

Royal Winnipeg Ballet triumphs

by Dale Parayeski

On the evenings of March 9th and 10th the Royal Winnipeg Ballet performed in the exquisite manner that has earned it world reknown.

It is reasonable to assume, from the response of the packed audiences at the Rebecca Cohn Arts Centre, that the Company did a great deal to dispell the notion of ballet's "snob appeal"; anyone who is impressed by human grace would have found the five dances truly entertaining.

Saturday's first presentation was a series of brief, light works. The timing and precision involved, especially in the parts when most of the Company appeared and danced simultaneously, was particularly notable.

In the next work Madeleine Bouchard and Attila Ficzere beautifully performed a tribute to Rodin called "Eternal Idol." The human form and sensuality preserved by that sculptor were very much part of the ballet.

The third dance, "Pas de Deux Romantique", was the most traditional piece of the evening. The work was created by the world famous choreographer Jack Carter especially for the Royal Winnipeg's "Premier Danseur" Sylvester Campbell. His effortless grace was well earned him both the title and the attention of Carter.

"The Still Point", in which Madeleine Bouchard was the centre of a touching human experience, followed next. Her performance was especially pleasing, and she impressively conveyed the emotions that made up that experience to the audience. My only complaint of the evening came at this point. Although the music for "The Still Point" was technically perfect, I feel that something a little less intellectually pretentions than the piece by Debussy could have been chosen.

When the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood commissioned "The Ecstasy of Rita Joe", they could not have picked a more eloquent art from than the ballet. The dancing, when combined with a filmed background, haunting voices, and Ann Mortifee's music, makes up the poignant story of an Indian girl's inundation by urban "civilization." I saw the play upon which the work was based, and although I was moved by it at the time, the Royal Winnipeg's version is even better.

I believe that Halifax can be added to the list of the Company's triumphs.



Sylvester Campbell



Madeleine Bouchard



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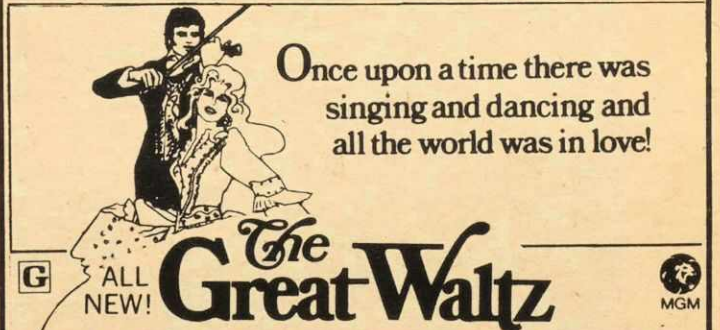


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