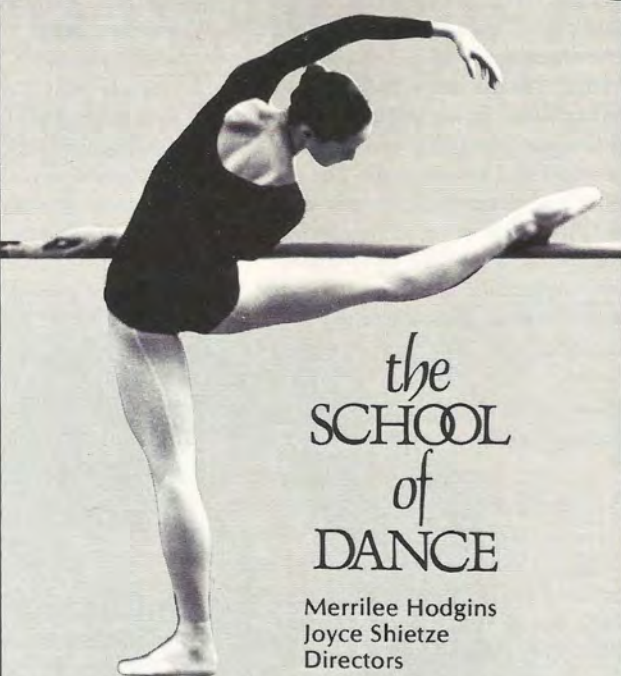
Her first group was a bunch of

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They transform, as does any art form in which the medium is live, breathing bodies. Call it a contingent imperative. The perception of change arises because the work has a layered look, the details coming from different directions on different bodies at different times, Leslie Manning wearing it with deadpan ease, Dean Smith with his half-smiling, deceptively mild intensity, or Anne Harvie with her elongated poise. The work is athletic, very masculine in a non-aggressive mode.

"At its core, the company is her."

Ross has what she calls her "modern lines" that derive from painting, the colours and the form, the qualities of those lines. There's also a positional quality to the choreography, what one dancer called the "hit and hold" style. The work isn't so much about flow as it is about positions, the getting *to* and the getting *out of* less important than the being there. Transition is not the key to this work. Another dancer referred to the process as working on still photos of a very idiosyncratic kind.

The images parade by, one behind the other, burning into the retina, decaying and reforming elsewhere. We find ourselves supplying the route from one picture to the next, as if she'd conned us into falling asleep, waking, falling asleep, all through the dance. Yet we don't feel as if we've missed anything. Her tribal metaphor has enveloped us again, future primitives in the blackness.

It's difficult to talk about this company without discussing Ross herself, because at its core the company is her. The history of the Paula Ross Dance Company is the history of Paula Ross. Much of the company's progress has originated with her. But one person can't run the whole show, hence the new arrangements. Previously, if Ross couldn't abide the politics of a situation, promising plans might evaporate. She wants to succeed, but she wants it on her own terms. When she says that she'll stay right where she is if it means having to compromise, she's serious. The work comes first. It won her the 1977 Chalmers Award in Choreography, the year after *Coming Together*.

Many artists go through times when they'd like to leave the whole business behind, to separate the art from the life. It's not easy; the studio has to be faced. Daily. One of Ross's former dancers recalls a particular Saturday morning:

"None of us really wanted to be there. She [Ross] came in with her coffee and was obviously not in very good shape, not bright and alert. But you got the sense of her recognizing that she had to get on with it, gripping herself, getting herself under control and then teaching this amazing class. I admired her ability to let go and sag, then with inordinate strength just amalgamate everything and proceed on the line she wanted to go."

The time has passed for Ross to be a

snark, to be defensive, even to be a recluse. In very real terms, it's perform or perish. Performing is saying things; Paula Ross still has things to say. "You can claim that you don't care about communication", Ross states flatly, "but in the final analysis that's what you're doing it for". □

Peter Ryan is a Vancouver-based dancer/choreographer and writer/broadcaster. The reviews quoted are those of Mr. Ryan.

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Leslie Manning

When Leslie Manning read the first critique of her dancing in one of the local papers she was devastated. The writer called her the least emotional dancer he'd ever seen, "cool, detached and strangely controlled". After the initial shock had worn off, she read it again and found it to be more complimentary. The reviewer went on to describe her as: "A remarkable dancer, almost naive in her movement, with arms that move directly and finally to their position, but...are as casual as though she were taking paint from the shelf".

A few years later, Max Wyman remarked of Manning's dancing that, "its air of strength and intensity is invested now with a natural warmth...". Clearly, Manning was developing a presence in performance that was the match of her technique.

Manning first saw Paula Ross's choreography at a Vancouver Art Gallery performance. "It took the top of my head off", she recalls. She loved it immediately.

Manning is of medium height, with long brown hair and small features. She walks with a touch of tightness, yet she can abandon this at a moment's notice. Some attribute the tight body look to the Ross choreography, but maybe a certain personality is attracted to the work in the first place.

Manning, like Ross, is a native British

Columbian and, like Ross again, expresses no desire to establish herself in Toronto or New York. She's always gone away with the express intention of learning things to bring back to the studio. In 1977, she went to Toronto to study at the Toronto Dance Theatre, then went to the Cunningham studio in New York. She was comparing herself, and departed with the confidence that she could hold her own as a dancer anywhere. This realization made it easier to return to Vancouver; she knew that she wasn't hiding herself as a dancer. It

also confirmed something that she already knew: Vancouver was a good town to come back to.

There's something else. Manning thinks that Paula Ross is brilliant, that her choreography is unique. "An artist's work always reflects and is influenced by the part of the world they live in", she feels. "It can still qualify internationally as good art. It seems to me that as an artist I can do my best work with a choreographer from this part of the world, so there's a very strong connection. It's natural that her work



Leslie Manning in Paula Ross's *Untitled*.

Tout comme son inspiratrice Paula Ross, Leslie Manning est originaire de Colombie-Britannique. Elle se sent satisfaite de son rôle en tant qu'interprète des chorégraphies de Ross. Lorsqu'elle a quitté la compagnie pour étudier ailleurs, c'était toujours dans l'idée d'y retourner avec un apport enrichissant pour son travail à Vancouver. Leslie Manning possède une grande discipline, et comme co-directrice artistique de Paula Ross, elle est un exemple pour la compagnie.

dancers from the Vancouver club scene. She claims she never formed a group in her life, but when they had a meeting about a name for themselves, she laid it out. "They all sat around the table and came up with these great names. Well I came from show business and if I was paying the rent, then I'd call it my name, then I could be responsible for it. I wasn't there just to fool around. So we called it my name. But they weren't terribly pleased about it. In those days I used to get notes saying, 'You are too committed and powerful. I have to express myself and there's not enough room in this vehicle'. But the thing is, none of the people who wrote those notes are working now. Maybe that's God and the Spirits. Who knows about that?"

"She can be vindictive, temperamental, tactless and self-indulgent."

Whatever plans Ross had were suddenly cut short by a serious car accident that nearly killed her. A main artery in her head was severed, and it "erased my tapes"; among other things Ross lost her spatial perception and the ability to count. It's her own opinion that she's only now getting back to normal, almost 10 years later. After the accident she decided she wasn't going to work again; she'd stay home and collect social security. It took a call from her old ballet teacher, Mara McBirney (who had virtually disowned her when Ross left town at 15), to get her going. Her personal life was coming apart at the seams, but she credits Mara McBirney with the well-placed kick that got her back into the studio and working. It was a tough grind, but Ross found herself and carried on.

When she met Anna Sokolow, Paula Ross felt an immediate kinship. Sokolow hated academies, she didn't like fixed rules, revelled in the lack of tradition in modern dance, and wanted none. She liked argument and questioning and confrontation, believed in stretching the movement vocabulary, didn't believe in endings and, according to Paula Ross, she hated everything about what she was doing *except* what she was doing. Sokolow said, "Do what you feel you are, not what you think you ought to be. Go ahead and be a bastard. Then you can be an artist". It could well have been Paula Ross talking.

There are more than a few in the dance world who regard Ross as a royal pain. She can be vindictive,



The Paula Ross Dance Company in Strathcona Park.

temperamental, tactless and self-indulgent. If you asked her, she'd probably admit it. She's nothing if not honest. In the last analysis, you don't look for excuses. You simply live it, or live *with* it. Ross lives it.

There's another side as well. She's a warm, funny, compassionate and eminently sane woman who invites you into her world in a prepossessing manner. Her sensitivity and intuitive nature ensure that nothing gets past her. She also knows how to make her dancers *want* to do her work; she tells them what they need to know. They'll tell you they love the work that they do; they find something of themselves in the choreography. It's something they can believe in.

Paula Ross bases her choreography on a contingency that few artists except perhaps the experimentalists could tolerate. Ross holds that one good step is as valid as another. If so, what is the imperative of art, its inherent rightness? Ross might answer that dances, for one, aren't fixed but sliding (as Emerson said of the universe); they shift in emphasis and energy, they grow and mature, they crumble and decay. Anyway, the artist should be the bad conscience of the culture, not the keeper of the crown jewels for the sake of some remote aesthetic expedience.

Half a year ago, *The Bridge had a distinctly malevolent air; today it seems full of humour. True, the*

opening section is still a chilling array of black figures reminiscent of Japanese ninja, looking for all the world like a horde of M.C. Escher gnomes on a tear. But the garbage cans arrive silently now, and the dancers balance delicately on the rims, the lids serving as hats. The music chugs along, a burping pop-bop chant of brass, as the dancers mug their ways back and forth across the stage. Fifty ways to walk to cover.

Ross works quickly, marking her dances out in big chunks, then filling in the details afterwards. According to one of her dancers at the time, she choreographed the whole of *Paulatics*, one of her major dances, in about a week, but this doesn't include the months spent mulling it over, chewing it and brewing it until it was ready to be born on the studio floor. Then, in a few brief hours, the whole thing was laid out, the lines marked, the dynamics tested.

She works with a defined range of steps and movements, but it obviously is no limitation for her. One can see the characteristic style in a viewing of two or three dances: the lunge onto one leg, parallel seconds, parallel jumps, the extended and turned in leg with the pelvis slipped back, the freedom in the armpits and the raised shoulders. But each time you watch the work it seems as if something's changed; maybe the piece has been edited, its sections shifted, compressed, expanded. Ross doesn't let her dances sit around gathering dust.

would appeal to me." One dancer said of Manning, "You can't imagine her doing anything else. It's the way she best expresses herself".

Ross and Manning rarely disagree. Currently they share the post of artistic director, and they're still seeing how it works. Manning feels that the arrangement has potential and that it will develop as they do. But their points of view are subtly different. Manning cites an instance two years ago when she suggested that they video the choreography. Ross had never taped any of her material. She felt that her best work was yet to be done, so why tape those dances? She said simply, "I'll do some more".

Ross has encouraged Manning to choreograph, but she claims to have no desire. Performing Paula Ross dances is satisfaction enough. "A lot of dancers aren't as lucky to have found a choreographer that they can develop a really satisfying relationship with", she says. "We share a relationship that finds its way into all the dances." One dancer felt that Ross and Manning had collaborated for so long that they needed each other.

Manning says she finds a depth in the choreography that continues to fascinate her. "Textures are what the work's about. Just when I have a dance figured out, I find a whole other texture there. I keep finding that out. Paula's dances are like puzzles; they've got a sense of mystery. And surprisingly, I never seem to know where the dances will end, even though they're all choreographed pieces."

She seems to represent the perfect choreographer's medium, her technique and intelligence subordinate to the work. She doesn't like to think in performance, and she doesn't believe in a great show of emotion, trusting that the emotion is in the choreography. She's very moved by the dances as dances.

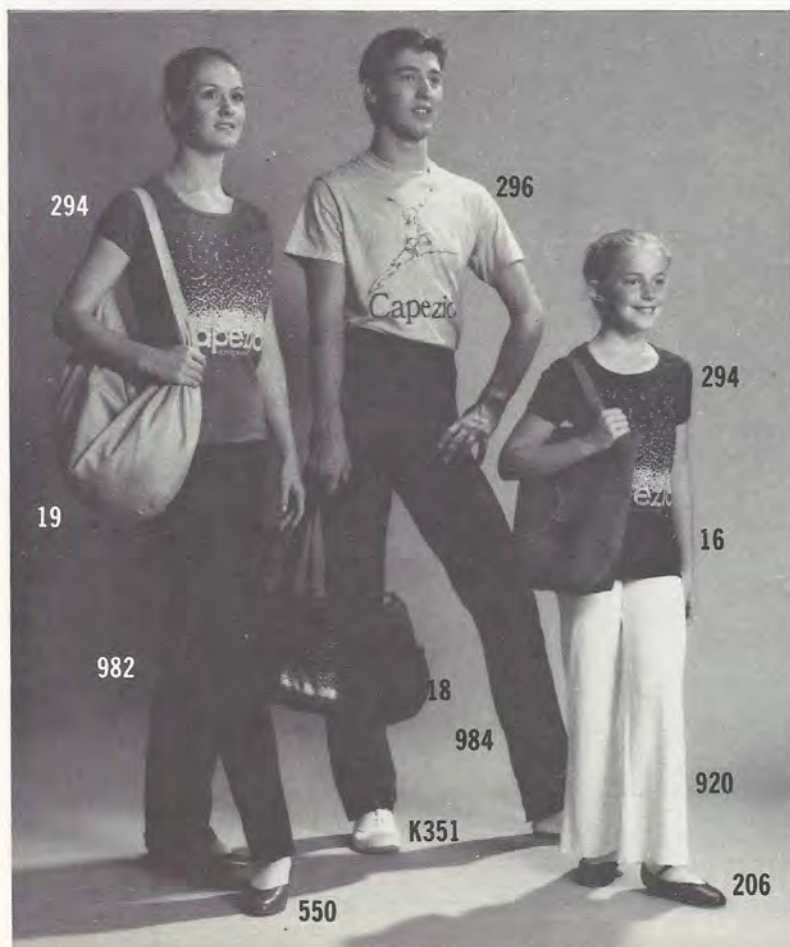
Technically, Manning strives to maintain herself in a receptive state. "It gets harder to stay in shape as you get older. Your timing takes on more of your natural timing. As I get older I find I have more difficulty with the different timings."

She's also an example to the company, a dancer who can do all the exercises, then show by example how she makes them useful to her body. A former

company member, who says that Manning's dancing in itself never impressed her, still paid her a compliment. She admired Manning's ability to get up early, do T'ai Chi, yoga, go running, come to the studio, teach, and so on through the day. Manning took on dancing and she improved. Her discipline was exemplary.

If nothing else were important to a dancer, Manning could still point to her diligence as a means to success. "With anything", she says with characteristic matter-of-factness, "if you stick with it, you'll get to much deeper levels than if you try many different things". □

PETER RYAN



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Photo-Gallery: The Experimental Scene

By Mary Reid

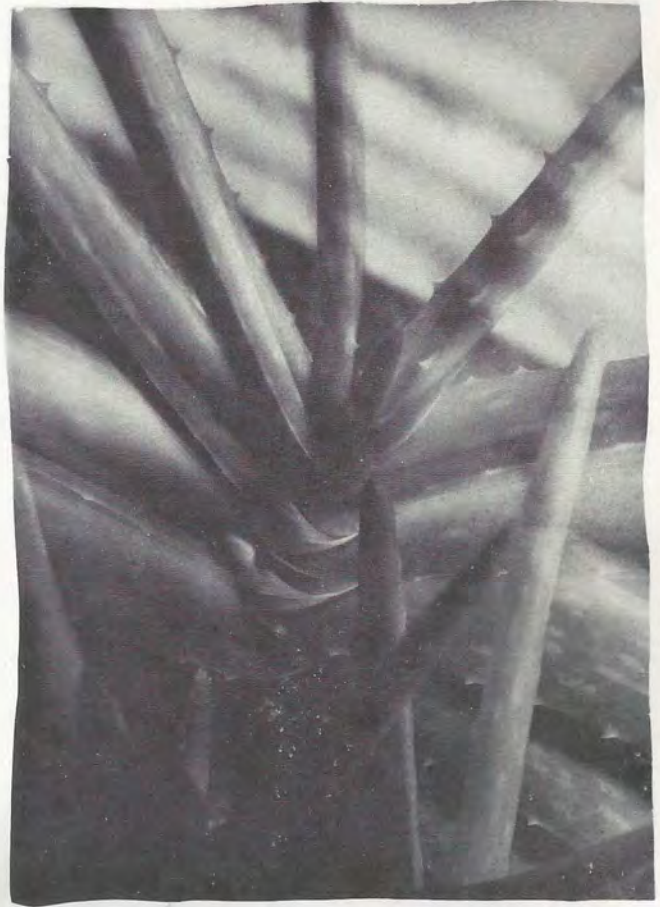
Photographers who become really involved in shooting dance seem to come away from the experience seeing both dance and photography in a new way. Simply having to choose which moments to capture raises questions: why is one moment more photogenic than another? It is paradoxical to freeze movement to document it and so the photographer must push the medium to the limits to try to capture movement. Along the way, it seems, his or her aesthetics are often radicalized.

