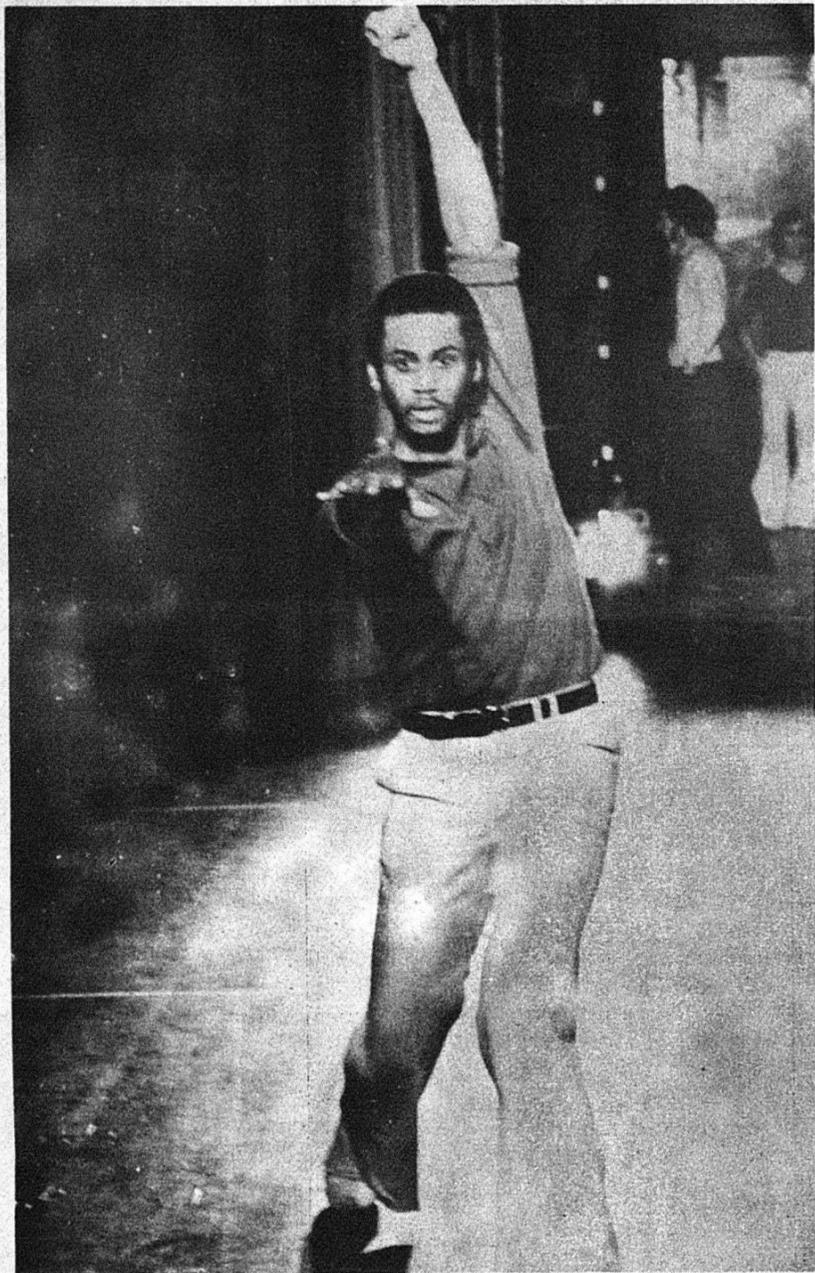


A rise for erotic ballet



Both the strengths and weaknesses of the Alberta Ballet Company were highlighted last week during this year's initial series of public performances and, as always, the company's forte is jazz ballet.

The jazz number *Giannine* was a challenging subject with great possibilities, although it was

hindered by lack of time. A large number of scene changes broke the rhythm of the story but despite this,

the dancing, music, lighting and sets were excellent. The final sequence of the show was also quite good

though the timing of the dancers was off.

Ballet highlights talent

Anyone who did not have the opportunity to see the National Ballet of Canada at the Jubilee Auditorium on Monday or Tuesday, missed a very special event. In the past few years, the company has made some major improvements and the results are just short of amazing.

The principal ballet performed was H. Lovenskold's *La Sylphide*. It was danced with precision and grace by every member of the company, which makes it difficult to single out any one dancer who was better than the others. The leading performers, Veronica Tennant as La Sylphide, Sergui Stephanischi as James, Tomas Schramek as Gurn and Wendy Reiser as Effy were excellent in their roles.

