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Pandemonium Dance Circus

Curtis Carter

Marquette University, curtis.carter@marquette.edu

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April 30-May 1, 1977

The Pandemonium Dance Circus of Milwaukee is notably strengthened by the assistance of guest artist Rika Burnham of New York and the addition of dancer Andrea Tecza of the UW-Milwaukee Dance Department. Their spring concert at UWM's Engelmann Hall, April 30-May 1, included new works of Burnham and Sheila Kaminsky and some repeat works by Betty Salamun, company director, and by Renaldo Alejandro.

DANCE DIMENSIONS

Burnham's "Randy's Turn" received its first performance at this concert, by dancers Burnham, Tecza, and Barbara Traugott. Burnham's interest in museum settings for choreography is reflected in this work. A large sculpture in the form of a circle with long rods extending from it is a major element in the dance. Dancers move in relation to the sculpture which is rotated from its base, along its vertical axis. The movement of the dancers is slow and carefully phrased, possible reflecting influences of choreographer Viola Farber. Verbal narration by sculptor Randy Williams and music of Oregon Guitars completes the setting for this work.

The company gave one of its best performances I have seen to date in Kaminsky's "Fadeout". The much-needed reinforcement of the company by Burnham and Tecza enhanced the improved form of company members, and showed significant potential for providing professional quality modern dance performances by the Pandemonium Dance Circus. (A major complaint that I have had with previous performances by this group is unsatisfactory quality of dancing.) "Fadeout" is an abstract modern piece which combines influences of Farber and choreographer Alwin Nikolais.

A matched pair of solo dances, Kaminsky's "Untitled Solo" and Salamun's "Lacquered Nests", brought an Oriental mood to the concert. Burnham's dancing in "Untitled Solo" evoked the appropriate mood with finely controlled rotations of the arms and a well-defined sculptural profile. These movements and shapes complement the slow and deliberate movement of Tecza in "Lacquered Nests" to fulfill the suggestions of an Oriental motif.

Performances of Salamun's "Snafu", "Tako", and Alejandro's "Josephine Bracken" completed the program. "Snafu" has improved with repetition, but Salamun's performance of "Josephine Bracken" seemed rushed.

--Curtis L. Carter