



Lar Lubovitch Dance Company at The Kennedy Center by Breena Siegel

Posted on [November 30, 2012](#) by [Breena Siegel](#)



Lar Lubovitch displays his work of artful dance at the Kennedy Center for two nights only. He is amongst the brilliant choreographers on the contemporary dance lineup for the 2012 – 2013 season. Lar's work is bright, alive and distinguished. His choreography teeters between modern and contemporary dance to abstract movement and performance art. But, it is also in essence, very much about dance as an age-old art form. The pieces evoke folk and social dancing. Each one intimately draws a connection with the accompanying music, which for most of the pieces plays loudly for a minute before the curtain rises.

Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, based in New York, has been creating dance since the late 1960s. Lar has created more than one hundred dances over the last fifty years. This year, he presents four pieces including *The Legend of Ten*, *Little Rhapsodies*, *Crisis Variations*, and *Transparent Things*.

The Legend of Ten (2010) is a dance of ten dancers stepping into the role of cartographers. You may only know this in having read background about the dance otherwise it isn't obvious on stage. The movement itself is wavy and fluid. It is very much about discovering in the moment. The power packed and emotional current of Johannes Brahms' *Quintet for Piano, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello in F Minor, Op 34* strongly supported the piece. The dancers themselves, dressed in black with mesh-like tops are bold and elegant. With this opening piece we begin to get a taste for Lar's movement voice, which is a beautifully deep understanding for both classical and contemporary dance.



Lar Lubovitch's 'Little Rhapsodies.' Photo by Nan Melville.

Next comes *Little Rhapsodies*, a joyous swirl from a triplet of male dancers. Again, the music — Robert Schumann’s *Symphonic Etudes, Op 13* — is so poignantly connected to the dance. This is certainly a signature of Lar’s work. This piece is inviting and playful. We experience an impressive force in each of the men’s movement that Lar later discussed in the post-show talk back as offering a distinctive weight and gravitas.

The third piece *Crisis Variations* takes a sharp turn away from the fluidity of the first two works. Complex and layered, this piece is challenging to follow. It is meant to inspire a sense of crisis. Lar himself wanted the dancers to experience this and thrust them into frenzy when he changed the music to Franz Liszt’s *Transcendental Etudes* one week prior to the premiere. The dancers were forced into a foreign world that they had to adjust to quickly. Dancers Katarzyna Skarpetowska and Brian McGinnis pair off from the remaining dancers in this piece and display a fuzzy, tangled dynamic on stage.

The final piece *Transparent Things* returns to the familiar purity and innocence of the first two works. This is Lar’s most recent piece. It is based on the Pablo Picasso painting “Family of Saltimbanques,” that depicts a world of street performers and entertainers. Lar is drawing a connection between the life of saltimbanques and the life of the dancers on stage: one that is fleeting and loosely held together. Here we witness Lar’s background as a visual artist and painter tied distinctly to movement. Each dancer on stage is dressed to ignite a character from the painting.

Transparent Things is a lovely offering to the life of traveling artists. This piece is lively and animated. The additional live quartet on stage adds more of a performance art structure and less a dance alone. **The Bryant Park Quartet** performs Debussy’s *String Quartet in G Minor, Op 10*.

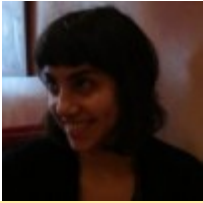


“Transparent Things.” Photo by Rose Eichenbaum.

The dancers take on characters with individual histories and emotional weight. At one point the dancers charmingly sneak around the musicians and watch them longingly. It’s a beautifully choreographed moment that unifies the “Family of Saltimbanques.”

Running Time: Approximately two hours, including two intermissions and one pause.

Lar Lubovitch Dance Company dances through tonight at The Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater – 2700 F Street, NW, in Washington, DC. For tickets, call the box office at (202) 467-4600 or (800) 444-1324, or purchase them [online](#).



ABOUT AUTHOR BREENA SIEGEL

Breena Siegel is a local arts writer, arts supporter and festival administrator. She has worked for local films festivals, the Washington Jewish Film Festival and Silverdocs International Documentary Festival. She also also traveled south and worked in the press office for America's premier performing-arts festival, Spoleto Festival USA. She is constantly eating up local art, dance and culture to then deliver the experience in writing to you.

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