

An impressive dance brings *Giselle* to life

Giselle
Royal Winnipeg Ballet
Jubilee Auditorium
February 25, 26, 27

review by Gerry Magill

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet is at its best when it performs classical ballet. *Giselle* is one of several classic pieces in RWB's repertoire, and Monday night's show demonstrated the company's proficiency in bringing to life one of the oldest ballets still in performance.

The ballet has a simple and rather silly plot. The heroine is Giselle, a peasant girl who is to be married to Hilarion, a local gamekeeper. Count Albrecht, a nobleman, has fallen in love with Giselle and has disguised himself as a peasant in order to be near her. He suc-

ceeds in winning Giselle's love, but Hilarion reveals Albrecht's true identity to her. When she learns that the Count is already engaged to a noblewoman, Giselle loses her mind and kills herself with Albrecht's sword.

After her death, Giselle joins the Wilis, which are the spirits of broken-hearted girls who have died before marriage. Albrecht comes to Giselle's grave at night, and the queen of the Wilis commands Giselle to dance with him until he dies of exhaustion. Giselle still loves Albrecht and manages to save him from death, but at dawn she fades away and he is left in despair at her grave.

Marianna Tcherkassky, of New York's American Ballet Theatre, was elegant and graceful in the role of Giselle. She brought Giselle to life as a shy but spirited girl. Jean Charles Gil was equally competent as Al-

brecht. He displayed great strength and agility with confident leaps and turns. The pair danced well together; their timing was excellent and Gil's lifts were especially good as he raised Tcherkassky and set her down gracefully. Their dancing was particularly good in the second act. They danced individually and in a moving pas de deux.

Other outstanding scenes included the Peasant Past de Quatre of Sarah Slipper,

Andre Lewis, Elizabeth Olds, and Steven Hyde; and the entrance of the Wilis. The corps of Wilis was impressive: the dancers' timing and movement were carefully orchestrated and so well executed that they occasionally appeared to dance as one. The Wilis' subtle toe work enhanced their ethereal nature. The talent and dedication displayed by all the performers brought *Giselle* to life, producing an impressive dance.



Marianna Tcherkassky puts on an impressive performance in RWB's *Giselle*.

Stripping away the stereotypes

The Breakfast Club
Universal Pictures

review by Sue Boytang

At first glance one may be tempted to pass *The Breakfast Club* off as just another teen comedy. Don't. Writer and director John Hughes (*Sixteen Candles*) has created a teen film which is humorous yet at the same time intelligent and sensitive. And he has done it well.

The Breakfast Club follows five mismatched students as they serve an eight-hour detention on a Saturday in the library of their high school. These five 'cellmates' could not have less in common: they include an awkward brain (Anthony Michael Hall), an oversophisticated beauty (Molly Ringwald), a good-looking jock (Emilio Esteves), a rebellious hood (Judd Nelson) and an excruciatingly withdrawn 'basket case' (magnificently played by Ally Sheedy).

The film starts out simply enough. We are subject to the usual profane banter and less than polite one-liners which seem to be ever-present in films that are geared for the adolescent crowd.

The humour in "The Breakfast Club," however, has a depth which is lacking in most teen flicks. Instead of bombarding his

audience with cute but meaningless chuckles, Hughes uses the humor in his film as a means of identifying the stereotypes each of his characters portrays. Compare, for example, these lunch menus: while 'beauty queen' Molly Ringwald enjoys a repast of sushi, complete with cutlery and tray, neurotic Sheedy feasts on a Captain Crunch sandwich. There are some humorous character clashes as the students are confronted with the enormous differences separating them.

Slowly, Hughes moves away from the hilarity, and as the stereotyped exterior of each character falls away, we see instead individuals with painfully real problems and fears. We learn, along with the characters in the film of the emptiness in being a beauty queen, the pressures that are a part of being a number-one jock or straight-A student, the hurt behind the rebellion, and the agony of being alone.

The driving force behind *The Breakfast Club* lies in Hughes uncanny ability to know what makes young people 'tick.' One gets the distinct impression that Hughes has a firm understanding of the adolescent mind, and this gives his characters warmth and vitality. I repeat, *The Breakfast Club* is more than the average teen flick.

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