

NEW YORK POST

© 1984 News Group Publications Inc. Vol. 184, No. 151

NEW YORK POST, TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1985

Dance fever sweeps NYC right off its feet

By CLIVE BARNES

WHAT a season this is for dance! Last week — for the first time I fancy — we had five important dance companies competing for the city's favor, and drawing mammoth audiences.

This week — counting David Gordon's Pick Up Dance Company opening tonight at the Joyce Theater — we only have three, but in addition to these major troupes there are no fewer than 45 separate dance concerts taking place between now and Sunday.

The two big guns are, of course, New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theater (two of that charmed handful of great classic dance companies) playing opposite one another at Lincoln Center.

Ballet Theater at the Metropolitan Opera House, offered the New York premiere of Fernando Bujones' first ballet, a classical divertissement called, unpretentiously enough, *Grand pas Romantique*. The work proved as unpretentious as its title. Danced to 19th-century music by Adolphe Adam — best-

known as the composer of *Giselle* — this is essentially a dancers' ballet by a dancer for dancers.

Not unnaturally, in his first work, Bujones has exploited, very nimbly, his own vast command of the classic vocabulary, and although the choreography is not unduly original — a strange and unrepeatable jump for his leading male causes surprise — and its organic symmetry too obvious, it has a cardinal virtue in its fluency.

It was also happily, even exultantly, well danced by a cast led by Marianna Tcherkassky and Danilo Radojevic, with Gil Boggs and John Gardner in a tricky duet.

The program was also notable for the revival of Merce Cunningham's *Duets* (strange isn't it, that the company's soloist ensemble dance this and Paul Taylor's *Airs* as well as anything in its repertory) and the restoration of Antony Tudor's *The Leaves Are Fading*.

This exquisite work of springtime fancy and autumnal regret is now beautifully danced by the company, in which

Amanda McKerrow and Kevin McKenzie were rhapsodically outstanding.

Across the Plaza, New York City Ballet at the State Theater has re-introduced Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* into the repertory, and it is looking magnificent.

Today the emphasis is on comedy rather than romance, with Gen Horiuchi as a particularly comic little Oberon, Maria Calegari as a super-couth Titania, Jean-Pierre Frohlich a bouncily assertive Puck, and a quartet of delightfully muddled lovers in Stephanie Saland, Judith Fugate, Daniel Duell and Peter Frame.

Also at City Ballet I caught an archly romantic Heather Watts and an appropriately doom-struck Victor Castelli, new to *La Valse* and, at another performance, Valentina Kozlova and Leonid Kozlov as newcomers in *Firebird*.

Both were terrific, Kozlova giving a smooth, regal flash to the *Firebird*, and Kozlov, superbly Russian — as one might have expected — as the innocent, clumsily

entranced, Prince Ivan.

Three companies finished their New York seasons over the weekend, the Pennsylvania Ballet, the Feld Ballet and the Lar Lubovitch Company.

My last visit to the Feld — ending up a most successful six-week engagement — was to see his lovely and moving *Summer's Lease*, to Mahler music and the lonely poetry of war and loss, intensely performed by a cast led by the beautiful Megan Murphy and Michael Schumacher.

The Lubovitch troupe received short shrift in these pages, indeed no shriving at all. But Lubovitch's one world premiere *A Brahms Symphony* (to the first three movements of Brahms's *Third*, proved a powerful exposition of symphonic choreography, full of energy, pulse and invention.

Probably the best thing I have ever seen from Lubovitch, both in its scope and power, it was handsomely danced with a cast led by Nancy Colahan, Rob Besserer, Douglas Varone and Christine Wright.