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DANCE REVIEW

Individual Links in a Rolling Chain



Chang W. Lee/The New York Times

Lar Lubovitch Dance Company presented the premiere of “Crisis Variations” in a program at the Baryshnikov Arts Center.

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It must be a pleasure to dance the choreography of Lar Lubovitch. To yield appropriately to beautiful music, secure in the hands of a master craftsman...



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Katarzyna Skarpetowska and Brian McGinnis in “Crisis Variations.”

This won't be surprising for anyone familiar with Mr. Lubovitch, who has been doing what he does for more than 40 years. But the particularly strong dancers who pass through his troupe shed light on his habitual assets..

On Thursday the central couple in “The Legend of Ten,” a 2010 work to a Brahms piano quintet, included the lovely Elisa Clark, just over from the Mark Morris company. Ms. Clark gave definition to the dance's most arresting moment, the opening of the second section, when Reid Bartelme slides himself — and Ms. Clark, strangely wrapped around him — along the floor...

The principal couple of “Dvorak Serenade” (2007) includes Clifton Brown, until recently a star with Alvin Ailey. His duet with Leigh Lijoi is a composition of arches, dovetailing wings and encircling arms that link like jewelry. Mr. Brown’s outsize, Ailey-style projection, not to mention his majestic wingspan, give these designs an exciting amplitude...

“Crisis Variations,” the season’s premiere, benefits from live music, excellently played by Le Train Bleu. Though Yevgeniy Sharlat’s score has an antic quality that might suggest silent comedy, the duet around which Mr. Lubovitch constructs his dance is floppy but not funny.

Brian McGinnis drags and tosses Katarzyna Skarpetowska all over, as her movement slurs like drunken speech; they could be co-dependent addicts. Collapsed upon each other, they recall Ms. Clark and Mr. Bartelme in “The Legend of Ten”...expanding upon the mysterious potential of the earlier duet...

The alternating group sections in “Crisis Variations” are rougher and more interesting than those of the other works: floorbound dancers are towed under by the rolling of other floorbound dancers. At the last second, Ms. Skarpetowska, leaning on the prostrate Mr. McGinnis, is swallowed by the clump of people behind her. The individual engulfed by the group is a recurrent image for this choreographer...

Lar Lubovitch Dance Company continues through Nov. 20 at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, 450 West 37th Street, Manhattan; (212) 868-4444, smartix.com.

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