Vid Ingelevics' first portfolio was documentary work: he had shot candid photos of the interesting people and strange situations he encountered while living in a Central American village. Ingelevics took this portfolio around to

try to get straight photography jobs. "Commercial photography is about giving things a veneer, making them look a certain way," he states. "There's a convention, a collective way of looking at things that's so embedded in us that no one's immune to it."

Slowly he realized that the concerns of the commercial photography world didn't really interest him. Thus began a long self-clarification process in which his eyes were opened about photography by way of "new music". "I had always had a much more developed interest in other areas and this started to influence my photography." Ingelevics attended concerts at The Music Gallery in Toronto and began photographing the performers he saw there. As he felt

"Photo-Gallery" présente un groupe de photographes de danse expérimentaux. Leurs photos n'ont pas un caractère "commercial" comme on le trouve par exemple dans les photos de programme-souvenir d'une compagnie. Ils font une recherche artistique sur le rapprochement de ces deux médiums opposés, la danse (un art du mouvement à trois dimensions) et la photographie (statique et à deux dimensions). Chacun de ces photographes envisage la danse (et la photographie) dans une nouvelle perspective et explore les possibilités de créer une relation nouvelle et enrichissante entre les deux.



From Vid Ingelevics' *Notes From The Greenhouse*.

closer to the music, more inside it, he became aware of the distancing inherent in photography. "I wanted to make it a connecting process, not so subject-object oriented. You see photographs that look intimate but of course when you shoot a photograph you're not being intimate. It's paradoxical."

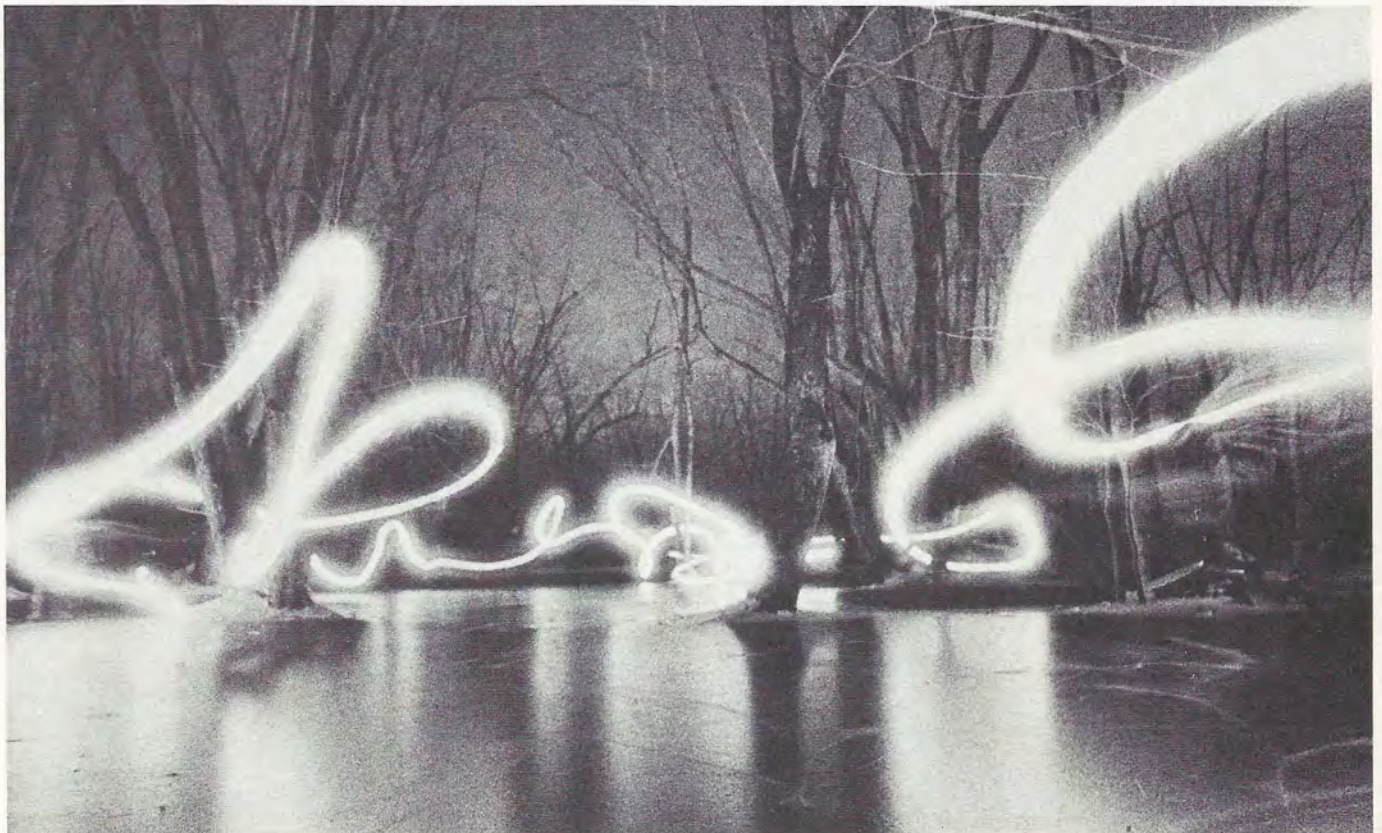
He also began to see that there was no such thing as objective photography. "Photographs are things of themselves rather than windows on some kind of reality. Documentary is meant to be truthful photography but when I look at any kind of photograph, I mostly see things about the photographer himself."

In 1979, Ingelevics received a Canada Council grant to document new music and dance in Toronto. He went all over town photographing outdoor pieces, activities at the Science Centre and, as before, The Music Gallery concerts. "I discovered with dance that I could be more part of the process than I could with other media. I was already very interested in movement of the camera, so interest in shooting dance logically followed. Dance always seemed so direct to me."

In its ultimate incarnation this led to his current work with the New Music Co-op and the Musicdance Orchestra in which Ingelevics performs with the musicians and dancers on stage. "I'm



Wendy Chiles, Jeannie Teillet, Roberta Mohler and Claudia Moore in Holly Small's *Quartet For Cannibals* photographed by Vid Ingelevics.



Light Sculpture, created by Denis Farley. Farley left his camera shutter open for 15 seconds while he skated around a frozen pond carrying a torch.



About The Eyes by Denis Farley.

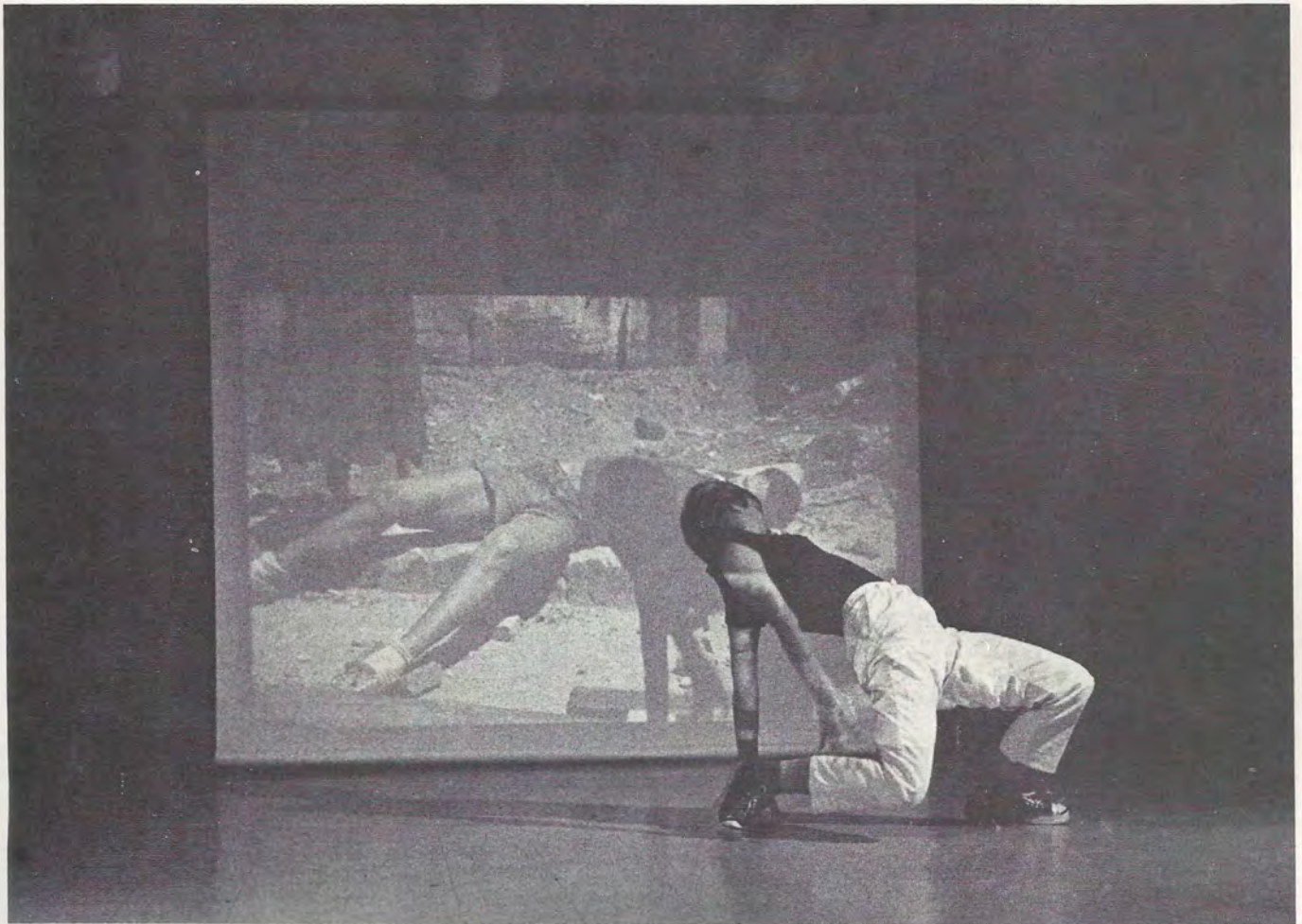
hoping this work might shake me up if I get too entrenched in a way of looking at things. I don't have an image to show the audience, just myself and what I look like when I'm photographing." He's trying to free himself from thinking about what the end product will look like. He uses chance to break down his influence on the photography; with long exposures, he captures movement. Sometimes he even shoots without

looking through the viewfinder. The photographs which are the result are much more an interaction with the music and dance than a clean, documented moment.

Even the performers who are the subjects themselves will often not understand the work. "Too bad about the camera shake", they'll comment. "Often people respond to the photos that show action at its height. I ask, why

are you ignoring all the other moments? I like the whole sweep of the action, the peaks and valleys."

Ingelevics' interaction with new music and dance profoundly changed his personal relationship to photography. In a sense, his concerns are very simple now. "The questions I ask through my photographs now are, what is it? why is it? The one that started this whole process was, why do I photograph?"



Slide Over by Irene Grainger.



Francine Boucher photographed by Steve MacDougall.

Irene Grainger came at photography from the opposite direction and her concerns reflect this difference. She works in colour slides. "The first roll of film I ever shot I used in a piece. I shot mannequins and skyscrapers in New York and I like them so much (the Kodachrome colours were beautiful) that I incorporated them into a piece I was working on, *Overstory*." From then on, she used slides in her performances. "They're so big and sharp and the colours are so intense. It's like being in the movies. I've always felt the connection between slides and film — the continuous and broken image."

Many of Grainger's images are noticeably static — domestic objects, pot scrubbers, tea pots and aisles of bright yellow no-name products — and dancers in tableaux. "I'm into shooting and then looking at the slides in different ways, arranging series and finding an implicit movement between one slide and the next. Then, by adding choreography, a flow between one image and the next begins to establish itself."

Sometimes she creates choreography and then shoots pictures to go with it, or, conversely, creates choreography to go with slides she already has. In one piece, entitled *If I Could Make My Life the Way I Make My Bed*, the two performers moved the projected images by moving a sheet which was their screen. The piece was more about the movement of the image than it was about the performers' movement. In another piece, *Slideover*, the collage of movement and slides touched on every combination: dancing

alone, dancing with slides, slides alone. In *The Brightest Colour*, Grainger explored the colour yellow and the emotion that she found it evoked.

Slides can transform a space. It is this theatrical effect that she's after. "I'm into the big image", she explains, "and I'm into controlling it. I want a specific thing". For Grainger, photography is one other element that interacts with choreography in performance.

Denis Farley's performance work often takes place in the country. He is interested in working with organic materials, trees and rocks, creating environments and interacting with them. Through his photographs of the work we

can enter the spaces he creates as if we were among the 20-odd audience members who actually attend one of his intimate performances.

In 1981, at the Banff Centre, Farley created an outdoor performance work entitled *About these Eyes*. In it, he explores a very specific site he discovered where the rocks at the foot of a mountain looked like a giant eye. Emphasising the lines of the natural forms, Farley created rope and cloth sculpture which he moved through while the small audience, who had hiked for 30 minutes to get to the spot, looked on. He etched a form like his own shadow in the dirt. "I'm interested in the expression of a presence in the created environment", he explains.

Steve McDougall has been taking pictures and dancing ever since he can remember, but in the last several years he's met two people who have helped him find a clear direction to his work. The first was David McKenzie, his design and illustration teacher at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. He had a particular interest in capturing movement in photography. "He had you doing movement with the camera, exploring space and even shooting video to slow down the motion and watch what happened to the movement." This was ostensibly for a graphic design photography course, but for McDougall the work went far beyond that. "David's very in tune with his mind and his body. He incorporates that into his looking and gets beyond making pretty pictures."

Then, four years ago McDougall met Francine Boucher. She was working on a concert of solo dances and invited him



to take pictures as she prepared. For three weeks he shot her working in the studio. Up until this point McDougall's training in dance had been centered around ballet. Through photographing Boucher, he discovered modern dance and, even further, the intensity and struggles that go into making dances. A week into the project, he had a revelation. He decided to put the camera down and just watch for a while. He perceived the fluidity and the play of gravity and balance involved in the dancing when seen without the frame. He knew then that he had to try to discover a new relationship to the subject in order to capture the essence of dancing. The resulting photographs make you feel as if you are actually dancing with her. In one of them McDougall came so close to her that he nearly collided — one can sense that looking at them. His own development as a dancer took an important turn then, too. He threw himself into studying Limon technique with Boucher and has since come to Toronto to study Graham technique. For the moment his dancing has eclipsed his photography to a large extent, but for him, development in one is now intrinsically entwined with development in the other. □

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Les Ballets

Geneviève S

by Paula Citron

Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal célèbrent leur 10ème anniversaire en avril prochain à la Place des Arts. Ce sera la joie des danseurs, mais leur directrice artistique, Geneviève Salbaing, se montre moins à la perspective des lendemains de fête face aux difficultés financières. Les Ballets Jazz n'ont jamais connu de stabilité financière. A leurs débuts, ils ont bénéficié de bourses de la Section de la danse du Conseil des Arts du Canada. Maintenant, et bien qu'ils soient patronnés par d'autres organismes - dont l'Office des tournées du même Conseil des Arts - la Section de la danse leur refuse des subventions de fonctionnement. D'après Geneviève Salbaing, cette situation nuit aux aspirations artistiques de la compagnie. Elle n'accepte pas l'opinion du Conseil des Arts qui ne considère pas leur style de ballet-jazz comme une forme d'art. A 61 ans et malgré des moments de découragement, Geneviève Salbaing maintient de profondes attaches à la compagnie et au style qu'elle représente.

