

VARIETY

Dance Review

Fri., April 25, 1986

Lar Lubovitch

(Royce Hall, UCLA;
1872 seats; \$22 top)

Lar Lubovitch is arguably the most consistently exciting choreographer of his generation, and his work is rarely if ever disappointing.

The three pieces presented by his company at UCLA's Royce Hall were certainly not exceptions.

The west coast debut of his latest creation, "Concerto Six Twenty-Two," was received with rapturous applause by a nearly full house the night caught and another fine example of his current inspiration. "A Brahms Symphony" also evoked enthusiastic response.

The unique quality of this artist's work, the seemingly limitless flow of his invention, the brilliant correspondence of movement to music and the clarity with which his ideas are transmitted qualify him as a national treasure.

"Concerto Six Twenty-Two," a visual evocation of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto K. 622, combines the formality of the classical concerto with the composer's delightful sense of humor and tender expressivity.

In radiant white shirts and trousers and simple dresses with just a hint of pale color occasionally revealed in the girls' underskirts, the company appears in circular and linear formations, arms carving out similar patterns in the air.

Then suddenly a flexed foot, a strangely hunched back, funny little fluttery steps and unexpected dives are injected, creating an air of fun and general hijinks. A duet for two men, danced with exquisite poignancy by Edward Hillyer and Sylvain Lafortune to the Adagio, is among the most beautiful and mov-

ing pieces of choreography in the repertoire.

In movement of quiet elegance and perfectly balanced lifts and leanings, they portray a friendship that is watchful and caring, supportive and accepting. The final section is a brilliantly devised series of variations, again combining formal patterns with high spirits to the apparent delight of dancers as well as audience.

The program's second work, "Big Shoulders," was seen locally during the Olympic Arts Festival, with its clever set pieces intact. Apparently, touring doesn't permit all the extras, but the piece, intended to evoke the character of Chicago's architecture, inhabitants and lifestyle, stands up very well without them.

Clad in leotards in a rainbow of rich, slightly dulled colors, the dancers move through a series of held poses and constructions to a soundscape of construction noises that is silenced for only a brief section toward the end.

There is an architectural angularity and a quality of energetic productivity in the movement of this piece, which seems to catch the essential character of this windswept Midwestern metropolis.

"A Brahms Symphony," set to the starkly dramatic music of the first three movements of Brahms' third symphony, showed yet another

facet of Lubovitch's fertile imagination. All but the four soloists were dressed in black, with the girls in long, Martha Graham-type skirts, and the stage bathed in a somber, somehow brooding semi-darkness.

The brilliant purple, red, green and blue of the soloists' costumes injected flashes of color into this rich gloom, and a seething drama unfolded in the dancers' swirling figures and reaching arms.

Powerful solos by Peggy Baker, Sylvain Lafortune, Douglas Varone and Christine Wright both heightened and lightened the scenario, accentuating the tragic sweep of the dance by contrasting with it.

Craig Miller's lighting did much to enhance visual and emotional impact throughout the evening, perhaps most noticeably in the "Concerto's" midnight blue backdrop and the wonderful brownish puce color that provided a background for "Big Shoulders." Pepp.