

Winnipeg dancers show vitality, concert's variety is its strength

By MARION KERR

All too often people going to see modern dance for the first time enter the theatre naive and open-minded and leave with their ideas, of what dance in general is, totally obscured. The program offered by Contemporary Dancers of Winnipeg February 25 was not an evening to obscure ideas. Rather, the company tried to communicate to the audience through a variety of works choreographed by Rachel Browne (dancer and artistic director in the company), Cliff Keuter and Anna Blewchamps.

SERIES OF EPISODES

Music by Paul Horn accompanied the opening piece, "The Woman I Am" choreographed by Ms. Browne. The work was a series of episodes in a woman's life, each section a 'coming to terms with life' based on poetry by Dorothy Livesay and Miriam Mandel. As different members of the company moved on and off the stage, at times the whole company dancing at once, there was a real dynamism, a feeling of flow from one section to the next. The emphasis seemed to be on arm movements full of strength and expression as they curved and circled through space.

The only thing that occasionally interrupted the natural flow and vitality of the movement were facial expressions — an over-exaggerated dead-pan or an ear to ear smile — that were incongruous with the natural expressiveness of the movement.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

The pas the deux, "Plaisir D'Amours", was danced by Shelly Ziebel and Kenneth Lipitz. Choreographer Cliff Keuter focused the piece around a dress which Ziebel and Lipitz wrapped, wore and carried in a variety of ways to suggest the images for a day in the life (which is capsule form of a whole life) of a young couple. The movement was so literal that it could be called an exaggerated day in the life.

Shelley Ziebel's treatment of this piece is wanting in a more subtle and mysterious quality; she moves too predictably to be exciting.

Keuter also choreographed "The Murder of George Keuter", the last piece on the program. Based on the true story of the murder of Keuter's cousin, the piece is a series of images that protest the killing and guns that exist everywhere. The movements are full of a strength and conviction that emphatically expresses the theme. James Davies, Kim Hughes, Kenneth Lipitz and Seth Walsh very ably handled the material with enough strength of technique and expression to make the piece meaningful.

GOSPEL OF MASS MEDIA

Anna Blewchamps' "Baggage" was a comical addition to the program which, according to the program notes, 'pinpoints the battle of the sexes according to the Gospel of Mass Media'. Featuring a bedraggled housewife and a refected ballroom beauty versus two cosmopolitan beauties, the piece satirizes the image of the plastic woman.

The evening's program was full of variety and vitality. These are ideal ingredients for a company that wishes to bring contemporary dance to as many communities as possible.

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Midnight at seven thirty: That's what time Ray Materick and his group, Midnight Matinee, storm into Burton tomorrow night, thanx to Gordie and the York Social Co-op. His style is nice and light, and he may be best known for his only single "Linda, Put The Coffee On". Opening for Materick will be Bill Hughes, whose noon hour concert a few weeks ago was one of the more popular in the series. Tickets are \$4.50 at the door.

Holy Stong! Two noteworthy events this week are being put on by the Big Green College. First, in room 109, The Samuel Zacks Gallery is featuring the 1977 Stong Student Group Show, including displays of painting, weaving, etching, printmaking, and photography. Also, from out of the Literature into Film Series, "The Reivers" will be presented in Curtis L Monday at 4, after being cancelled due to that deluge of white stuff that hit York a few weeks ago. Admission to both is free.

Go Funk Yourself: It's easy, because the Movement for African Nationalism is putting on a dance, Saturday at 9 in Bethune's infamous Dining Hall. Admission is \$2, and plenty of reggae and funk has been promised. It's a refreshing change from drab disco. E.L.

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