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director Geneviève Salbaing, although the anniversary will be a triumph of her determination in the face of adversity, she also knows that following all the hoopla, the company will be plunged back into the financial uncertainty that has plagued Les Ballets Jazz throughout its existence.

The story of Les Ballets Jazz and the Canada Council is now so familiar that it has become a litany. Canada's most successful contemporary troupe receives no operating grants from the Council's dance section. As a result, not even the sell-out box office receipts from around the world, grants from other quarters such as the Quebec government or the music and touring offices of the Council, corporate donations or the profits of its auxiliary dance schools, can cover the

personally guaranteed the the company's \$165,000 deficit, does Les Ballets Jazz continue to operate. She, herself, has never taken a salary. The company has benefited from the Salbaing family connection in other ways too. Daughter-in-law Caroline is the director of the schools and company administrator. At one time or another, all four Salbaing sons have helped out. Patrick, an MBA student, manages the Toronto school which he took over following a dispute with the previous management. Chartered accountant Michel and international lawyer Christian have lent their expertise while, during the company's recent visit to South America, Spanish-speaking François acted as tour director. The only one not involved in the company is Salbaing's businessman husband, Pierre, who, as she says, "thinks I'm a crazy fool!"

The lack of an operating grant from Ottawa leads to problems which have become a way of life with Les Ballets Jazz. Salbaing explains: "No money means we are always short staffed. We have one administrator, one technical director, a part-time secretary and me. Also, the company always has to tour in order to make money which means we have barely enough time to rehearse new works and we can't do choreographic workshops. The life is very hard on the dancers who burn out after seven or eight months a year on the road. We can't afford a twelfth dancer which we need as our rep is geared to ten. With just one float, injuries can be costly. We have no money for répétiteurs; the dancers teach each other the parts and so we lose consistency and there are lots of fights. The morale of the dancers is also affected by the lack of recognition. Everytime I tell them that the grant has been refused, it is a personal blow. I tell them that the revenues and the public



Geneviève Salbaing in rehearsal.

Les Ballets Jazz: A Tough Decade

Geneviève Salbaing Speaks Out

by Paula Citron

Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal célèbrent leur 10ème anniversaire en avril prochain à la Place des Arts. Ce sera la joie pour les danseurs, mais leur directrice artistique, Geneviève Salbaing, se réjouit moins à la perspective des lendemains de fête face aux difficultés financières. Les Ballets Jazz n'ont jamais connu de stabilité financière. A leurs débuts, ils ont bénéficié de bourses de la Section de la danse du Conseil des Arts du Canada. Maintenant, et bien qu'ils soient patronnés par d'autres organismes - dont l'Office des tournées du même Conseil des Arts — la Section de la danse leur refuse des subventions de fonctionnement. D'après Geneviève Salbaing, cette situation nuit aux aspirations artistiques de la compagnie. Elle n'accepte pas l'opinion du Conseil des Arts qui ne considère pas leur style de ballet-jazz comme une forme d'art. A 61 ans et malgré des moments de découragement, Geneviève Salbaing maintient de profondes attaches à la compagnie et au style qu'elle représente.

On April 12 this year, when Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal celebrates its 10th anniversary at Place des Arts with three glittering premières, one person will be joining in the festivities with mixed feelings. For the company's artistic director Geneviève Salbaing, although the anniversary will be a triumph of her determination in the face of adversity, she also knows that following all the hoopla, the company will be plunged back into the financial uncertainty that has plagued Les Ballets Jazz throughout its existence.

The story of Les Ballets Jazz and the Canada Council is now so familiar that it has become a litany. Canada's most successful contemporary troupe receives no operating grants from the Council's dance section. As a result, not even the sell-out box office receipts from around the world, grants from other quarters such as the Quebec government or the music and touring offices of the Council, corporate donations or the profits of its auxiliary dance schools, can cover the

costs of running the 11-member company. Thus, with each successive inflationary year, Les Ballets Jazz slips further into debt.

Only because Salbaing is a wealthy woman in her own right and has personally guaranteed the the company's \$165,000 deficit, does Les Ballets Jazz continue to operate. She, herself, has never taken a salary. The company has benefited from the Salbaing family connection in other ways too. Daughter-in-law Caroline is the director of the schools and company administrator. At one time or another, all four Salbaing sons have helped out. Patrick, an MBA student, manages the Toronto school which he took over following a dispute with the previous management. Chartered accountant Michel and international lawyer Christian have lent their expertise while, during the company's recent visit to South America, Spanish-speaking François acted as tour director. The only one not involved in the company is Salbaing's businessman husband, Pierre, who, as she says, "thinks I'm a crazy fool!"

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Geneviève Salbaing in rehearsal.

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Subsequent grant applications have been rejected with variations on the same themes. For its part, Council representatives claim that Les Ballets Jazz has been reluctant to open up its school accounts which the Council says is necessary in order to determine the money being fed from the schools to the company. Salbaing categorically denies this charge. She suspects that there is a hidden motive in the refusal. "We have schools that bring in money and good box offices so they think that we can survive. The Council only wants to help people with no schools and no public. It appears it is a crime to be popular. Why should we be the miracle who must make it on our own?"

Salbaing, however, does concede what, in her view, were artistic problems during the company's early years. "Initially, Eva von Gency was the company's main choreographer and her works were very repetitive and not inventive, although her pas de deux were very good. It was a craft for her and not a creation. For three years, we had 10 ballets that all looked the same because she brought in other people like herself. No wonder people thought that jazz dancing had nothing. I brought in Lynn Taylor-Corbett, Real Lamb, Louis Falco after that and we became a strong repertory company. Every piece has to be good. I've commissioned works that I've paid for but never used because they weren't up to calibre. Why doesn't the Council look at our repertory now?"

The crux of the Canada Council funding problem, however, is the very term "ballets jazz" which according to a Canada Council spokesperson, is not an art form. "If we fund jazz dancing, then the floodgates would open. We'd have to fund such things as ice dancing, tap and



Les Ballets Jazz in Benoit Lachambre's *J'freak assez*.

all ethnic dancing and we do not consider any of these as artistic forms." Nonetheless, Salbaing strongly defends her insistence that only jazz music be used for the repertoire and that jazz dancing, as done by the company, is a valid type of contemporary dance. "All we are doing is dancing to jazz music. We are using the pulsating rhythms by putting definite steps to them and there are as many different techniques of dancing used in jazz as there are jazz musicians. To call us 'commercial' is to call jazz 'commercial'. We are transmitting what jazz is through our dancing. I'm dedicated to jazz music and I'll do it until I die!"

"The life is very hard on the dancers."

Salbaing goes on to point out the list of notable choreographers — Canadian choreographers — whose works are in the company repertoire, among them Judith Marcuse, Norbert Vesak, and Brian Macdonald. All three also choreograph for other (funded) Canadian companies.

Since the Canada Council also quarrels with the non-modern training of the dancers, which means that the company is not in the genre of contemporary dance, it is interesting to look into the moulding of a Les Ballets Jazz prototype.

Salbaing, in auditions, looks for classical dancers and the company has four ballet classes a week. "If you don't have classical lines underlying jazz, you have nothing — just wrong placements and crooked knees", she explains.

"To call us 'commercial' is to call jazz 'commercial'."

"Ballet is the foundation of dance and just as a pianist must practise the scales, our rep demands ballet training." The remaining two classes of the six-day work week are devoted to jazz and modern. Salbaing feels that one jazz class a week is sufficient since the jazz repertoire is being danced during the rehearsals. In modern class, all the basic techniques including Graham and Limon are taught so that the company is prepared to receive any choreography. As well, there are master classes given by modern and jazz specialists such as Bill Gornell from the Falco company and Arthur Plasshaert from Paris.

This training is also found in the successful, bursary-supported professional programs of the five Les Ballets Jazz schools, founded with the express purpose of creating dancers for the company. All five have produced dancers who have entered the company or other troupes such as Spindrift and Pointépiénu. The bursary program has also fostered a choreographer. Benoit

should be our judge but they are very vulnerable."

Although the company received funding during its first three years, in 1975 Les Ballets Jazz was cut off without a dime. According to Salbaing, a letter from the dance section explaining the grant refusal claimed that the company was not artistic. "The letter went on to say that our dancers lack the energy and endurance associated with a professional company and, except for a few pieces by Falco and Taylor-Corbett for example, the repertoire is trash. Also, the Council thinks that our costumes are not in the best of taste."

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Lachambre's promise was first spotted by Salbaing in a student choreographic workshop and he has since gone on to create two works for the company.

Since 1979, Salbaing has been the single driving force behind the company. Eddy Toussaint left after the first year following a disagreement about the non-profit status of the schools. Co-founder Eva von Gency resigned five years ago because of artistic differences. When Salbaing looks back over the company's first decade, it is not without some bitterness. "When I founded the company with Eva, I didn't know it would disturb my whole life and I wouldn't do it again — ever! Many people feel that I have nothing else to do in my life. What about my family, interests, hobbies? Those first years were hell. If the partnership with Eva and Eddie had worked out, I would have had more time for myself. As it is, I got caught up in dance and I found myself doing all the work."

On the other hand, the suggestion that perhaps, since she is 61 years old, she should think about retirement, makes Salbaing bristle. "If I quit now, what did I suffer for all these years? Besides, living continuously with young people keeps me young. I can out-sail, out-scuba dive,

out-ski and out-tennis most of them!" There is also the thorny problem of who would replace her as artistic director. "We haven't paid an artistic director for ten years. Who would take the job?", she asks with a rueful smile.

Thus, the lives of Geneviève Salbaing and Les Ballets Jazz seem to be inextricably linked. Although it will be the dancers on stage who will perform the three new works by Judith Marcuse, Benoît Lachambre and Daryl Gray, during the Place des Arts birthday celebration their artistic director will be

"If I quit now, what did I suffer for all these years?"

moving with them in spirit, particularly in the last which is set to an originally commissioned score by Canada's foremost jazz musician, Oscar Peterson. The dramatic tale of the Peterson piece and of Salbaing's struggle to get it into the repertoire for the tenth anniversary is worth an article on its own! But then, that's life at Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal and Geneviève Salbaing is always prepared for hardships. "I have to believe that a solution will always present itself", stoicism, it seems, is her first rule of survival. □

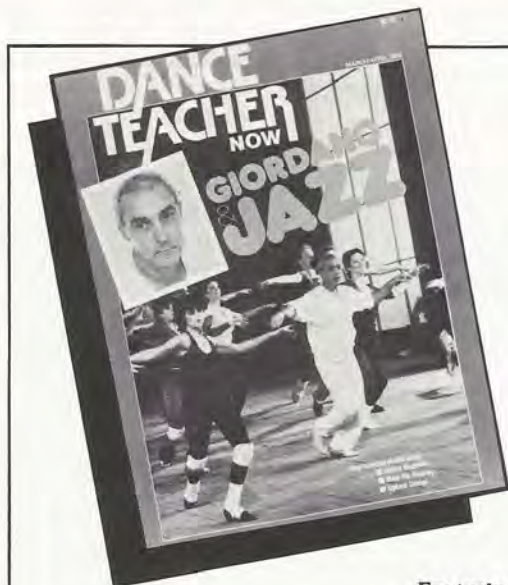


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By G.H. Van Gyn

As you struggle, at the barre, with your développé in second position, the leg of the dancer, in front of you, effortlessly unfolds to wondrous heights, leaving you feeling slightly inadequate. Not to be discouraged, you work diligently on your stretching every day, motivated by this vision of breathtaking extension. The disappointing result is a minimal improvement in that développé. As a serious dancer you realize that dance demands a strong, flexible and expressive technique and you have followed the traditional methods of training. So where is the result?

How it happens

Flexibility is the range of motion around any joint. Typically, dancers strive for flexibility in the hip and ankle joints, the upper back and the shoulder region. Flexibility is joint-specific which means that if you have good range of motion in the hip joint you may not have similar flexibility in the extension of the ankle. In fact, flexibility is specific to the individual joint movement, because different muscles, bone structure and connective tissue are involved in the various movements of the joint.

Physiological data tells us that, in general, specific flexibility training should be done no less than three times a week for a significant change to take place. However, there should be a maximum of five flexibility sessions per week with a day of rest after three consecutive days of flexibility training. This schedule does not negate light stretching for warm-up every day which brings us to the next principle.

The stretching we typically see in the warm-up or introductory sections of a technique class has minimal long term effects since, in most cases, the muscles are not stretched beyond that point which the dancer has experienced previously. The muscles are not "overloaded", which is necessary for a training effect. A warm-up stretch is extremely beneficial in its own right as it encourages large muscle group relaxation, and increases blood flow to

specific muscles. In combination with methods to increase flexibility, the warm-up stretch helps to reduce injuries to the muscle and connective tissue.

In specific flexibility training, two types of flexibility can be developed. Controlled extension or active flexibility is developed through specific stretching exercises combined with strength development in the area being stretched. Uncontrolled or passive flexibility is developed through stretching alone and results in movements that are somewhat weak and subject to control by gravity rather than being under the dancer's control. Obviously it is the former type of flexibility the dancer seeks.

Traditional Methods

Traditionally the dancer has relied on three standard methods of stretching. Slow stretching involves a gradual lengthening of a specific muscle group until the muscle group is fully stretched. The dancer then releases the muscle group which returns to its resting length. A second technique, termed static stretching, is similar to the slow stretch method, however, when the muscle group is fully extended this position is held for approximately six seconds.

Both methods are relatively effective in enhancing passive flexibility and done in a slow gradual manner usually do not result in any injury to the muscle. The third method is a fast or ballistic stretching technique. This method relies on the speed and the weight of the

moving body part to lengthen the muscle group. A typical example of the use of this method is a battement initiated from a lunge position or the bouncing achilles or gastrocnemius stretch.

This technique is potentially dangerous in that the quick ballistic action can cause a reflex contraction of the same muscle that the exercise is designed to lengthen. As a result, there are two opposing forces acting on the muscle group; the force generated by the ballistic exercise attempting to lengthen the muscle and the reflexive contraction (called a stretch reflex) of that same muscle group. The outcome of these opposing forces may be muscle soreness from minute ruptures and tears in the muscle and connective tissue and potentially fairly major ruptures in the muscles and connective fibres resulting in scar tissue formation and reduced flexibility and function. The stretch reflex, which causes a fully stretched muscle to contract is a protective mechanism which responds to the length of the muscle and has a magnitude proportional to the speed of the voluntary stretch. In effect, ballistic stretching, when done in repetitive sets, will tend to shorten the muscle group rather than lengthen it, as well as increasing the probability of muscle fibre and connective tissue injury.

PNF: A Better Way

A relatively new approach to increasing flexibility is based on the therapeutic

Un danseur doit avoir une grande souplesse et l'acquisition et le maintien de cette souplesse est un aspect crucial de son entraînement. Les méthodes traditionnelles d'assouplissement peuvent présenter des risques d'accident et sont parfois inefficaces. La technique consistant à obtenir des élongations par la vitesse et le poids d'une partie du corps en mouvement est particulièrement dangereuse. De nombreux physiothérapeutes utilisent une autre technique qui donne d'excellents résultats. À l'aide d'un partenaire, le danseur fait des exercices d'assouplissement progressif en se concentrant sur un groupe de muscles, suivis de contractions du groupe de muscles opposé. Comme tous les exercices d'assouplissement, ils sont précédés d'un réchauffement pour que les muscles puissent résister à l'effort. C'est une technique qui demande de la persévérance car de légers progrès ne sont perceptibles qu'à la suite d'un entraînement régulier.



