

Lubovitch performances made as 'dance for our time'



Lar Lubovitch Dance Company performs at the Chicago Dancing Festival Opening Gala. Photo by Todd Rosenberg Photography

About Mark Kanny

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• [Tribune-Review](#) **TRIBUNE-REVIEW**

By [Mark Kanny](#)

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Pittsburgh Dance Council searches for adventuresome artistry. Sometimes, the result is a relatively new group just making its mark.

But Dance Council also presents iconic figures that we anticipate with eagerness, such as Lar Lubovitch. Noted for his sensitivity, musicality and humanity, Lubovitch was declared by the New York Times to be "one of the 10 best choreographers in the world."

The Lar Lubovitch Dance Company will perform Saturday at the Byham Theater, Downtown, to conclude the Dance Council's 2011-12 season.

The program is "North Star" (1978), performed to a Philip Glass score; "Little Rhapsodies" (2007), piano etudes by Robert Schumann; Crisis Variations (2011), a score commissioned from Yevgeniy Sharlat; and "The Legend of 10" (2010), Johannes Brahms' piano quintet.

Lubovitch formed his company in 1968 in New York City. He says there's always a body of work that's active and that repertoire for touring is chosen for balanced programs and in some cases to satisfy the requests of sponsors.

"North Star," which he says is frequently requested, is a celebratory piece with a great sense of community and also relates to astrological bodies swirling together. "Together, it has kind of not totally abstract but pictorial version of things united in the sky."

It is a signature piece that has retained its freshness. "It remains pertinent on some level, just like a painting you revisit in a museum," he says. "Every time you go to the museum, you know you choose to pass a particular painting, probably because it retains a certain mystery. 'North Star' is a piece that seems to want to be visited this many years after its creation. I've become its caretaker rather than creator. I've not revised it at all. Not a step."

His newest work is "Crisis Variations," and expresses his feeling that "we exist with a vague sense of panic underlying our daily lives that either rises or subsides at various moments but never goes away. If given full license to be totally unleashed, this dance 'Crisis' is what the world would look like. Dance for our time."

Lubovitch emphasizes that he is devoid of political leanings, that he is an observer of the human condition and his work is a comment on that.

"I remember times when existence wasn't resting on this underlying sea of panic that seems to be the operation position of being human today," he says. "In the '50s, '60s, '40s even, maybe early into the '70s, there was an undercurrent of hope and possibility which doesn't feel prevalent any longer. An underlying current of hope has a very different existential sensation than the current underlying sense of panic. Perhaps I'm speaking to my own inner life."

Lubovitch, 69, is not attracted to retirement because to him it sounds like waiting to die.

"I have a still-unquenchable desire to create. I don't know where it comes from," he admits. "It could go away, but hasn't. Whether a blessing or curse, it only gets harder, but it is a compulsion and it does go on."

LAR LUBOVICH DANCE COMPANY

When: 8 p.m. Saturday

Admission: \$19-45

Where: Byham Theater, Downtown

Details: 412-456-6666 or www.trustarts.org

Read more: [Lubovitch performances made as 'dance for our time' | TribLIVE | Pittsburgh](http://triblive.com/news/recentnews/1131297-74/dance-lubovitch-says-underlying-company-council-crisis-lar-north-panic#ixzz1tHQhyJ00)
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