

Dance company finds strength in diversity

By NICOLE DESJARDINS

Last Thursday at Harbourfront's Premiere Dance Theatre one of the best performances of the season to date was presented, and from none other than a hometown company: the Toronto Dance Theatre (TDT). The clean style, polished technique and expressive choreography characterized the recent performance of this Toronto based modern dance company. TDT performed five pieces, created by their four resident choreographers—Peter Randazzo, Patricia Beatty, David Earle and Christopher House. The performances are as diverse as the number of their choreographers suggests, making for an exciting and entertaining evening of dance.

TDT is fortunate to have four choreographers in their company. This gives dancers and audience alike a wide variety of styles to sample. With such an advantage it was surprising to see one of the dancers cast in four of the five shows. The style and technique of former York graduate Karen duPlessis, however, can be seen as ample reason for this decision.

The five pieces were accompanied by scores varying from "pulsating electronic" by Ann Southam (in *Rewind*) to Mozart's Requiem (in *Sacra Conversazione*). *Radical Light*, the second piece, performed by Rene Highway and Karen duPlessis, is a

powerful duet, illustrating the dynamic relationship between a man and a woman—"The Victim" and "His Courage." The piece makes good use of costume and set design to add to its effect. The primitive rhythm of the music is matched by the movements of duPlessis as "His Courage," as she incites "The Victim" to more action.

Of the four choreographers, only Christopher House (another York dance grad) actually dances. In his solo piece *Shubert Dances*, he exhibits his dual abilities. House's dancing resembles that of Baryshnikov. A nonchalant and seemingly effortless style mixes graceful motion with great strength to make a great performer in Christopher House.

House also choreographed *green evening, clear and warm* which followed. This is a humorous piece that combines gestures and mime to depict several scenes of courtship involving four women and three men. This work falls into the category of neo-classicism, which joins the two extremities of ballet and modern dance, creating a lyrical quality.

Sacra Conversazione, the last piece of the program, choreographed by David Earle, is by far the strongest, most powerful performance I have seen of the Mozart's Requiem. Last fall, Montreal's Eddy Toussaint Dance Company presented at Roy Thomson Hall a complete work on



Style and polish all part of the Toronto Dance Theatre: *Sacra Conversazione* (above) and *green evening, clear and warm* (left) with Karen duPlessis.



the same music with choir and orchestra. But it did not exceed the forceful impact that TDT's dancers exerted on stage, travelling through space as a group or individually, reaching up with arms and legs in a constant fluid motion. The piece was enhanced by evocative lighting by Ron Shippe.

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CALENDAR

Readings/Readings/Readings

Canadian Women Writers at Glendon
Toronto poets Maria Jacobs, Diane Keating, Jay Macpherson, Miriam Waddington
Mar. 27, 7 p.m., Senior Common Room, Third Floor, York Hall, Glendon College



CALENDAR

Dance/Dance/Dance/Dance/Dance

Dance Labs
Apr. 3 & 4, Burton Auditorium, 8 p.m.
Apr. 5, Joseph Workman Auditorium, 8 p.m.

Theatre/Theatre/Theatre/Theatre/Theatre

York Graduate Theatre Program Presents:
In the Boom Boom Room
Mar. 27, 7 p.m.
Burton Auditorium, information 667-3499/3730

CALENDAR

Latin America and Caribbean Contemporary Prints

AGYU, April 3-May 2

Photography Exhibit by Victor Flores Olea

Norman Bethune College Gallery, Apr. 3-May 2

Daniel Pokorn: Stone Sculpture

Apr. 10-18
Opening Apr. 9, 6-9 p.m., featuring a performance by the artist

CALENDAR

Galleries/Galleries/Galleries/Galleries

Experimental Area Exhibition
IDA Gallery, until Mar. 28

Strong Student Show

Samuel J. Zacks Gallery, until Apr. 3

Poeisis '86: Founders' annual art competition

Founders College Gallery, until Apr. 5



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