The PNF Technique is employed in a stretch for hip rotators and the adductor muscle group which are involved in leg turn out. The dancer is actively contracting against the partner and follows with a relaxation phase. Note alignment of the back and pelvis.

principle of proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF) and is widely used by physiotherapists in clinical application. However, it holds great promise as an effective method for dancers in that it not only increases flexibility significantly, but also promotes muscular strength and endurance in the muscle group being stretched. The therapeutic technique was altered slightly by Lawrence Holt for the purpose of introducing the method to athletes and dancers. His "3-S Method" generally involves two people with one person stretching and the partner assisting. The method involves:

- a) placing the muscle to be stretched in a position where it is lengthened but the dancer is comfortable.
- b) gradually contracting the stretched muscle group isometrically (against the partner or an immovable object so that there is no movement) until a near maximum effort is reached,
- c) sustaining this isometric contraction for approximately six seconds,
- d) relaxing the muscle group,
- e) then contracting the opposing muscle group in order to place the muscle group being stretched in a more greatly extended position. (This can be aided by slight, *gentle* pressure from the partner.) This process is repeated three to four times. On each repetition the muscle group is in an increasingly stretched

position so that by the fourth repetition it is fully stretched. (This fully stretched position will vary according to the amount of extension the dancer has already attained, so be realistic in your

expectations. Improvement will be most evident after using this technique over an extended period of time.) Because of the contractions involved at the end of each successive stretch, the dancer will experience an increase of strength as well as an increase in flexibility which serves to reduce the possibility of sustaining injuries. By using the PNF method the dancer's active range of motion, which involves extending the limb to a fully stretched position and actively holding it in that position, would be enhanced. This active flexibility capacity is obviously preferable to an increased passive range of motion.

PNF and you

The effectiveness of the PNF technique has been demonstrated mainly in clinical use. Recently, however, it has been the subject of several experimental enquiries, the results of which have shown that:

1. The PNF technique resulted in three times the increase in trunk flexion found using the slow and ballistic stretching techniques. Ballistic stretching resulted in least gain.
2. The PNF method resulted in significantly better flexibility and faster rates of improvement in the hamstrings as compared to a slow stretch assisted by a partner but with no isometric contraction.
3. The PNF method resulted in significant strength gains in both



The Partner gently aids the dancer to a fuller extension. The dancer actively extends the leg downward, rotating from the hip joint. This again is followed by an active isometric contraction for six seconds.

muscle groups responsible for holding the extended position. This indicates that the method enhances active flexibility.

To maximize the benefits of the technique it should be preceded by a general warm-up involving relaxed and flowing movements of large body parts. This helps to elevate body temperature and readies the dancer's body for stretching.

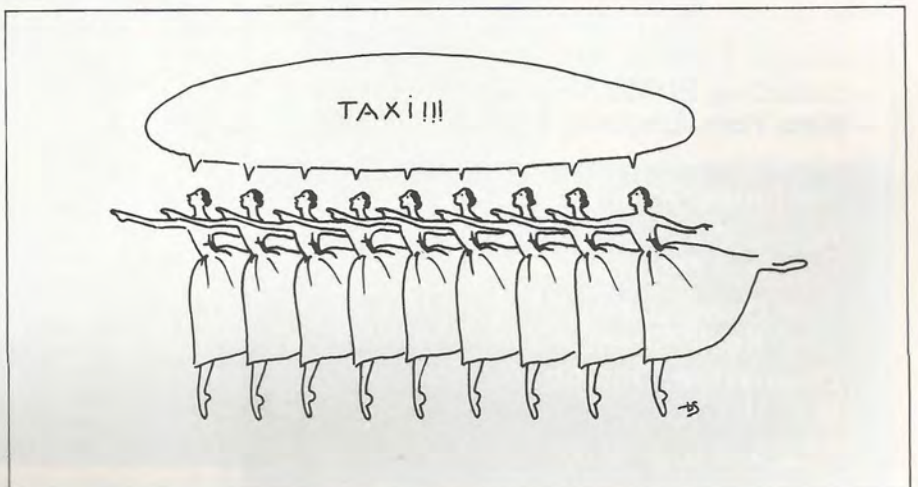
As a technique to condition the dancer it probably would be most effective used outside the class structure on an individual basis, so that time could be spent on emphasizing the dancer's weaker areas. □



The PNF Technique applied to a stretch for the adductor muscle group. Note the position of the partner's hands. Pressure should only be applied at the knee joint or higher because pressure applied below that joint (knee to ankle) will place undue stress on the connective tissue of the knee. The dancer is actively contracting (isometrically) against the partner. Feet are flexed to give a maximum stretch.

Dr. Van Gyn, who teaches in the Department of Physical Education, University of Victoria, has provided a reading list to accompany this article. It may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to, "PNF", c/o The Editor, Dance in Canada, 38 Charles Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 1T1.

The dancer actively contracts the *abductors* (those opposing the muscle group being stretched) and further extends the legs, aided by slight pressure from the partner.



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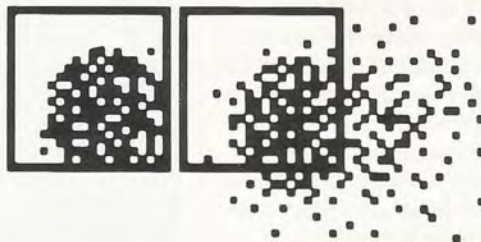
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In Review

Dances by Christopher House
Toronto Dance Theatre
9-11 December, 1982.

It has been apparent for some time that Christopher House, who joined the Toronto Dance Theatre in 1979, is enormously gifted. Apart from his impressive development as a dancer, House has emerged as an important young choreographer. TDT's three founding artistic directors gave public notice of their faith in this when they named him Resident Choreographer in 1981 — the first time in TDT's 15-year existence that such a title had been bestowed.

Christopher House's sensitivity to music and the broad, swooping lyricism of movement that is natural to his own body were evident in his first solo pieces, created while he was still a student in York University's dance department. Later works, *Toss Quintet* and *Schola Cantorum*, created for TDT in 1980, made it abundantly clear that he could also choreograph for groups and the passage of time has given way to dances that exploit the talents native to other dancers' bodies and temperaments as well.

So, it was only fitting that TDT should take account of Christopher House's choreographic progress by presenting a program devoted to his work — and it was only natural that this should attract considerable local interest.

The last (and most recently created) of the five works presented was, for me, a great surprise. Among all the accomplished and polished dances that Christopher House has produced, *The Excitable Gift* is his most imaginative work. It was the only item on the program to

use pre-20th-century, classical music, (Bach's *Concerto No. 2 in C major for two pianos*), yet of all his works, *The Excitable Gift* has the most strikingly contemporary sensibility — thematic and aesthetic. It constitutes a radical departure from the prettiness that stamps House's other work, a prettiness that can often be beautiful to watch but sometimes becomes cloying.

At the most basic level, House has expanded his use of movement from the impressionistic danciness he's known for to something more gestural and broadly imagistic — expressionistic, in fact. Bodies form crosses, arms are used like swords or are sternly folded. Fingers are set to shape a V and cover the eyes while people whisper maliciously during the opening, allegro section.

In this, House establishes rather fascistic, cynical relationships between the seven dancers. They form two groups, suggestive of prisoners and their keepers.

The imagery ranges from

religious to military but, in the choreographer's eye, is framed humourously rather than balefully. They're like the Wicked Witch of the West's hench-monkeys: wicked but idiots.

These relationships are totally unlike the petulant, annoying boy-girlish ones of *Schola Cantorum* or *Boulevard*, or those established almost strictly and very successfully for their harmony and beauty in *Toss Quintet*. When House glides from them into a soft and sweepingly romantic central adagio duet section, it comes as a surprise.

This, however, is done so smoothly that things fall into place: these two circling bodies with their light, glancing touches are the antidote to the first section. It also casts a whole new light on the music, making it uplifting where before it was strident. The final allegro section reunites the dancers in an enormously free dance, so full of energy that even cartwheels seem appropriate, set as they are alongside flying lifts and leaps.

If there's a message here, it is about the redemptive power of love (the central section). Yet, it is not any narrative structure that makes *The Excitable Gift* exciting. It is the way House has mixed aesthetics to unfold some meaning, rather than the meaning itself. It is a crazier, freer dance than his others and House has approached the medium with obvious trust in its possibilities for substance and surprise as well as for delight.

Of the other pieces from 1982, *Fleet* struck me as far more original than *Boulevard*. The latter, though much admired by audiences, is reminiscent of the private-school poppets in *Schola Cantorum*. Although the dancing is often beautiful and occasionally quirky, the Norman Rockwellish nature of House's *ménage à trois* (dancing to a Satie piano score) — like best girlfriends vying for the attention of the cute boy in class — is a bit much.

Fleet, however, shows House at his abstract best, where the relationships are in the choreography, shown rather than recited by it. Patterning changes swiftly and constantly, shifting from a throw to a lift to a leap, a spin, a drop and a sudden standstill, then moving into a calm section in which a dancer walks among five still figures and subtly motivates them. Set to the oddly drum-like amplified pianos of John Cage's *Three Dances*, *Fleet* showed some of the poking and prodding into the recesses of dance's more substantive possibilities.

ALINA GILDINER

Alina Gildiner writes about dance for the Globe and Mail.



Karen Duplisea and Christopher House in his *Boulevard*.

Royal Winnipeg Ballet
 Manitoba Centennial
 Concert Hall
 Winnipeg
 26-30 December, 1982.

It is often said that *Giselle* is to a ballerina what Hamlet is to an actor — a very tough nut to crack. The ballet itself began life in Paris more than 140 years ago, in the later stages of the Romantic Movement, and its story of an ill-fated peasant girl, jilted by a philandering young nobleman and doomed thereby to spend a ghostly afterlife in dank woodland glades, is nowadays pretty hard to take seriously.

The only reasons the work has survived are, first, because its title role offers a meaty technical and dramatic challenge to ballerinas and, second, because underneath all the silly business of doomed Wilis in dank glades, there lies an enduringly meaningful allegory on the subject of human weakness, love and forgiveness. In the *right* hands, *Giselle* still has the dramatic power to touch the heart.

Many people were, nevertheless, surprised when about a year ago the Royal Winnipeg Ballet announced it would be producing this two-act classic. For most of its long history the world-travelled 25-dancer company has devoted itself to presenting mixed bills of short, often popular and accessible works. *Giselle*, in fact, is the first full-evening ballet from the classic 19th-century repertoire that the RWB has produced in its traditional version.

Why would the RWB bother with *Giselle* when Canada's two other and much larger classical companies, the National and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, each have a production of their own — which, in both cases, they will be remounting this season?

Well, the RWB's management has probably noticed that in these harsh economic

conditions audiences more than ever seem to favour tradition over innovation. They want a good story with powerful emotions and lots of colourful costumes and sets. Quite apart from other considerations, that was a compelling reason for the company to stage *Romeo and Juliet* in its 1981/82 season.

Then as Arnold Spohr (now celebrating his 25th season as artistic director) would insist, his company has to grow and develop artistically. He sometimes tires of hearing people say his dancers have lots of pizzazz. He wants them to be honoured for their artistry as well. And, Spohr has a rapidly improving professional school to consider. By staging larger ballets requiring huge casts he has at his disposal a means of forging links between the professional students and the company — links that will persuade them that the RWB should be their natural home upon graduation from the school.

Then, there's Evelyn Hart, the RWB's brilliant young ballerina who won a gold medal in Varna two summers ago and whose artistic growth is a vital concern of the RWB's artistic director. Spohr freely admits that ballets such as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Giselle* are vehicles designed for Hart — and so they should be.

Her debut as *Giselle* on December 26 was the kind of performance that breeds legend. It was *not* perfect, Hart was clearly nervous at times and lacked some of her natural verve, but it was so rich in promise and, even at this early stage, so intelligently painted with dramatic touches, that one can only ponder in awe what may yet unfold from the mind and body of this formidably gifted artist.

In Act I, Hart was a high-spirited girl, hopelessly besotted with her disguised suitor (elegantly danced by guest artist Henny Jurriens of



Evelyn Hart as *Giselle*, comforted at the end of the Act I "Mad Scene" by Catherine Taylor portraying her mother.

the Dutch National Ballet). Yet there was a frenetic edge to her character which kept you worrying about how her infatuation would resolve itself. The so-called Mad Scene which follows *Giselle*'s discovery of her betrayal can, and often does, come close to the brink of burlesque. Adolph Adam's music, (like Prokofiev's for the death of Tybalt and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*) goes on too long and few ballerinas have enough in them to make the scene work. The temptation for audiences is often to giggle rather than to cry. Hart, however, absolutely riveted one's attention and this reviewer's were not the only damp cheeks in the house when the curtain fell on Act I.

Hart's Act II, such a contrast in mood and style from Act I, was a miracle of cool, ethereal dancing enriched throughout by the dancer's seemingly instinctive way of hearing through to the poetic core of a phrase of

music. There are idiosyncratic, rather Russian mannerisms in Hart's use of her long hands but the artistic essence of her portrayal has such authority and conviction that discussion of detailed technical points almost becomes irrelevant.

The RWB's new staging of *Giselle* was produced (for the 12th time in his career) by Peter Wright, artistic director of the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet and the same man who gave the National Ballet a new *Giselle* in 1970. His set designer this time is Desmond Heeley (for the National) and the production has rather too arty a look. Wright has made some minor changes to the musical order but overall the production has the same dramatic lucidity that marks all his *Giselles*. Wright is a stickler for logic and his plot unfolds plausibly from start to finish.

The RWB's dancers are not all yet able to meet the challenge of *Giselle*. The female corps, crucial to the

success of Act II, lacks polish but, considering that a good part of it was made up with students from the school, it did respectably enough and will certainly get better with practice. David Peregrine's Albrecht (he danced with Veronica Tennant of the National Ballet in her three guest appearances which included the first performance) was competent in a lacklustre way. His dancing is unmusical and, so far, he seems to have developed no conception of who Albrecht is and what he is like as a human being. You're never sure if he's just a mindless rich kid or a malevolent predatory romancer.

There were problems throughout making the mime look right and the men in the corps had so many different ways of pretending to be involved in the action that they sometimes risked drawing attention away from centre-stage.

But all this is what one might expect from a company testing itself in unfamiliar territory and, when the little problems are put aside, you can only admire the company's remarkable achievement. They made *Giselle* come alive for seven sold-out performances in Winnipeg, danced it as if their lives depended on its success and demonstrated once again what it means to have a company that clearly love and believe in what they're doing. Peter Wright was pleased too. "They exceeded my expectations", he declared happily afterwards.

MICHAEL CRABB



Judith Marcuse

Judith Marcuse and Sacha Belinsky:
In Concert
 Theatre Passe Muraille
 Toronto
 4-9 January, 1982.

Judith Marcuse is unusual among Canadian choreographers in having a demonstrated ability to switch her talents to and from musical theatre and the "serious" art-dance stage. This dual role has had some obvious effects on her work. It has given her a keen sense of theatricality and a healthy respect for audiences. Without compromising her creative intentions Marcuse presents her work with a degree of professional polish and high production values sadly lacking in many of her colleagues' efforts.

This, of course, does not in the final analysis, make her a better choreographer but it certainly does make her various dance-works easier to watch and absorb.

It helped make her recent concert program, brought to

Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal during January, an altogether rewarding evening. She and partner Sacha Belinsky presented a seamlessly evolved evening of 13 short dances, most of them new, some of them solos, the rest duets.

There is a pixie-like quality about Marcuse the dancer. She is precise, fast, immaculate in all her moves. Choreographically she is frugal. Even at their busiest, her dances are spare and lean. Nothing is there just because music has to be filled.

Belinsky (in an earlier career Alexandre Bélin of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens) is, by contrast, more lush in his approach to movement, more expansive and generous. Combined, Marcuse and Belinsky make an intriguing partnership.

