

ENTERTAINMENT

Fusing modern dance, ballet

Montreal troupe's jests light up audience

By AGNES KRUCHIO

A six-legged millipede announced their arrival; the animal wore a bright and funny smile in a bright and funny outfit in a bright and funny poster. Its near beatific expression bore a curious resemblance to the expression of many of the members of a bright and funny Montreal dance company here Monday night, EntreSix.

Many of the seven member of the company are graduates of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and Ballet Jazz, and they combined the techniques of both ballet and modern dance, an interesting combination at the very least.

With Entre-Six, it leads to such zany developments as a ballerina on pointe breaking out in a near-burlesque manoeuvre: passing between two men, a young woman on pointe finds a pair of opposing insistent hands creeping up and down her torso. Although the sketch in its entirety is not much more than a juxtaposition of these two visions, to those of us weaned on the lyricism of the National Ballet, their antics can only be unexpectedly and openly funny.

There are many instances in the work of choreographer Lawrence Gradus when he chooses to present a totally innovative approach, with fresh interesting motions. In their last piece, Toccata, for example, the company combined balletic and acrobatic movements, interspersed with some others that

defy categorization. The result was an entirely inventive series of movements which, as the programme notes insisted, had as its sole point the "exploitation of contemporary action". As evidenced by this piece, choreographer Gradus's strongest point is the creation of unexpected linkages between movements, and the creation of new patterns of motion. Unpredictability and unexpected changes in direction and mood were piled on until the unpredictability in itself becomes humorous. Unexpected permutations and combinations made Toccata the company's most rewarding offering.

But while creating new lines of motion is Gradus's strong point, creating a dramatic situation with dramatic tension certainly is not. Emergence was a piece that had the most dramatic potential; a young girl's growing sexual awareness and the incest taboo was to have been the subject of exploration. But while Shelley Osher's little girl had much warmth and poignance especially in moments of tender affection with her father, there was little evolution in her character. As for the parent-figures, they appeared more as two dimensional cardboard representations of what parents supposedly are about vest, tie and newspaper for father, a forbidding dark purple dress for mother gave the impression of



watching an illustrated parable of the overstylized parents vying for the affection of their daughter.

In a moment that was anything but surreal, Francois Beaulieu in a wild-man-cum-fear-phantom representation (the fear of incest? the fear of being devoured?) appeared and proceeded to matter of factly salt-and-pepper the heroine, before going after her with a fork and spoon. His antics not only failed to intimidate, as it behooves good phantoms, but his robustly good-humoured motions, his matter-of-factness in his absurd chore more than brought the house down.

Vladivostok is a short but striking piece of choreography that is the brainchild of Andrea Smith, a York dance graduate who had gone

on to dance with the Louis Falco company. This piece could as easily be entitled Swish, since that was the sole sound accompanying the competitions of two bullies working in different and often opposing directions. Beaulieu and Pierre Lemay put an extra oomph into the straight lines which built nearly visible choreographical structures in front of our eyes.

In many instances, however, Gradus's choreography was underdeveloped. I became very frustrated early in the programme when after a painfully embarrassing start in Vivance (which seemed to strain the competence of the dancers on some basic technique), in a piece called Sketches one good idea was thrown away after

another. With a little more thought and deliberation, the number of these sketches could have well been reduced but the lines and ideas would have become much more clearly pronounced. This way many did not even have a chance to be seen and grasped before they were washed away by the next one and the next one after that.

The other idea that had been pretty well thrown away was that of a programme, which could have been entitled "guess the dancer-composer-piece, even". The concluding performance of the Performing Arts Series at Burton auditorium ended on a satiric note not in the director's notebook, but funny though frustrating nevertheless.

30s comedienne Lombard makes one-night return

The real Carole Lombard will stand up and screwball comedy will 'ride again' next Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. in Curtis Lecture Hall L when the Wednesday Free Film Series presents the beloved madcap comedienne of the 1930s in her two best-known roles in the

Secretaries enjoy horror stories

Operation Finger Pinky is coming to York. It's a catchy title for a play based on the experiences of secretaries who work in the various departments here at York. The play, which is being presented by Theatre Passe Muraille, has been described as a recreation of the 'astounding world of the office live on stage'.

Showing proper respect to its content, all basses (with I.D.) will be admitted to the performance for free, when accompanied by a secretary. Otherwise, all tickets are on sale for \$2.50 at the York Women's Centre at Atkinson, and at the door.

It will be shown Tuesday, March 16 at 8:30 p.m. in Burton Auditorium. A discussion will follow the performance.

Lord reveals design trends

Bill Lord, designer of the sets of the Canadian Opera Company and assistant professor in York's theatre department, will discuss Theatre Decor, with illustrations of the sets he has designed for Canadian opera company for La Boheme, Carmen and Fledermaus among others next Monday night at 8 p.m. in the Stong SCR. His discussion will include historical background and comments on what some European set designers are doing currently.

original versions of My Man Godfrey and Nothing Sacred.

Between them the two films define the style and territory of screwball comedy, a form of satirical comedy of manners which flourished in the 1930s under Directors like Frank Capra and Howard Hawks; writers like Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur and such breezy and charming performers as Katherine Hepburn, Irene Dunne Myrna Loy, Jean Arthur, Cary Grant, Melvyn Douglas, and Fred McMurray.

Among such illustrious company, two acknowledge masters of screwball comedy were Carole Lombard and William Powell who play the leads in My Man Godfrey (1936). This crazy but witty sophisticated comedy of the nouveau riche, superbly cast and brilliantly directed by Gregory LaCasa, Godfrey was the first and still one of the few films ever nominated for Oscars in all four acting categories of Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actor and Best Supporting Actress.

Nothing Sacred (1937) whose very title expresses the motto of the genre, is Hecht and MacArthur's classical black farce of the 30's in which Lombard is seen as Hazel Flagg, a small town girl apparently dying of a rare disease who is promoted into an international heroine by cynical reporter Frederick March. Produced by David O. Selznick and directed by William Wallman, this film was photographed in the early 3-colour technicolour process, and was Lombard's only film in colour.

The Wednesday Free Film Showings is open to everyone in the York Community, presented by the Department of Film, Faculty of Fine Arts with funding assistance from co-curricular budget, Stong and Bethune Colleges and the CYSF.



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