

[about us](#)

[media library](#)

[eye on dance](#)

[eye on the arts](#)

[cultural calendar](#)

[current activities](#)

[get involved](#)

[feedback](#)

[links](#)



Performing Arts: Dance

LAR LUBOVITCH DANCE COMPANY

April 25, 2018

Lar Lubovitch is primarily discussed in terms of his keen musical sensibility as well as the smoothed out classical movement he effortlessly spins to his selections. Program B of Lar Lubovitch Dance Company's 50 th Anniversary season at the Joyce demonstrated these conventions speaking to a larger concern – the redemption of masculinity.

The two couplings of the four pieces each began showing, contrary to our current moment, how a man could both be and be seen, subsequently paired with a work with a more troubled air. Little Rhapsodies features Jonathan Alsberry, Reed Luplau, and Benjamin Wardell in a piece simply about taking turns. Schumann's Symphonic Etudes even gets to take space, preceding the curtain's opening on the three, standing in silhouette.

They see each other and then dance together, weaving through and holding each other in a purely platonic manner – a challenge for many men, sexuality notwithstanding. This segues into a rotation of solos, the spatial cooperation of which feels subversive in its politeness. As their percussive footwork unearths folksy roots in Schumann's signature off-kilter style, their playfulness exposes the childlike in grown-up bodies.

The subsequent collection of scenes from Act III of Lubovitch's Othello is a jarring aesthetic jump, replacing Rhapsodies' airy ballet-ish movement to recognizable classical music with pointe shoes, a commissioned score, and period costumes. It is in these scenes we see Othello's jealousy taking over him, as manipulated by Iago (Temur Suluashvili), who goes about his false accusations of Desdemona's adultery via a rather erotic duet with Fabrice Calmels. Cassio (Rory Hohenstein) is already falsely in chains, and we end with Othello's ill-advised murder of Desdemona. The programmatic placement emboldens what Rhapsodies works to amend – entitlement-induced possessiveness and territoriality.

Lubovitch's newest work, Something About Night returns us to

a utopian environment, scored by Schubert's heart-achingly tender Songs for Male Chorus. The cast, however, includes Nicole Corea and Belinda McGuire, amid three additional men, equally engaged in suspended flow. If Rhapsodies shows a man's arm around a man's shoulder as nonsexual, Something About Night renders sexuality irrelevant to sensuality in its crafting of tableaux, whirling, intimate, and architecturally sound.

Again, we shift from pleasantries to turmoil with Men's Stories. While the title sets up a first-time viewer to expect danced mansplaining, the subtitle "A Concerto in Ruin," hints at the dissolution to come. Harmless displays of fraternity begin via virtuosic sequences and cheeky pantomimed machismo activities in sleek black suits by Ann Hould-Ward, placing the cast of nine anywhere from CEOs to showmen to military officials. Once we hear a voiceover of a vintage "birds and the bees" talk from father to son, we begin to see their command confined, emblematic of the harm patriarchy does towards its beneficiaries when it prescribes unregulated success seeking as manhood.

EYE ON THE ARTS, NY -- Jonathan Matthews

<http://www.eyeondance.org/arts/archives.cfm?category=5FA605C9-5555-46DF-992EB5F4AEACF582>