It's hard to put a man and a woman together on stage and not, by implication at least, make some statement about human relationships and Marcuse has, wisely, not tried to desex either Belinsky

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or herself to create so-called abstract dances. In fact, her pas de deux are rich in emotion and the audience finds itself observing the progress of a number of different human encounters.

If she has not suffered in her own personal life, Marcuse must certainly have been a keen observer of the vagaries of human behaviour. There is a bitter-sweet, love-hate tug of war going on in a number of the duets. Life isn't easy she seems to be saying, but it sure beats sitting on the sidelines.

In an exultant solo such as *Baby, I Love You*, Marcuse celebrates the fulfilment of an emotional impulse. In *Spring Dance* or *Sephardic Song* she declares a more generalized sense of life's potential joy.

Marcuse, however, does not approach dance simply as a device for making statements. It is also for her a pure art and at times one can detach oneself from the content of a particular dance and enjoy the

meticulous care that has gone into its formal construction. She is in command of the components of dance, isolates them, plays with them, joins them up in curious ways.

She is especially fond of playing with energy and will let the strength drain from a movement as if a plug has been pulled only to whip back into full power with a sudden shift of focus or direction.

Grant Strate seemed to have appreciated these characteristics in Marcuse's dance makeup in choreographing *Détente*, the only non-Marcuse work on the In Concert program. The dance appears initially to be a string of fragments, of movement phrases that seem to contradict each other's intent, but, by the end you see how true it all is to the movement preferences and complex personality of the dancer herself.

KEVIN SINGEN

Nova Dance Theatre
Sir James Dunn Theatre
Dalhousie Arts Centre
Halifax
14-15 January, 1982.

Nova Dance Theatre's winter concert offered a rare and even heroic stance in these dark times. Four choreographers composed six dances that spanned several movement styles and a diversity of ideas, but the effect was not jarringly patchwork. Thematically unified, a delicate balance between diversity and consistency was achieved, the linking thread was warm, human and hopeful.

Kinergy III, the first piece on the program, was choreographed by Diane Moore in 1980. The dance abstractly illustrates John Klemmer's aqueous jazz score in a refreshingly light, lyrical way.

Robinson and Moore collaborated on and performed in *Body Blocks*. Composer Kurt Haughn played his synthesizer upstage centre while the dancers, dressed in electric orange and black karate outfits appeared in pools of light and then proceeded to approach, circle, and attack each other with the even, ominous power of karate movements. The elements of music, movement, costumes, and lighting were in themselves a suspenseful and dramatic choice, but the connection between these and the work's overall intention was ultimately elusive.

A "Bravo!" for Duncan Holt whose piece *Pontoon*, originally created for two dancers but reworked for four, now seems completely realized. Where the piece used to be almost uniform in tone, it is now dynamic and theatrical. The performers sparkle with humour, plain fun, and personal whimsy: a playful street-styled scene has been added.

Francine Boucher's *No Frills* is described in the program as, "an exuberantly

silly piece set in the 'no frills' section of a surreal, Felliniesque supermarket". Gleaming shopping carts glide and collide across the stage. The audience begins to laugh, and does not stop. Shoppers, like the carts, collide and spin-off in all directions. In turn, frowzy, frumpy, hawk-eyed, snooty, and furtive bargain-hunters appear pushing their carts, fighting over bananas, or using their carts (a great prop) to glide rapturously down imaginary aisles. A man engages his cart in an amorous duet to *Stormy Weather*. The banana ladies, à la Carmen Miranda, shake it to *La Cucaracha*. One hopes Boucher continues to elaborate on the work's characters and visual anecdotes while eliminating some of its redundancy.

Robinson's solo, *Cocktails*, rips through the pretence that is the cocktail party. The sound of laughter bordering on tears fills the air. Dressed like a thirties gangster, biceps flexed, Robinson approaches a bottle of wine. Throwing a few drinks back, she begins to lose control; anger and desperation eat through to the surface of her tough-guy character. She talks (audibly) of her troubles. Laughter and gay chit chat intrude as she slips in and out of a private world of misery. The score perfectly accompanies and aids in illustrating the choreographer's intent. The piece is succinct and lucid. Inventive movement and an urgent performance complete the portrayal.

Robinson's *Dance For Changing Parts* takes on no less than the human condition and its relationship to the cosmos — and succeeds! At first the dancers are not visible, but the glowing colourful flares they manipulate are. As the dancers swirl their through black space, imitating electron patterns, their after-glow makes us wonder at the magic of light. From separate orbits the lights come together.

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There is synergy: the additional power that comes from joining forces. The dancers lineup, circle, or clump together merging their flares into larger bands of light. Their energy peaks and the stage lights come on to illuminate beings coming into human consciousness. One by one awareness grows on their faces and spreads through their bodies. Two join hands and smile. Others pull at their hair in agony. Each dancer expresses a singular personality in a short solo. They maintain these personalities when moving with the group, and this moving with others erases any pain and loneliness. All the while, Kurt Haughn's score reminds us that sub-atomic particles, people, and the larger scheme of the cosmos, dance in their personal yet interdependent and interchangeable orbits. *Dance For Changing Parts* builds to a choir. The audience rose to its feet not just because Robinson's dance was beautiful and moving, but because the evening refreshed the spirit by saying that being human is enjoyable, and when it's not, there is a larger order to give it meaning.

ALICE FROST



Jacques Gorrissen as Sancho Panza and Charles Kirby as Don Quixote in Nicolas Beriozoff's production of the Russian classic for the National Ballet of Canada.

National Ballet of Canada
O'Keefe Centre
Toronto
10-28 November, 1982.

The National Ballet's *Don Quixote*, produced and choreographed by Nicholas Beriozoff, after Alexander Gorsky (and in his turn, after Petipa), was first mounted by Witold Borkowski for the London Festival Ballet in 1970. Even though reviews and photographs of that production reveal remarkable

similarities, the National's program note is coy about the Borkowski connection, saying only that its staging "is based" on London Festival's. Whatever its history, *Don Quixote* has the sets and costumes Emanuele Luzzati designed for Festival Ballet. The production is hideous to look at — garish best describes the designs — but, nevertheless, it was a popular success.

Readers of *Dance in Canada* will be familiar with the *Don Quixote* pas de deux, occasionally trotted out by the National (and a host of other companies) at gala performances. Though the full-length ballet has never been performed in Toronto, (I believe the Bolshoi once danced it in Montreal), Cervantes' story of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza is familiar enough: a slightly mad Iberian knight journeys through Spain in search of his ideal love. In the current variation, the Don becomes mixed up in the courtship of two young lovers from

Madrid, Basilio and Kitri, and rescues Kitri, whom he idealizes as his dream, Dulcinea, from an unwanted marriage to Gamache. Of course, all ends happily; Kitri marries Basilio amidst general rejoicing, after which the Don and his faithful servant depart in search of adventure.

If that remark suggests a hero riding into the sunset, the implication is intended, for however foolish the old man may be, audiences should take him seriously. Alas, this production does not. The Don is confined to a wretched little study that does nothing to suggest his wide-ranging scholarship, and he is forced to ride what can only be described as a hobby-horse, the sight of which sends the audience into gales of laughter. If an audience regards the Don as a fool, how can it expect to be sympathetic towards his quest? Imagine Siegfried or Florimond so regarded, and you see my point — since their quest is quite the same. Whatever Charles Kirby or

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Frank Augustyn as Basilio in *Don Quixote*.

Donald Dawson attempted to make of the character became, in the circumstances, grotesque, though each had a fine and venal Sancho Panza in Jacques Gorrissen or Craig Randolph.

"In the circumstances" must also account for Luzzati's sets and costumes, though the latter, one is informed, were substantially remade. Still, the backgrounds, which attempt to suggest the colour and vibrancy of Spain in their geometry and their colouring confuse the eye and wipe out the dancing. The drop for the

final act — an inappropriate ballroom — was such a pulsating shade of purple as to seriously disturb one's vision. Moreover, the refurbished costumes are mostly orange; the combination of the two colours is nightmarish.

Against such a disturbing background, the dancers had a difficult time of it. Kitri and Basilio, for example, were almost unnoticeable on their first appearance, so it is not surprising that Karen Kain and Frank Augustyn looked tentative. And while Kain has the necessary glamour for the


part, she lacks the speed and high jump to make Kitri really hers. Augustyn, on the other hand, is appropriately boyish and ardent, playing his comic bits with a deftness that brought to mind Colas in *La Fille Mal Gardée*. Peter Schaufuss, as one might expect, danced brilliantly, but seemed to be in an altogether different ballet. His romantic melancholy suggested *La Sylphide*, and none of Veronica Tennant's wit or drive drew him from 19th-century Scotland to medieval Spain.

The keenest dancing pleasure of the principal casts I saw were Kevin Pugh and Yoko Ichino. Trained at Balanchine's school and a former member of the Joffrey, Stuttgart and American Ballet Theatre, Ichino has the litheness and energy one assumes to be characteristic of all American dancers. She took to the O'Keefe Centre's stage as if she had been dancing on it for years, and gave a definitive reading of Kitri: quick, witty, vivacious, and deliciously danced. My only reservation is about a slight blandness in her classical dancing, an insensitivity to phrasing, but we will have to see what other performances reveal. Certainly Ichino is a valuable addition to the company. And Kevin Pugh danced with the zest we have come to expect, while investing Basilio with a likeable character. At the moment his reading is tentative, but it should, with additional performances, become more open and spontaneous.

But *Don Quixote* also makes demands on the whole

company: they must be Barcelonans, gypsies, dryads, wedding guests and matadors. And there were some lovely performances: a superbly observed fop from Hazaras Surmeyan (*Gamache*); an elegant Espada from Peter Ottmann; a leering Gypsy Boy from David Nixon; an alluring Mercedes from Gizella Witkowsky...one could go on. Obviously the lessons about characterization that the company learned from *Napoli* have been absorbed and reflected upon, for the National can present a whole range of characters. In the first performances, the company was not wholly comfortable with Gorky's choreographic style. Its amplitude eluded them, so that some of the ensemble dances — and they are numerous — looked short of breath, though this deficiency may in part arise from George Crum's conducting. He took Minkus's music very fast at the first performance, and the sound, one wit remarked, was like a 1950s monaural recording — the result of trying to compensate for the O'Keefe's notoriously pathetic acoustics by amplifying the orchestra, tucked away as it is in a long, semi-cavernous pit.

During the second week, two pas de deux entered the repertoire, *Three Easy Pieces* and *Portrait of Love and Death*. The first has choreography by Luk de Layress, music (unidentified) by Astor Piazzolla, and should be seen for the sleek and witty performance of David Nixon. The second with choreography by Vicente Nebrada, to music (also unidentified) by Enrique Granados, should be



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seen for the hard work and commitment of the principals, Veronica Tennant and Raymond Smith. Neither ballet, however, should be seen again. This particular program was remarkable for a light-hearted performance of *Kettantanz*, especially from the younger members of the company. Perhaps it should be left entirely to them for the only senior member of the cast, Vanessa Harwood, looked as though she was performing in front of a mirror!

In its final week the company revived *The Sleeping Beauty*. The Nureyev/Georgiadis production for the National is now 10 years old, and there is probably not much more to say about it. *Beauty* is the apex of classical dance that the National for all its efforts has never reached. After a decade of brave performances, a wholly satisfactory cast of fairies has yet to appear, and reviewers seldom now write about the corps with the enthusiasm that they were once wont to. *Beauty* badly needs Nureyev to come and curse and swear; even more, the corps needs new and tighter standards. Still, there was a glow about the first Kain/Augustyn performance that warmed up the dismal O'Keefe, and enormous individual promise in Yoko Ichino's last-minute debut as Aurora.

LAWRENCE HASKETT

T.I.D.E.
Theatre Passe Muraille
Toronto
1-5 December, 1982.

Theatre Passe Muraille, through the good offices of its associate artistic director (and a longtime friend of new dance) Jim Plaxton, opened its doors last fall to a complete mini-series of dance performances. Among these was an impressive but ultimately unsatisfying appearance by T.I.D.E. (Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise).

Passe Muraille's upper theatre incorporates several awkward pillars but the raked seating establishes an intimate performing environment.

T.I.D.E. offered *Set in Motion* — an hour-long mixed-media presentation incorporating dance, drama, music, voice and decors. All four T.I.D.E. members, Paula Ravitz, Alan Risdill, Denise Fujiwara and Sallie Lyons, contributed to the choreography, much of it improvisational in appearance and, in parts, clearly founded in Contact Improvisational techniques. These lend an almost sporty quality to the movement.

Set in Motion begins with recitation. Musician Andrew Smith delivered what sounded at first like lines from an old-fashioned fairytale. "Once upon a time, in the beginning, far, far away and a long time before the wheel and after the telephone . . .".

The words hint at man's historical roots but quickly transpose time from its conventional linear conception to something more cosmic and mysterious.



T.I.D.E. members Alan Risdill, Paula Ravitz and Sallie Lyons in *Set in Motion*.

The dancers enter a dimly lit stage looking a bit like Zen monks chanting their Koans. They carry lanterns which are swung about, creating a fluttering effect. Suddenly the lights dim further, the lanterns go out and a voice wails:

"Once upon a time, there were storytellers who spoke, not in words but in motion. They joked and laughed with their hands. Their stories sprang from their standing up, moving forward, their leaping and turning and flying away. Jump stories are different from hop stories, but the best ones are heart stories which are neither in English nor in French. These stories speak the language of the body. Most have been forgotten, but we come here to remember".

The theoretical underpinning of the dance is thus clearly established and

the performers start the process of remembering, of releasing stories whose drama is hidden in the body's most visceral emotions.

The intention is admirable but the dancers' means do not always seem equal to the task they have set themselves. They seem to work at cross-purposes. While attempting to perform the specific intentions of the piece, intentions rooted more in drama than dance, they lose contact with their emotions and with the audience.

There's a schizophrenic edge to the whole performance. The dancers are technically accomplished but the movement itself seems redundant and inadequate.

The lights come up to reveal a large, bright portable banner-like set designed by Scott Parkinson. It depicts a



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house in woodland and the dancers stand in front of it, apparently puzzled to know where they are. There are further set changes. They bring on the sun, clouds, even a rainbow-like canopy — all of which are finally mounted on standards.

Andrew Smith's stunningly evocative vocal and percussion accompaniment made more sense of these set changes than the actual content of the dance. This becomes increasingly ill-defined and the potential for exploring the historical and temporal implications of story-telling is lost.

Contact Improvisation is indeed fun for those doing it and can even be fun to watch but in this case it makes the dancers more concerned with the process of their own physical interaction than with conveying any sense to the audience.

There are isolated gems amidst the general confusion. Alan Risdill and Sallie Lyons, for example, begin their respective representations of an ancient rock and a piece of shiny wrapping paper with evocative movement and in each case develop it into witty abstractions.

Set in Motion is so rich in promise and Scott Parkinson's designs so delightful that one hopes T.I.D.E. will give the piece a thorough reworking, perhaps with the help of an outside directorial hand.

JUDITH POPIEL

Denise Clarke and Anne Flynn
Loose Moose Theatre Simplex
Calgary
24-27 November, 1982.

It began with a long, breathy tone; from the depths of someone's belly, from somewhere in the darkness. Light up on two dancers, Denise bending over Anne, asking, "Have you finished breathing yet? We've got a concert to do". Both ladies were wearing red shoes; it was obvious that they had some dancing to do. But first they talked — a lively dialogue about styles: ballet, jazz, modern, avant garde and tap. They were poking fun at dance and themselves. It was witty and funny, doubly so if you realized their backgrounds. Denise Clarke, who has danced ballet and jazz since she was a child, said, "Ballet is purity". Anne Flynn, who waltzed into modern and improvisation much later in life, countered with, "Pretentious". Denise went on, "Control". Anne, "No freedom". And so it went until Frank Sinatra broke in with *Young at Heart* and led them down the gilded staircase into the wonderful world of dance. The dance was called, *If They Can't Take a Joke*. Apparently everyone could.

