

Oberon's Grove

Thursday, January 30, 2013

by Philip Gardner

Dance From The Heart 2013



Above: Kile Hotchkiss and John Eirich of **TAKE Dance** rehearsing the men's quartet from Take's **SALARYMAN**, the closing number on this evening's **DANCE FROM THE HEART** program at Cedar Lake Theater. Photo by Kokyat.

Tuesday January 29, 2013 - This cloudy, drizzly day was a bright and dance-filled day for me, starting with a visit to Luca Veggetti's rehearsal at the Martha Graham studio where Luca and five Graham beauties were polishing up his new creation which will be shown at the upcoming Graham season at The Joyce. Then a brisk walk up to 26th Street to Cedar Lake for the annual **Dancers Responding to AIDS** gala.

The evening offered a nice diversity of dance styles, opening with an impressive tap solo by Ayodele Casel. Its title, **ACID**, seemed to herald an edgy and ominous piece yet it was anything but: the dancer was lovely and her dancing was lyrical, with delicate nuances in her tap technique.

Christina Noel Reaves and Lonnie Poupard in tanga orange costumes used the space beautifully in a Jody Oberfelder duet **THROB** in which the dancers are called upon for bold physicality, momentarily pausing from time to time in geometric constructions. The duet was well-sustained by Andy Akiho's score, and the dancers were excellent.

A shift in programme order produced a slight glitch when the 'wrong' music started to play, but the tall and stately Julia Burrer of Doug Varone's troupe simply held her pose and her composure until things were set to rights. The excerpt from Varone's **TUGGING UNDER** was darkly entrancing: beautifully restless quality of movement with passing punctuations of stillness. A Julia Wolfe score set the dancers on their speedy trajectories with partnering motifs worked into the flow. Aside from Ms. Burrer, the dancers were Erin Owen, Hollis Bartlett, Alex Springer and Eddie Takata: a very handsome ensemble.

Mark Dendy's opening solo to Peggy Lee's "My Analyst Told Me" was witty and wonderful; but then there was a lull with too much talking and a bagpiper...until a ravishing goddess, Catherine Miller, rose spot-lit in the audience and took the stage for a shadowdance as Ms. Lee's sultry voice intoned "Me And My Shadow". Clinging to the brick wall, Ms. Miller looked sensational.

In gorgeously fitted quasi-Baroque Santo Loquasto costumes, two of the dance world's most marvelous creatures - Michelle Fleet and Michael Trusnovic - appeared to dance the courtly duet from Paul Taylor's Bach ballet **CASCADE**. Heavenly bodies? Look no further than these two superb dancers. They moved with measured elegance yet an undercurrent of sensuality is ever-present. A delicious appetizer to the upcoming Taylor season at Lincoln Center.

Tom Gold's **SOME KIND OF ROMANCE** takes wing on the lilting music of the Vitamin String Quartet. Stylish, witty and rooted in the vocabulary of classical ballet (the girls are on pointe) the fast-paced choreography has a touch of contemporary spice here and there, and the three sexy boys look enticing in their sparkly silver briefs. Tom culled his ensemble of young dancers from **Pennsylvania Ballet** (Abigail Mentzer - who also designed the costumes - Alexander Peters and Amir Yogev) and **Miami City Ballet** (Zoe Zien and Ezra Hurwitz). Last week I'd seen a rehearsal of this work, at which Tom told me he plans to expand on the current structure; we should be seeing the finished creation during his New York season.

The evening came to a fittingly exciting climax as the beautiful boys from **TAKE Dance** set the stage afire in Take's murderously demanding male quartet from **SALARYMAN**. To the relentless driving percussive throb of "Soul's Ville" by AUN, the guys (in suits and ties) stunningly fling themselves around the space, crashing into one another, leaping and swirling in competitive combinations and improbably off-kilter phrases, hitting the floor only to rise again and literally climb the walls. A momentary pause for a battery-charge and they are off again in this mad and magnificent masterwork for men dancers.

The boys - John Eirich, Kile Hotchkiss, Brynt Beitman and Jeffrey Sykes - bought down the house with their remarkable performance. In a brief respite, Take's girls - Kristen Arnold, Gina Ianni, Marie Zvosec and Lynda Senisi - appear as coat-check girls and divest the boys of their jackets. Then the wildness continues. Great finale for an evening of dance.