

Welcome addition to dance

Dancemakers take their art to the street



The Dancemakers, York graduates all, in Markham Street Village.

Mystery thriller undermined by coincidence and contrivance

By JULIAN BELTRAME

The premise of *The Parallax View*, that an organization run by businessmen for businessmen is responsible for the recent rash of political assassinations in the U.S., is too good a theme to have been wasted on this film.

Unlike most films, where nothing is attempted and nothing is achieved, in the *Parallax View* a great deal is attempted, and it is indeed a pity that the film-makers did not think enough of their cause to work out a more plausible plot.

There is almost no development of character, very little plot, and equally little comic relief, sorely needed throughout most of the film's two-hour running length.

Warren Beatty plays a journalist-detective whose character is never really defined. He is presented as an idealistic, somewhat kooky (we are told but never shown), brave, intelligent, uncompromising, opinionated, handsome journalist, but is anything new in all this? Aren't all journalists brave, intelligent and un-

compromising?

Actually, the blame cannot fall squarely on Beatty's shoulders. He has been handed a stereotype role long worn out by Steve McQueen, Paul Newman, and Clint Eastwood as the super-cool, unrelenting vindicators of the world's injustices. The only really good performance comes from Paula Prentiss, who attempts an unusually, for her, dramatic role and excels in it. But alas, she is gone by the time the film is 10 minutes old.

Nothing happens in the story which leads us to believe in the existence of the *Parallax Corporation*, unless we believe in it already. Presumably Alan Pakula, who directed the film, wanted to do no more than preach to the converted.

The *Parallax View* does not even hold together as a mystery thriller. Too many things appear contrived to allow us to become at all concerned with what happens to our hero.

We are given the usual quick and adroit rebuttals by Beatty

which are supposed to make us believe that he is witty, intelligent, and hip; the by now familiar fight with the hick sheriff's deputy of the hick town; and of course the exciting car chase. This time it even goes through a crowded supermarket. I don't know what the film industry would do without car chases.

Admittedly the final 20 minutes, when Beatty becomes trapped while stalking the killer in the *Parallax Corporation's* own magnificent building, packs a powerful wallop. Pakula leads up nicely to the climax by building up the tension without dialogue, so that we become involved for the first time in the course of the film.

But half an hour does not a film make, and finally what has to be admitted is that we still have a great premise for a great film. Anybody got a plot?

While cosmopolitan Toronto has been an enthusiastic host to its classical favourite, the National Ballet company, this enthusiasm has not been extended in the past to support new experimental groups, a situation which accounts for the dearth of dance in this otherwise culturally burgeoning city. Notwithstanding, a new dance group called Dancemakers is on the road to becoming a welcome addition to the Toronto dance scene.

YORK GRADUATES

What is most interesting to members of the York community is the fact that the youthful members of this company are all graduates of the York programme in dance. Founded last April by artistic director Andrea Ciel Smith and Marcy Radler, Dancemakers hope to widen the modern dance audience by performing their dances beyond the confines of the traditional theatre.

Their plans include performances in shopping plazas, streets and small Northern Ontario towns which normally don't receive visits from dance troupes, as well as elementary and high schools and other universities.

As a company their goals are to have as many good choreographers to work with as

possible from other parts of the country and the U.S.

NEW YORK PIECES

Of their present repertoire of five pieces, four have been choreographed by visiting choreographers, three of whom are from New York. It is to be hoped that as they grow as a company, they will be able to develop more and more of the local talent for choreography.

Although their hopes, enthusiasms and potential are high, they are very poorly financed. They have received an Ontario Arts Council Grant, the first of its kind for that august institution, and are looking for studio space in which to hold classes. For the present, however, their energies are concentrated on rehearsing for their first performance, to be held in the Bathurst Street United Church, September 17 through 21, at 8:30 p.m.

Their debut will consist of five pieces. *Echoes*, choreographed by Kelly Hogan of New York, is a walk through an enchanted garden. Mitch Rose, also of New York, concentrates on pure movement in *Omaggio à Joyce*, a long vocal piece with some lighter moments.

York is further represented in the work of Grant Strate, director of the dance programme here, who unites film and dance in a piece that delves into the growth of the creative process. Carol Anderson, a member of the company, choreographed a *Dance for Three Women*, a lyrical piece. Tremor is the effort of three members of the company: Andrea Smith, Carol Anderson and David Langer, replacing the original Will Hollahan.

The company has had a few chances to perform this summer, at Harbourfront and in the Markham Street village, where they met with an enthusiastic reception.

"One man even got a ticket because he stopped to watch us," said Andrea.

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