The performance, "It Takes 1,2", was the second this year for Clarke and Flynn. Both are teachers at the University of Calgary; they teamed up last spring to create a show at the University Theatre that



Denise Clarke and Anne Flynn

filled the house and brought it down. "It Takes 1,2" came out of the enthusiasm generated by that show. A very different production in a smaller space with less technical support and a much shorter preparation time, "It Takes 1,2" came off with less polish but lots of spunk and integrity.

The performance consisted of five pieces, with choreography by the dancers and two Calgary associates, Larry McKinnon and Vicki Adams Willis. McKinnon's *Aria*, was contemporary/classical, a solo for Denise, drawing upon her well-honed classicism. I can still picture her arms sweeping great curves through space.

There were some beautiful moments, but I did not feel the impact that I am sure McKinnon intended. Perhaps some of the shape was lost in the smallness of the stage, the proximity to it, and the odd sight-lines. The space was designed for improvisational comedy and it was obvious that the performers had not thoroughly adjusted to it. When the audience is that close, you can't rely only on shape and form: there must be an inner intensity, dancer must also be actor.

Ladies Placed in Waiting Unattached also suffered from the lack of space, but there was still lots to write home about. Willis has more rhythm in her than most

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people see in a lifetime and she proves it time and again with show-stopping jazz choreography. Some fantastic struttin' and shufflin' and sluffin' and somewhere in the midst of the coquetry, uncertainty, healthy sleaze and female bravado came two moments of magic where the essence and spirit poured out of Anne and Denise's faces and there was a reason for them being so close to their audience.

Hempel's Dilemma was a very whole package of assorted treasures. Excited about a concept gleaned in a Philosophy of Science course she is currently taking, Anne hauled her lecturer onto the stage to talk, backed her up with her favourite New Wave musicians, the Rip Chords, and danced a quiet careful dance of leans, balances, falls and quizzical facial and body expressions. It was all summed up very neatly when the lecturer announced that, "Any attempt to eliminate our human perspective from the world must lead to

absurdity".

The show ended with a hot little number, *98% hu. N.Y. N.Y.* (which translates to "It was very hot and muggy when Denise was in New York this summer"). Using the Rip Chords as none too ambient New Yorkers, she filled the stage with schleppers, but they eventually wandered over to their instruments, leaving Anne and Denise bopping around (some people love the heat). The instruments doodled their way into a rousing rendition of *Hot Town: Summer in the City*. The transition was exciting — from bop to pow. The room came alive with the music and Adele Leger's gutsy voice. The dancing was loose-limbed and breezy, in and out of unison. Denise's intention was to use the Rip Chords for "more than just accompaniment". And so it was, schlepping or playing, they held my attention as their bodies exuded a playful spontaneity, a counterpoint to Ann and Denise, riffing like nobody's business, centre stage.

"It Takes 1,2" is the sort of performance where you can tell that people enjoyed working together, and that more will come of the interaction than just a room full of people clapping. Calgary is rich in resource people, the artistic interchange is strong and always seems to benefit from new connections. Some brilliant photography by Heather Elton, and Peter Moller's (Egg Press) poster designs helped brighten up the city prior to the performance. Elton's work was displayed in the theatre foyer throughout the four-day run. Peter Moller is the drummer in the Rip Chords. It all adds up to more than just a performance. "It Takes 1,2" is an event, a dance that uses people and ideas, not merely time and space. And that is a large part of what makes an opening night sell out on a cold Wednesday in the middle of November.

MARY JO FULMER

Danceworks 29 Desrosiers Dance Theatre Company

Toronto
December, 1982

Memory is a wonderful thing; it allows us to recall, sometimes in brilliant detail, the objects and events of our past, to embellish them or to leave them stark and unadorned. So, here are this reviewer's memories of two programs presented in Toronto last December.

Danceworks 29 was, on the whole, a rather bleak affair, with only a few pieces sufficiently cogent to recommend them. *Sunday Afternoon*, subtitled "a dance about memory", sustained itself by a coiling, uncoiling, recoiling motif that etched the movement in the mind. Choreographer William Douglas created a dreamlike context for dancers Susan McKenzie and Ken Gould to romance their way into the deepest recesses of memory, their arms and torsos slowly billowing and waving around



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one another. It was the ebb and flow of an afternoon spent with a lover, a tangled other-directed confusion of positions, memorable not so much by their singularity as by their recurrence. That recurrence also resulted in the middle of the dance disappearing into the haze, its momentum losing ground to its repetition, the *ganzfeld* taking over. But the images do remain, so the dance had its desired effect.

Lawrence Adams'

Behaviourism: An Interim Report had enough of its own eclectic images to earn a place in my cerebrum. In spite of its title, the subject (Vicki Fagan) and the object (Alan Risdill) had virtually nothing connecting them. Risdill spent his time doing the Foxtrot or the Charleston behind a wall of backlit newspapers while Fagan for her part looked coldly malevolent, stalking about the stage in her heels, hammering an amplified brick to mark off the sections of the



Robert Desrosiers in *Bad Weather*.

dance, playing with parts of her body in a shaft of light, or studiously stamping those menacing heels at the back of the stage for a good three or four minutes, after which some of the audience clapped with relief. Ah yes,

behaviourism personified. For all its disjointedness, its unexplained logic, *Behaviourism...* generated enough energy to keep this watcher amused, or bemused, throughout its length.

Memory is perhaps most effective when it's married to magic. A behaviourist would have had a field day trying to objectify the responses of the audience to the latest works by Robert Desrosiers, a memorable magician if ever there was one. Desrosiers is a product of another time, or so it seems in this performance incarnation. Today he appears as the medieval man, part clown, part jester, part saint, part demon, while all around whirl the images of half-intuited worlds, the souls of the departed, the sounds of the departed. Consider this opening tableau: a jungle-like backdrop, two body-painted black creatures undulating on either side of the stage, an ephemeral woman in a sphere of hoops upstage, and in the middle a Chaplinesque figure playing an accordion turning and turning on the spot with, of all things, a huge black and white cow flying behind him, attached to his waist. This is the beginning of *Bad Weather*, a 20-minute collection of myth, mystery and magic unlike anything on this side of

the Atlantic. People are lifted, the cow gets lifted, then milked, there's a rain dance, an African section, incredible gymnastics, incantations, a spellbinding solo by Claudia Moore, in short a visual feast. As the storm approaches and bad weather becomes the order of the day (or night), we see Desrosiers in a rowboat on the floodwaters battling the waves, and believably at that. The vignettes vibrate, and *Bad Weather* becomes a shining example of theatrical magic, a memorable dance.

The Fool's Table continues the evening in the same general mood, but if suffers by comparison. The same magic, seen again or too soon, loses its impact. The elements are present for this dance to become another special piece, but at this writing *The Fool's Table* is a little flabby, with amorphous solo work that needs shape and compression.

Special mention should be made of the music, created and performed by Gordon Phillips and Sarah Dalton-Phillips, which in its variety and subtlety was more than a match for the dance that it accompanied. And that is what I remember, or choose to, of these strangely diametric evenings.

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LABAN CENTRE

Cullberg Ballet

Ryerson Theatre
Toronto

24-27 November, 1982.

Anyone who saw the Cullberg Ballet for the first time during the 15-year-old Swedish company's North American debut tour last fall will be unlikely to forget the experience. No amount of preparatory reading could fully equip one for the sheer shock of the Cullberg's blockbuster dancing or the controversial, sometimes even tendentious nature of the work it performs.

Birgit Cullberg founded the company in 1967 after an earlier career outside Sweden that had established her reputation as an innovative and provocative choreographer. *Miss Julie*, her 1950 adaptation of the Strindberg play about the consequences of repressed sexuality, caused a sensation when it was acquired by American Ballet Theatre eight years later.

Cullberg's training included



The Cullberg Ballet in Mats Ek's *The House of Bernarda*.

a lengthy period with Kurt Jooss, creator of *The Green Table*. Much of the 75-year-old choreographer's artistic sensibility can be related both in style and subject matter to Jooss's own brand of socially and politically engaged choreography. It is no surprise to read that Cullberg made satirical dances about Hitler and the Nazis just when her homeland was trying to maintain an uneasy neutrality

during the Second World War.

Today, the driving force behind the Cullberg Ballet is Birgit's younger son, Mats Ek. He, however, has been bred in the family tradition and his choreography maintains the faith that dance can comment on the ills of human existence.

The means by which he achieves this are far cruder than those employed by his mother and, when the initial shock-waves from his choreographic grenades have dissipated a bit, you are left wondering just how much choreographic craft he really possesses.

As befits its name, the troupe of which Mats Ek is now co-artistic director feeds at the technical wellspring of classical ballet. Company class, according to Cullberg, is always a ballet class, yet the work seen on stage clearly makes extensive use of movement idioms drawn from the major streams of North American modern dance — endless Graham contractions, spirals and falls, with a generous helping of Limon-inspired lyricism. But then, while pointe work has largely been banished from the Cullberg stage, there are lots of balletic jumps, arabesque turns and seemingly decorative enchainement. When Ek wants his choreography to speak strongly he tends to rely on the modern dance idioms but

in his hands they look too much like a borrowed language which the choreographer only partly understands.

What gave most of the choreography its undeniable power was the extraordinary conviction and full-out energy of the dancers. The Cullberg Ballet is a company of soloists. Every member projects a strong personality and dances as if there's no tomorrow.

Mats Ek's choreography dominated the repertory for the Cullberg Ballet's Toronto engagement. (Ottawa, with its lavish National Arts Centre, was able to accommodate *Miss Julie*.) Cullberg was represented in Toronto by a 16-minute pas de deux, *Adam and Eve*, choreographed more than 20 years ago. This quaintly charming dance depicts, (in Cullberg's rereading of Genesis), Adam's escape from the harmful strictures of religious superstition. With a shake of the fist towards the heavens he asserts his right to enjoy Eve without feelings of guilt.

Even for Cullberg, *Adam and Eve* is pretty tame stuff and looked positively bland placed beside the supercharged work of son Ek. His *House of Bernarda* (1978) combined powerful mimic gesture with almost viscerally raw dancing to create the choreographer's own gloss on the famous Garcia Lorca

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Choreographers - A Step Ahead



Ana Laguna in Act II of Mats Ek's version of *Giselle*.

play. Sexual undercurrents in Lorca surfaced grotesquely in Ek's interpretation. Bernarda, danced by a man, cavorts sacrilegiously with a Christ-doll while her daughters seethe with repressed anger and desire.

In *Soweto* Ek sets out to pass judgment on the repression of blacks in South Africa. It's ham-fisted judgment at best which often comes close to burlesque. A Victorian doll, complete with white lace and parasol, sits downstage right while the dancers (mercifully *not* black-faced) enact a series of angst-ridden sequences which presumably connote their resentment of white oppression. Birgit Cullberg herself impersonates some great, wise Mother figure who finally rouses the others to pull down the back and side curtains in a symbolic act of rebellion. (The company did this so successfully in Ottawa that they caused several thousand dollars-worth of damage!) The doll turns its head and motors its way, (by remote control, of course), to centre stage, where it remains oblivious of the threatening circle of dancers closing around it, all to an incongruous collage of

modern, mostly popular, music.

Ek's political commentary in *Soweto* is naive to the point of being laughable. It seems he likes to grab at issues and reduce them to simple confrontations of right and wrong — with himself always on the right, (that is, politically left) side. If only the world's problems could be so easily solved.

Then there was Ek's *Giselle*, reworked into a 1940 setting with an oversexed, barefoot peasant girl standing as the

dual victim of class prejudice and social alienation. Whether Ek intended to lay so many false trails throughout his *Giselle* is a matter for debate. Perhaps it was a simple case of confused intentions outmatched by a poverty of means.

Adam's heavily descriptive original score, (on tape), had been reordered in such a way that the leit-motifs became irrelevant — unless one was supposed to deduce some complicated pattern of role transposition. Ek's designer (Marie-Louise De Geer Bergenstrahle) provided two wonderful painted back-drops rich in sexual imagery and costumed Albrecht and his perhaps significantly over-doting squire in tails. Neither, however, wore a bow-tie presumably because they and their cocktail-dressed female colleagues, wanted to go casual among the peasants.

To an extent, it seems that Ek wants to turn *Giselle* into an allegory about class prejudice. Albrecht philanders with the already nutty *Giselle* not because he is a bad person but because he is upper-class. As an epilogue, after he has been through the experience of visiting *Giselle* in the Act II lunatic asylum, Albrecht is stripped stark

naked. Hilarion enters to give him a rough peasant cape. He is symbolically purified by shedding his upper-class duds.

Ek seems self-consciously out to shock his audience in *Giselle*. It's as if he wants people to get up and leave. Nobody did of course. The actual dancing is so sensationally good, despite the descriptive poverty of the actual steps, that you are seduced into believing it all adds up to something big. But it doesn't. Ek's *Giselle* is a trashing of a classic rather than a meaningful reworking. It steam-rollers its audience into a false belief that something truly significant is being said. What you're left with is isolated memories — of Ana Laguna giving everything as *Giselle*, of the wonderful long-limbed Yvan Auzely as Hilarion.

The Cullberg Ballet is not easily forgotten because it is *so* different from anything to be seen on this side of the Atlantic. It works at one extreme dramatic edge of the art form. It is exciting in a crude way. It keeps you awake. It makes you angry and it makes you laugh. That's about it — and it's not quite enough.

MICHAEL CRABB

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Book Beat

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Ballet, by Horst Koegler; second edition. (Oxford University Press, 1982. \$48.75, paper: \$14.95.)

Biographical Dictionary of Dance, by Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratynier. (Schirmer, 1982. US\$75.00.)

Horst Koegler's second edition contains extensive revision of materials found in the original 1977 issue. He's updated career listings, supplied dates of death for biographees who have left us through mid-1982, and he's created new entries for contemporary dancers and choreographers who have recently come into their own and for significant new dance works composed in the interim. Canadian users will appreciate finding some documentation for James Kudelka, Constantin Patsalas, and Danny Grossman, as well as the principal dancers of the National Ballet of Canada.

Presumably to make room for more timely stuff, Koegler has dropped a significant number of entries for performers and works no longer *au courant* and their omission reduces the effectiveness of the book as a tool for historical reference. The axe fell mainly on performers who flourished in mid-century and are no longer in the news; and while it's nice to see the teenaged Darci Kistler (listed erroneously, incidentally, as *Darey* in the new issue) warrant nine lines of data, users will have to refer to the 1977 edition to scan the careers of Richard Adama, Henry Danton, Nina Novak, and Gertrude Tyven — to mention a few names that have been denied perpetuity. Otherwise, the new volume will be of general service for ready-reference. The fact that the price for the bound issue has tripled in five years might



Linda Gibbs and Micha Bergese of the London Contemporary Dance Theatre in a photograph from 1975 by Anthony Crickmay whose book *Dancers* was published recently by Collins.

prompt most buyers to resort to the paperback version.

The Cohen-Stratynier effort is sheer disaster on all counts, demonstrating an alarming irresponsibility on the part of both editor and publisher. Schirmer advised Cohen to compose her "more than 2,900" biographical entries rather than adopt a data-process format, and the results contain some of the oddest grammar and mutilated prose you'll ever encounter in print. Scores of typographical errors and misspellings demolish the credibility of her research,

with carelessness extending to the names of several biographees, at least one of which is put out of proper alphabetical sequence. As for veracity, the dictionary abounds in incorrect information and dates, with many dancers accounted for as members of companies they never joined and in roles they didn't perform. One surely wonders just what those "three independent sources" might be which, so she claims, served the compiler in the verification of her data: certainly Koegler was not among them! I sent Xerox

copies of their entries to several persons represented in the dictionary and got responses expressing horror over having their professional lives so falsely represented. One declared that her biographic account had "at least a dozen major errors"!