However, if singling out a specific performer were necessary, it would have to be Veronica Tennant. She danced the part of La Sylphide with such delicacy and sensitivity, that all the beauty and serenity of this fairy creature was

transmitted to the audience.

It was not only the dancing that was effective; the company's acting capabilities were also showcased during the performance. A large part of the ballet's impact was due to the acting, as well as the dancing.

The quality of the orchestrations and sets were also impressive. Good musicianship and conducting combined to produce an evening of smooth, precise and extremely pleasant music. The construction and arrangement of the sets were appropriate for the ballet's atmosphere, and did not clutter up the stage unnecessarily.

The 'disappearances' that were staged, made interesting use of both dancers and sets. A rope to pull La Sylphide up the chimney and a false back to a chair (so that when covered by a blanket, she could 'vanish'), caught most of the audience by surprise but was very satisfying and well-done.

The second ballet performed Monday evening was *Kettentanz*, a

The most effective and best performed dance of the entire sequence was *Phallos Fable*. This symbolic study of domination was performed by Ellen Freidl and John Kaminski in what has been termed erotic ballet. Occasionally the dancing was stiff and choppy but was more often flowing and easily interpreted.

Its symbolism, however, was the dance's best ingredient. The evolution of a two-foot long stick from an object of curiosity, to a toy, to a club and up the successive levels of weapons was expressed exceptionally well. The central theme of the dance concerns its use as an instrument of power whose strength is finally rendered impotent.

One of the best dance sequences appeared during the first quarter of the show. Though this portion of the performance was quite poorly done, the dance called *Capriccio* was excellent. Danced by Anne Stevenson and John Kaminski, it was lively and invigorating. Precision and perfect timing only added to its quality.

The one standard classical sequence in the show, *Grand Pas de Deux*, was relaxing and pleasant, but by no means extraordinary.

Many dance numbers were not as good as they might have been, had a larger stage been at the company's disposal. The auditorium of Victoria Composite High School restricted both their dancing and their utilization of subject matter. As the performance lengthened it became obvious that the fewer the number of people on stage, the better the dancing was. Some of this poor synchronization was probably due to the fact that a large part of the cast were sick with the flu that day.

All in all the performance was an enjoyable experience, and leaves one with an optimistic outlook for the future. The Alberta Ballet Company has a great potential for growth and development in the years to come.

Eve Rose

Come as you go with Lionel

Lionel Kearns plays with words. He uses them, manipulates them, twists and bends them, for he says, "Poetry is always an experiment to create new effect with language."

Canadian poet Kearns read samples of his work at his appearance in the Humanities Center last Monday, selected from his five publications and from poetry he had composed that very day. A sparse crowd attended this special events presentation, but those who did heard from a very entertaining and imaginative poet.

Kearns divides poetry into two categories: public and private. Public poems are "made to create an effect on the first hearing" and private poems are "poems that are more dense, poems that don't make sense when you first hear them."

"Ideally," he says, "poetry should have enough layers so that they can make an impact on the first reading and still have something when one comes back and reads again. A good poem is one that lasts that isn't depleted on one reading."

On poetry, Kearns writes:

*It is a process of struggle with sense
and it is heroic
and we are all heroes.
that is poetry,
and has nothing to do
with fame or applause or approval*

Both serious and silly aspects can be seen in Lionel Kearns' writing. On the one hand, his poetry concerns humanistic group and racial relationships and political struggles. The fun aspect of his writing is seen in his book entitled "by the LIGHT of the SILVER mcLUNE", which he describes as a collection of media parable poems, signs, gestures, and other assaults on the interface.

The poem which received the best response at the reading was one about a hustler called Charlie who buys a car, installs his girlfriend in the back seat, and sells his services to friends for three dollars a shot. His idea catches on so he buys a hearse, then a whole line of hearses and advertises them "where hearses" supplying "lay the way" where you can "come you go."

Charlie eventually sells out and turns to politics.

Mr. Kearns' other books are entitled *Songs of Circumstances*, *Listen George*, *Pointing*, and his latest (which is out of print), *Abolish Time*.

Judging from the samples read last Monday, any of his publications can be depended on to supply both witty, imaginative poems, and more serious 'private' compositions. Either way, you are assured of finding something that you like.

Kim St. Clair