

London Dance troupe has local debut

by Dave Cox

The London Contemporary Dance Theatre is appearing in Edmonton on its first American tour November 1 & 2.

Artistic Director of the theatre Robert Cohan stopped in Tuesday to talk about contemporary dance in general and his troupe in particular:

Gateway: What does the modern dance aim at? Is it a more interpretive style, a less stylized performance?

Cohan: Contemporary dance comes about because it needs to explore areas that are not part of the mainstream. Like contemporary art, it focuses your attention on specific aspects of it.

It may be the movement itself—you might be fascinated by turns, by turning like dervishes, and construct a whole work around it. It's an exploration of an area—of the form and structure out of which dance is made. You're trying to stretch people's- and your own- imaginations.

Gateway: You seem to have close ties to Canada—are there dance companies in this country who are particularly dynamic, is there an emotional appeal for you?

Cohan: There were ties to Canada—I taught at York when many of your contemporary dancers were studying there. (Company founder) Robin Howard's great-grandfather was involved in building the Canadian Pacific Railway over the Rocky Mountains. We wanted the rest of the troupe to see how beautiful the

Rockies are.

The Canada Council touring office has a very positive approach toward bringing good art to the people. We felt the same way—that

Cohan: Yes, our first number is Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater*—I choreographed it very carefully to go hand-in-hand with the music. It's very meaningful and moving.

You have to be able to understand this abstract language. It's done in a meaningful, and yet very beautiful, lyric style.

Second Turning was a Canadian premiere by Christopher Bannerman. He did this semi-autobiographical work based on his last ten years. It's kind of an introverted poem in a very abstract language about a man's life.

Forest is about how people in a forest environment are different people than in a city. You become more sensitive, more tactile. If a twig snaps you'd turn around, whereas in the city you might not even notice a car crash.

Also, we were working in rehearsal at the time without music. People are always moving together in rhythms without music—just look at the people down there in the courtyard (of SUB). Like sport, people work in tune with each other without music.

I was exploring that aspect of choreography. Originally, it was intended to be in silence, but you never have silence in an audience, especially in London where everybody has a cold all the time, so we've added some "forest ambience" sounds.

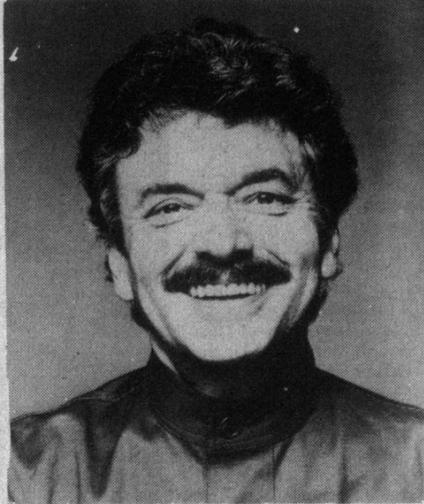
The last dance we're doing is called *Class*, based on our technique class.

It's filled with energy and bravura. It was originally designed to show how we work, but it's filled with so much energy and so many jumps that nothing could follow it, so we had to put it at the end.



Photo Bill Ingle

David Woodward, of the Powder Blues Band, who put on a dynamic show here last Thursday.



Robert Cohan

this was important to do. It took about four years, with Canada Council, Air Canada, and the British Council all helping out.

Gateway: Could you tell us something about the program the group will be performing here?

It's a really, really big Shew

by S. Bertles

Bobby Shew is at U oA this week, and his act is definitely one worth catching.

For those of you who don't know, Bobby Shew is a jazz musician of the highest calibre. He is especially famous for his wide range of talents, having played both lead and solo trumpet for some of the biggest names in jazz, including Tommy Dorsey, Woody Herman, Buddy Rich and Louis Bellson. Dizzy Gillespie once named him as "the flugel horn player who had most impressed him among the current generation of soloists."

During a nine year stretch in Las Vegas playing backup for the likes of Paul Anka, Robert Goulet, To Jones and Connie Stevens he found he missed the creative freedom of jazz, so he moved to Los Angeles.

After playing there in the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Band, and with the Bud Shank, Chuck

Flores and Frank Strazzeri quintets he formed his own group. Their album *Outstanding in his Field* was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1981.

The time spent in Las Vegas in the "music mill" convinced Shew of the importance of the spiritual, emotional and innovative aspect of music. He stresses this on tour, where he performs and works with students all over North America.

Sponsored by the Department of Music as a part of the "Distinguished Visitor" series, Shew's time has been spent touring local schools and working with U of A students.

In addition to his own concert with "Friends" tomorrow night in SUB at 8:00 pm, Bobby Shew will perform with the U of A Stage Band on Sunday, Oct. 31 in Convocation Hall. Further information is available from the Music Department.

Jump Cuts

by Jack Vermece

In the middle of a relatively light discussion of film last week, I found myself whimpering to a friend about my seeming inability to pin-point just what it is about a particular film that makes me like it. She suggested (very logically) that a good way to start figuring out your identity as a critic is to list your five favorite films and decide why it is that you like them. She then asked me what my five favorite films are, to which I calmly replied, "I don't know." With this startling revelation came the feeling that I'd better engage in some self-analysis and figure my filmself out. So, what follows is the result of this self-analysis; my five favorite films.

Annie Hall (1977). The definitive film on "the relationship" that takes the statement "Relationships never last" as a given and doesn't despair about it. I love this film for its humour, poignancy, and ultimately, for its optimistic treatment of what others may see as a bleak realization.

McCabe and Mrs. Miller (1971). Altman's counter-culture "western" is both stunningly photographed and perfectly played. The excellent ensemble acting, the beautiful Julie Christie, the great soundtrack, and the lyrical camera work are a few of the reasons why I love this film.

Day for Night (1973). Where do I start with this one? Truffaut makes a movie about making a movie that is amusing and enchanting from the opening scene. The perfect blend of humour, tragedy, fate, personalities and technical expertise is just one reason for loving this film.

The Last Waltz (1978). I hesitated to include

this one as it seems to reflect my musical tastes more than my cinematic preferences. However, it is a movie and as such, it qualifies for my "top five". It is simply the best concert movie ever made.

The General (1927). This is the only Buster Keaton silent comedy that I have seen, but if the others are like this one, Keaton gets my vote as the screen's best silent comedian. He is absolutely super-human as a train engineer and mislabeled coward during the American Civil War. His amazingly lithe and elastic body combined with his perfect timing make this film into a balletic and balanced combination of man and machine. And to top it all off, Keaton also directed!

O.K., there are my five favorites. Do with them as you may. In the meantime go see these movies:

The Children of Theatre Street (1978). I've heard and read nothing but raves about this documentary film on the Kirov school of ballet. If you want to see just what is involved in striving to be the best, check this one out. Oct. 28 (9:30 pm.) at the Princess.

Last Tango in Paris (1972). One critic suggested that this film puts forth a "new form of film language". I don't know about that, but I defy anybody to see this film and come away undisturbed. Brando is magnificent. Oct. 29 (9:30 pm.) at the Princess.

Psycho (1960). If you haven't seen this film, don't miss it this time and if you have seen it, go again. The old Hitchcock magic will turn you into raving madmen on that most evil of evenings; Halloween. Oct. 31 (9:15 pm.) at the Princess.

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