Canadian data are particularly unsatisfactory since most careers were not traced beyond the mid-1970s. Many of the longer essays, particularly those dealing with such major figures as Isadora Duncan, Diaghilev and Nijinsky, contain glaring inaccuracies and some bold

and audacious pronouncements which are bound to raise the dander of specialists in these subjects. In respect to her own field of research, Cohen has made an effort to cover the careers of many performers in American theatrical dance and the motion pictures who have not been treated in existing dictionaries, but her general disdain for accuracy in the other listings hardly encourages one to rely on any of the facts presented. Meanwhile, Schirmer might save face by recalling the dictionary and handing it over to a responsible editorial team.

Dancers, by Anthony Crickmay. (Collins, 1982. \$65.00.)

Ten Dancers: On Stage, Backstage, At Home and On the Road. Photographs by Pierre Petitjean; text by Holly Brubach. (Gage, 1982. \$44.95.) Two elegant volumes of dance photography offer contrasting viewpoints. Crickmay sees his subjects as deities, sacred and profane. Mikhail Baryshnikov and Peter Schaufuss soar through milky infinities, Lynn Seymour glitters in her own aura, and Martha Graham braces for an attack of furies. Ensemble photos seem considerably larger than life; included is the famous 1971 shot of the National Ballet of Canada in Roland Petit's *Kraanerg*, a legion in white unisex surrounded by Vasarely's overwhelming geometric concepts. Petitjean's 10 superstars are presented in the stylish, urbane settings we expect them to inhabit and in situations which testify to the glamour of their peripatetic occupations. Both photographic visions are valid, and the results of each are quite delicious.

Dancers! Horizons in American Dance, by Ellen Switzer. (Atheneum, 1982. US\$14.95.) **Leap Year: a Year in the Life of a Dancer**, by Christopher d'Amboise. (Doubleday, 1982. \$23.50.) Ellen Switzer, who writes books on various subjects for

adolescents, turns to the dance world for this effort, covering issues which have been treated much better in any number of current guides written by more qualified authors. Throughout her survey of American theatrical dance she frequently patronizes her young readers with simplistic observations. One about Isadora Duncan particularly enchanted me: "She drank too much and picked up too many young men". Other pronouncements indicate that Switzer is a bit lazy in checking facts. We're told that Duncan's junket of European engagements included appearances in Beirut, that Nijinsky's *Rite of Spring* (which had but seven performances, all in 1913) "is rarely performed today", and that American Ballet Theatre "does not now and never had a resident choreographer", an observation bound to offend Antony Tudor and several others who performed that very function.

Mr d'Amboise, who is an adolescent, joins the dancers of New York City Ballet who are hellbent on becoming authors this year. He's the youngest of the dancing diarists and has recorded impressions of his first year as a professional employee of that company. In terms of ballet's glorious heritage and lore, he remains an innocent, reserving his awe for the accomplishments of his peers. Despite Lincoln Kirstein's vivid endorsement in a preface and the encouragement and editorial assistance of Jacqueline Onassis, d'Amboise really doesn't have all that much to say, and the year he picked to chronicle is likely to strike most readers as an inconsequential one. In a decade or two he may have something more interesting to share; at the moment he comes across as a young apprentice testing his oats in the family business.

In the Wake of Diaghilev, by Richard Buckle. (Collins, 1982. \$27.50.)

In his second autobiographical offering, Buckle tells how at age 16 he became aware of the world of ballet when he chanced in 1933 on a copy of Romola Nijinsky's book about her husband. Within a few years he was immersed in the fallout of the Diaghilev era, witnessing the London seasons of Colonel de Basil's Ballets Russes and their rivals, getting to know the survivors of a glorious age, observing the emergence of British ballet, and hoping to become himself a second generation Diaghilev. Denied the appropriate resources, he turned to engrossing occupations — ballet criticism, curatorship, editing *Ballet* magazine for several years, and organizing the magnificent Diaghilev exhibit and the Sotheby displays and catalogues for the auctions of Ballet Russe décors. Ultimately he would research and produce what many consider the definitive biographies of Nijinsky and Diaghilev.

Buckle offers vivid portraits of his friends: the Russian Tamara Karsavina and Lydia Lopoukhova, the English Lydia Sokolova (whose memoirs he edited), the wily Romola Nijinsky and the sad Boris Kochno. His travels took him to America and to the survivors of the Diaghilev age residing there, and his assessment of those who thus assisted his research is both eloquent and whimsical. This is a brilliant, gossipy account of the gradual demise of an art movement, told with perception and great wit.

IN BRIEF

Igor Stravinsky's Selected Correspondence: Volume 1 (Faber and Faber, 1982, issued in Canada by Oxford University Press at \$81.25) contains communications between the composer and his various musical colleagues (Nadia Boulanger, Maurice Delage, Ernest Ansermet et al), offering special interest to the ballet historian for those extensive exchanges with his

ballet collaborators, Jean Cocteau and Lincoln Kirstein. These shed considerable light on the genesis and evolution of many of the great ballets. Stravinsky exchanged letters with Cocteau for 50 years. The correspondence with Kirstein documents a 20-year association with George Balanchine which resulted in the production of such ballets as *Orpheus* and *Agon*. The Canadian price set on this worthy research tool seems even more inexplicable when an identical production can be had in Knopf's American edition at US\$27.95.

Marina Grut's **The History of Ballet in South Africa** (Human & Rousseau, 1982. \$47.50) is a handsome volume, lavishly illustrated, which documents the development of theatrical dance institutions in a country we know little about. The author, who was a celebrated exponent of Spanish dancing, performing in South Africa under her maiden name of Marina Keet, surveys the influences of early and more recent visitors and accounts for the emergence of several major dance companies. Readers in Europe and America will recognize the names of many dancers who trained in South African schools (John Cranko, Nadia Nerina, and Yvonne Mounsey, in particular) and will be surprised to note the impressive list of artists and troupes that have visited the apartheid-bound nation in recent times.

Choreography by George Balanchine: a Catalogue of Works, is scheduled for release in March, 1983, by Eakins Press of New York. Containing full data for every ballet and dance for all theatrical media created by Balanchine, the book (printed in Italy, bound in Belgian linen and boxed) will be issued in a first edition of 2,000 copies at US\$75.00.

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et les travaux écrits peuvent être
présentes en anglais ou en français.

Noticeboard

GENERAL

C Channel, "the national lively arts pay television service", began broadcasting nationwide from Toronto on February 1 with a magnificent full-length production of The Royal Ballet in *Swan Lake*, starring Anthony Dowell and Natalia Makarova. Other dance programs in C Channel's first month of operations included a documentary portrait of Makarova and televised performances of the Joyce Trisler Danscompany, the English modern dance troupe Hot Gossip, Pilobolus, the Crowsnest Trio (founded in 1979 by one of Pilobolus's founders, Robby Barnett), and the New York City Ballet in selections from its Stravinsky Festival.

C Channel's most adventurous and promising excursion into the dance world so far has been its co-production with the National Ballet of Canada of a television version of Brian Macdonald's *Newcomers*. C Channel put up most of the money for the \$300,000 production which was taped at Niagara-on-the-Lake on the

stage of the Shaw Festival Theatre last December. The television *Newcomers* was directed by the choreographer himself — a personal debut for Brian Macdonald as a television director. He says he enjoyed the experience so much he'd like to direct other choreographers' work for television! *Newcomers* represents C Channel's first major financial commitment to original Canadian creativity and it is a tribute to the collective wisdom of its managers that they decided to start with dance.

The Canadian Conference of the Arts is holding a series of meetings across Canada to discuss the recently-released report of the Applebaum-Hébert Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. These cross-country meetings which run through March are designed to stimulate the broadest possible public awareness of and involvement in the government's response to the report since this will shape Canada's cultural future and affect the lives of all Canadians for years to come.

The CCA's annual confer-

ence, to be held in Ottawa (May 4-6) is also in the planning stages. Discussion of the "Applebert" Report will form the focus of this conference. For more information contact Canadian Conference of the Arts, 141 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 707, Ottawa, Ontario. K1P 5J3. (613) 238-3561.

The Dance in Canada Association is busy putting the finishing touches to arrangements for this year's annual DIC conference, to be held June 8 to 11. Wise dance-lovers are already making their travel plans for the trip to Saskatoon since the **1983 Dance in Canada Conference** will offer a comprehensive range of events around the general theme of education.

As in past years, the conference is being organized by a local committee but, in addition, Dance in Canada, can now draw on the expertise of **Miriam Adams**, its new Projects Co-ordinator. (Together with her husband, Lawrence, Miriam Adams ran Toronto's renowned 15 Dance Lab during the 1970s. Both were once members of the National Ballet of Canada.)

Those who have attended past DIC conferences will know that each event reflects the particular character of its host-city/region. **Sonya Barton**, this year's Conference Chairperson and a five-year member of the DIC board of directors, has done a tremendous job in organizing and activating the Saskatchewan region. Local dance-lovers and citizens have been joined by municipal and provincial government officials in support of Conference '83.

In recognition of Saskatchewan dance activities, Confer-



Sonya Barton

ence '83 will include a special evening of "Saskatchewan Dances" (June 10). It will represent the wide range of dance activity in the province, including ballet, modern, jazz, tap, ethnic and children's dance.

Each conference day will open with a keynote address from a noted dance personality. **Evelyn Hart**, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's gold medal winning ballerina, is among those who have been invited as guest speakers.

As usual, there will be classes to take throughout the conference. **David Adams**, the internationally renowned former ballet dancer who now teaches at Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton will be in the studio as will Toronto's popular, **Brian Foley** (for tap and jazz). Canadian Choreographer **Norbert Vesak** will give modern classes (and head a seminar on choreography).

Classical Indian dancer/teacher/choreographer **Rina Singha** will lead a workshop in teaching disabled children and **Diane Miller**, who has her own school in Vancouver, will teach a special children's class. **Shirley Murray**, artistic director of the Children and Dance Association of Calgary will be conducting a lecture-demonstration and **Marianne**



Brian Macdonald's *Newcomers* during taping for C Channel pay television.

Livant of Saskatoon's Prairie Dance Lab will be heading a workshop session in music and dance.

Among applications to perform during the conference are those from Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers, Vancouver's Terminal City Dance Research and Pacific Ballet Theatre, Calgary's Sun•Ergos, Edmonton's Brian Webb Dance Company and the Canadian Children's Dance Theatre (based in Toronto). Judith Marcuse and Judy Jarvis, both former winners of the Chalmers Award for Choreography, are among the large number of independent dancer/choreographers likely to appear in Saskatoon.

A Gala Performance of Canada's leading artists will be held on the Saturday evening of the conference in downtown Saskatoon's Centennial Auditorium and this closing event will include presentation of the 1983 Chalmers Award and be followed by a big party.

The busy schedule of daily activities - classes, seminars, workshops, research papers, Dance in Canada forum meetings, etc., will not prevent delegates from finding time to meet old friends and make new ones. There's even an

outdoor picnic and hayride planned for the final day.

Those planning to attend the Saskatoon conference should not wait too long to settle their travel and accommodation plans. Rooms can be booked at reasonable rates in one of the University of Saskatchewan residences and there are two hotels downtown to house the sybarites.

There are sizeable reductions for people who apply before April 1 so start planning now.

For the details, contact Sonya Barton, Dance Saskatchewan Inc., Box 502, Sub P.O.6, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 2P9.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Sir Anton Dolin, a living legend of ballet in the 20th century, was in Vancouver in January to set the classic 19th-century ballet *Pas de Quatre* for the Pacific Ballet Theatre. Dolin's illustrious career began with the Diaghilev Ballet Russe in Paris in the early 1920s. In 1950 he founded the London Festival Ballet with Dame Alicia Markova and since then has worked with ballet companies around the world, mounting such ballet classics



Sir Anton Dolin rehearses Pacific Ballet Theatre dancers Charie Evans (left) and Suzanne Ouellette in his *Pas de Quatre*.

as *Giselle* and *Pas de Quatre*.

Pas de Quatre is a short ballet originally choreographed in 1845 by Jules Perrot for four of the greatest ballerinas of the time — Marie Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, Lucile Grahn and Fanny Cerrito. Dolin chose Charie Evans, Donna Kelly, Suzanne Ouellette and Merrill Lochhead, respectively, to dance their roles for PBT's premier performance of *Pas de Quatre* at the Surrey Arts Centre in January.

The First Canadian Dance Critics Conference will be held

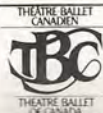
in Vancouver in November. The week of workshops, lectures and panel discussions on dance criticism is co-sponsored by Simon Fraser University Centre for the Arts and the Dance in Canada Association. Negotiations are underway with Deborah Jowitz (dance critic for the *Village Voice* and for many years director of the Critics Conference at the American Dance Festival), Max Wyman (Canadian dance historian and critic for *The Vancouver Province*) and William Littler (music and dance critic for



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St. Catharines, Ont.	Brock University	February 6
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Simcoe, Ont.	Composite School	February 13
Montreal, P.Q.	Centaur Theatre	February 23-26
Deep River, Ont.	MacKenzie High School	March 3
Halifax, N.S.	Rebecca Cohn Auditorium	March 19
Wolfville, N.S.	Acadia University	March 20
St. John's, Nfld.	Arts & Culture Centre	March 22
Alberton, P.E.I.	Westisle Theatre	March 26
Moncton, N.B.	Moncton High School	March 27
Fredericton, N.B.	The Playhouse	March 29
St. John, N.B.	St. John High School	March 30
Ottawa, Ont.	NAC - Theatre	April 12-13
Carmel, Cal.	Sunset Centre	April 27
Los Angeles, Cal.	Loyola Marymount University	April 29



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The Toronto Star) to lead writers' sessions. Conference participants will also attend movement classes, visit local dance studios and resource centres, view dance films and video tapes and attend numerous dance performances by local and touring companies. A timely coincidence is the Vancouver appearance of the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet as part of its North American tour. For information contact: Critics Conference Committee, Centre For The Arts, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6.

"Bye, Bye, Betty Street" was the title of a smash-hit New Year's Eve fund-raising party held by Dance in Canada's B.C. regional office. The event, which attracted more than 400 revellers and raised \$1,100 for the regional office, was held in the Vancouver Playhouse's old, soon-to-be-vacated rehearsal rooms on Betty Street, thus the party's

name. Working on a suggestion from Grant Strate, head of Simon Fraser University's Centre for the Arts in Burnaby, the B.C. region committee hired a popular, local 7-man New Wave group called The Beverley Sisters to provide the entertainment. "The party", commented Strate, "was great and it means we're in business again as regional branch".

David Y.H. Lui, the Vancouver-based impresario who, during the past 13 years did much to turn his local citizens into a body of dancers by presenting the best in ballet and modern dance, filed for bankruptcy on January 31. Lui said that he was almost \$500,000 in debt and that advance ticket sales for his upcoming events had been so bad he had little choice but to fold his business. Lui presented his first event in Vancouver on February 16, 1970 — the

Phakavali Dancera of Thailand. In the following years he gave Vancouver such internationally celebrated companies as the Joffrey Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Twyla Tharp and many, many others. Lui's business almost went under in 1978 as a result of the unprofitable operation of the theatre he had built (mainly for dance performances) three years before. He blames his collapse on the recession in general and on the strike by Vancouver civic workers two years ago which effectively shut down the Queen Elizabeth and Playhouse Theatres where Lui presented most of his attractions.

The failure of the Lui organization, however, is not expected to affect the scheduled cross-Canada tour of the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet this fall. (Lui had been hired as the Canadian impresario). The Canada Council's Touring Office, which had already planned to support Lui's efforts, said in early February that it would see that the tour went ahead.

paintings, some are portraits, others lyrical inner landscapes, all in vibrant colours. Also on the program was *Small White Poems* which was designed by Welsh artist Glenys Cour for Sun•Ergos' recent tour of the U.K.

Dancers Studio West of Calgary has received a \$19,000 grant from Alberta Culture to assist its operations. Studio renovations are currently in progress, which, DSW director Elaine Bowman says, will produce "the best dance studio space in Canada". DSW is sponsoring a performing series of independent dance artists from across Canada. The series opened in January with a group of independent Calgary dancers including Faye Rattray and Donna Krasnow. Performances in March include Toronto's Pavlychenko Dancers, Vancouver's Barbara Bourget, Edmonton's Formolo and Urban, and Adrea Rabinovitch. The series closes next September with Louis Guillemet from Montreal.

The World University Games will be held in Edmonton this year during July. Lilianna Elenka is the organizer and choreographer of the opening and closing ceremonies and in this capacity is looking for 8,500 volunteer performers, rehearsal directors and administrators. Volunteers must be 14 years of age and older. For information call 422-7132 in Edmonton.

The Alberta Ballet Company's winter season in February in Edmonton and Calgary featured the Canadian premiere of *A Night in the Tropics* by resident choreographer Lambros Lambrou as well as revivals of Lambrou's *Shostakovich Piano Concerto* and Norbert Vesak's *The Grey Goose of Silence* which has a haunting score by Canadian singer/composer Ann Mortifée.

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ALBERTA

The Banff Centre celebrates its 50th anniversary this year and is inviting all former students, faculty and administrative staff to return for a Homecoming week this spring. The celebrations will take place April 30 to May 8. A 60-minute film on the centre by the National Film Board is to be released also. All Banff Centre alumni are encouraged to contact the Alumni Office, Banff Centre, Box 1020, Banff, Alberta. T0L 0C0. Phone (403) 762-6100.

Sun•Ergos premiered *A Day of Two Moons* January 21 at Calgary's University Theatre. It is the company's newest dance-theatre work in collaboration with a designer. Calgary artist Susan Gorris has created an environment of towering sculptures and

SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan Theatre Ballet, which made its official debut last November, started the new year off with a tour of Saskatchewan during January and February performing in Yorkton, Swift Current, Kamsack and Prince Albert. The province's first ballet company consists of three professional dancers: Marie Nychka-Blocka, April Chow and Lorne Matthews, and five apprentices. Seven of the eight dancers are Saskatchewan-born and have received much of their dance training in the province. The STB performs a mixed-program of short works including dances by company members as well as works by Suzanne Ouellette of Vancouver's Pacific Ballet Theatre and Petre Bodeut. The fledgling company's first order of business is to bring high quality dance entertainment to audiences in the cities and towns of Saskatchewan. The

rest of the country will have the opportunity to see STB at the eleventh Annual Dance in Canada Conference to be held in Saskatoon June 8-11.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers spring season (May 4-7) will feature the premiere of associate artistic director Stephanie Ballard's latest work, *Spring Training*, and the company premiere of José Limon's *The Exiles*, the story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. New York choreographer Dan Wagoner will also create a new work for the company. Contemporary Dancers will tour southern Ontario in April with appearances at Toronto's Harbourfront (April 28-30) and The National Arts Centre in Ottawa as well as a number of smaller communities. Contemporary Dancers Appren-



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ONTARIO

Preliminary plans for the **Toronto International Festival 1984** were announced in January. This enormous cultural undertaking will alter life in Toronto for the entire month of June 1984, turning the city into an international centre for the performing arts. The Festival will present artists and attractions from all over Canada as well as many other countries including the US, the UK, Japan, India, Ghana, Cuba and Austria. Dance companies already confirmed for the Festival are Sankai Juku from Japan, the Dance Theatre of Harlem and the National Ballet of Canada presenting the company premiere of John Cranko's *Onegin* (1965). Specially commissioned by the Festival, *Onegin* will feature artists from the National and Stuttgart Ballet in the lead roles.

Erik Bruhn was named on December 8 to succeed Alexander Grant as the National Ballet of Canada's artistic director. Grant relinquishes the post on June 30 this year. Bruhn has had a long association with the National Ballet since the early sixties as a dancer, choreographer/producer and as a teacher. He has also worked with the students of the National Ballet School as a guest teacher on many occasions. The National's productions of *Swan Lake*, *La Sylphide* and *Coppélia* were all staged by Bruhn and he also produced the company's version of *Les Sylphides*, with Celia Franca. Bruhn has already stated that he regards an expansion of the company's facilities for coaching and rehearsal as a top priority although he has no plans to make any sweeping internal changes until both he and the company have had time to adjust to each other.

Bruhn's *Coppélia* opened

the National Ballet's regular three-week winter season at the O'Keefe Centre in Toronto (9-27 February) and included the appearance of **Alexander Grant** as the mad Dr. Coppélius — his debut in the role. The season saw the revival of Ashton's *The Dream* and Tudor's *Offenbach in the Underworld*. A new ballet by James Kudelka, *Hedda*, received its premier performance on February 18 and Michael Peters, co-choreographer of the Broadway hit *Dream Girls* created a new ballet *Quartet* for the company. *Canciones*, originally created by company resident choreographer Constantin Patsalas for the Ballet Camera Contemporaneo in Venezuela and later presented at the National's 1980 workshop, was also included in the O'Keefe mixed programs.

Yoko Ichino, who joined the National Ballet last September and made such a strong impression in her early company performances, joined Kevin Pugh as the pair made their debut in the leading roles of Titania and Oberon in *The Dream*. The National's winter season repertoire was completed with performances of *Giselle*. Evelyn Hart of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet joined the company as guest artist on February 26 to dance Giselle

with National Ballet principal Frank Augustyn.

The Queen's Quay Theatre, Harbourfront's new dance theatre will not open officially until September 20 when a week of gala dance performances by companies from across Canada is planned. Meanwhile, negotiations are underway for the new theatre to actually begin operation on May 17 with the hit musical *Snoopy* which will open as part of the Toronto International Children's Festival (May 17-22) and then run all summer long.

With the formal opening of the Queen's Quay Theatre the rental policy at Harbourfront will change. As of September 1, 1983 a guaranteed rental fee will be charged in all of the performing spaces against 25% of the ticket gross (whichever is greater). The per day rental rates for non-commercial companies will be as follows: Studio Theatre — \$150, Brigantine Room — \$175, Queen's Quay Theatre — \$500.

The Fifth Annual Dance Ontario Award was presented in December to **Patricia Beatty, David Earle and Peter Randazzo**, the co-founders and artistic directors of the Toronto Dance Theatre. The award was presented by Brian

Robinson, last year's recipient, at the annual Dance Ontario Conference in recognition of their contribution to the growth and development of dance in Ontario through their dancing, teaching and choreography.

The Toronto Dance Theatre moved into its 15th Anniversary Season with a series of concerts devoted to the work of each of its founding directors. The series began with the "David Earle Retrospective" in February. Of the 35 works Earle has choreographed for the company *Frost Watch*, *Baroque Suite* and *Bugs* were chosen to highlight his first retrospective. "The Dances of Patricia Beatty" included three classics — *Study for A Song in the Distance* (1969), *Lessons in Another Language* (1979) and *Against Sleep* (1968). The company will present its second program devoted exclusively to the works of Peter Randazzo March 2 to 5. "Randazzo Revisited" will include two poignant solos — *Enter the Dawn* (1982) and *Untitled Solo* (1970).

Pavlychenko Studio, Toronto's centre for independent dancers, presented a program of new works in February at Harbourfront. The choreographers, Gail Benn, Kathryn Brown, Susan Cash, Claudia Moore, Holly Small and guest artist Elaine Bowman all contributed works to an evening with an overall design concept by Lawrence Adams. Adams endowed the Brigantine Room with a cabaret atmosphere complete with audience seated at small tables, a continuous open bar, friendly waiters and waitresses and lively commentary throughout the show.

In March Benn, Brown and Cash will represent Pavlychenko on tour in Alberta performing at the new Calgary Studio Theatre as part of the Dancers' Studio



Erik Bruhn artistic director designate of the National Ballet of Canada in rehearsal with Veronica Tennant and Tomas Schramek.

West Independent Dance Series (March 4, 5). They will perform with DSW at Medicine Hat College Theatre (March 8) and Red Deer Memorial Centre (March 10).

The Paula Moreno Spanish Dance Company has a new home at St. Paul's Church, 121 Avenue Road, Toronto.

Forest City Gallery in London, Ont., has moved to spacious new quarters at 231 Dundas Street. The Gallery's first dance series opened in January with Montreal choreographer Daniel Leveillé. T.I.D.E. and Lucie Gregoire performed there in February and in March London audiences will see Toronto's Musicdance Orchestra (March 21) and Jennifer Mascall (March 31).

The University of Windsor sponsored a dance series this winter at the St. Denis Centre. The series opened with Nonce, a company from Detroit and presented Gina Lori Riley in January and Ottawa Dance Theatre in February. The University of Windsor Dancers closes the series March 20.

Ottawa Dance Theatre premiered its new work *Alice Through The Looking Glass* on January 7 at the National Arts Centre, Theatre. The work, choreographed by Judith Davies, represents a major community involvement featuring dancers from ODT, the Nepean Symphony Orchestra, several actors and numerous children from regional dance schools. *Alice* was jointly presented by the National Capital Performing Arts Foundation and the National Arts Centre.

Le Groupe de la Place Royale's artistic director Peter Boneham has created a new work for the Ottawa company based on Gertrude Stein's play *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* with a score by Montreal composer John Plant. Associate artistic

director Jean-Pierre Perrault returns to work with the company in March and Marsha Blank from New York will be guest teacher in April. Following this intensive winter rehearsal period Le Groupe will present its next Choreographic Events series (April 22, 23, 29, 30). Immediately following the spring performances the Alain Bauguil Theatre Company from Firminy, France will be in residence at Le Groupe's Sparks Street studios (May 2-20).

Theatre Ballet of Canada began 1983 with a tour of southern Ontario and Montreal. In March the company tours the Atlantic Provinces performing in St. John's (March 22), Alberton (March 27), Halifax (March 19), Wolfville (March 20), Fredericton (March 29), Saint John (March 30), and Moncton (March 27). TBC then returns to Ottawa for its annual home season at the National Arts Centre (April 12, 13). The program this season features a new work by Lawrence Gradus to the music of Mozart. Company ballet mistress Margery Lambert makes her choreographic debut and the company will give its first performances of Antony Tudor's 1972 ballet *Fandango*. There are three new dancers at TBC — Marcel la Rochelle, formerly of Les ballets Jazz, Deborah Smith from Anna Wyman Dance Theatre and Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers, and from Poland, Zdzislaw Zielinski formerly of the Mazowsze Dance Company.

QUEBEC

Tangente danse actuelle has moved to 307 ouest, Ste-Catherine, Montreal, the larger, more centrally located space that was formerly occupied by Véhicule Art. An official opening benefit was held February 18 and 19 featuring performances by

DANCE IN CANADA ANNUAL CONFERENCE



many well-known Montreal dancers including Marie Chouinard, Edouard Lock, Jean-Pierre Perreault, Jo Lechay, Benoit Lachambre, Silvy Panet-Raymond and Linda Rabin. Tangente has an impressive line-up of dance performances this spring beginning with Julie West (March 3-6) and including

Toronto's Musicdance Orchestra (March 11, 12) and T.I.D.E. (March 18, 19), Vancouver's Terry Hunter/Savannah Walling (March 26, 27) and Jennifer Mascall (April 8, 9) and Montrealers Paul Ducharme (April 1, 2) Jacqueline Lemieux, Alain Bergeron, Jacques Garofano and Carolyn Shaffer (April

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15, 16) and Andrew Harwood/Jo Leslie (April 29-May 1).

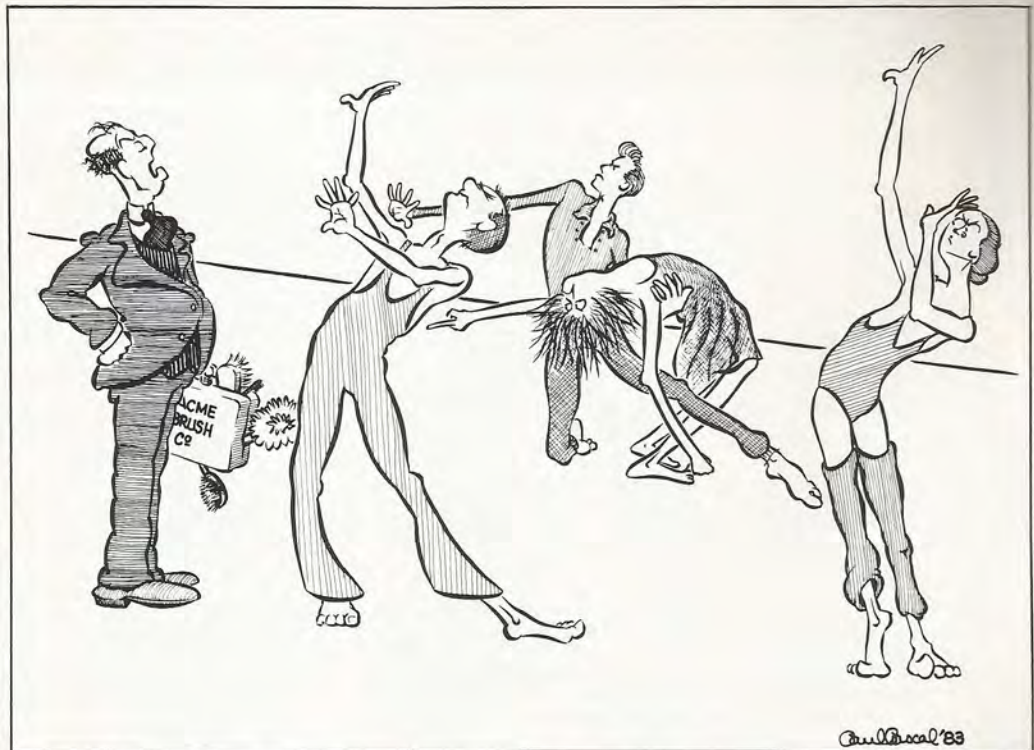
Dansons Montréal is a new dance contest which was held at Montreal's Tritorium in January. The organizers, Suzelle Cerantola and Claude Côté, modelled the contest after similar events sponsored by the Friends of Art in the late 1940s and after contests currently held in England, the U.S. and Australia. More than 300 dancers auditioned in the three separate categories of ballet-jazz, modern and contemporary dance. A classical ballet category will be added next year. A jury of eight dancers, choreographers and teachers selected 25 semi-finalists and Ludmilla Chiraeff awarded first prize - a scholarship to the Luigi or Alvin Ailey School in New York.

More than 700 people watched the 22 finalists compete. First prize was shared by **Marie-Josée Paradis** and **Chantal Côté**, both of the Dansepartout company in Quebec City. Second prize went to **Roxane D'Orleans** and **Claire Hardy** won the third prize.

NOVA SCOTIA

Nova Dance Theatre, in collaboration with filmmakers Christopher Majka and Gordon Parson, produced a half-hour film focusing on two works by artistic director Jeanne Robinson. The film is to be broadcast on Pay Television C-Channel.

Terrill Maguire, well known across Canada as a dancer/teacher/choreographer, was in Halifax during the fall for a residency at the city's Dance Exchange, sponsored by the Eye Level Gallery and the Nova Scotia College of Design. She also completed a residency, including, as in Halifax, a series of performances at the L.S.P.U. Theatre in St. John's, Newfoundland. Maguire is



"A simple 'NO' will do, thank you!" Ça ne coûte pas plus cher de le dire!

expected to appear in Toronto during April for performances at the Theatre Passe Muraille.

The Dunn Thing — a performance which combined dance, acting, music and mime — was held in Halifax, December 12, in the Sir James Dunn Theatre. The cast of eight local performers presented a total of 23 disconnected episodes which took them to all corners of the auditorium. This imaginative and unusual theatrical production included a meet-the-cast party backstage and three days later audience members were invited to the performers' studio, The Other Space, to watch a video to express reactions to the show.

NEWFOUNDLAND

Atlantic Dance Company is a new troupe in St. John's formed to give student dancers an opportunity to perform. The company made its debut in December with *The Nutcracker Dream Suite* and has planned several workshop performances for the new year.



The cast of *The Dunn Thing*. Standing, left to right: Duncan Holt, Diane Moore, Sandy Moore and Sherry Lee Hunter. Pat Richards is in a strangle-hold. Upside down are Ellen Pierce and Angela Holt.

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