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## DANCE

A FEW weeks ago, down in Greenwich Village, we stopped by one of the sound stages in the Industria Superstudio, near the Hudson River. We'd been alerted that Merce Cunningham, filmmaker Elliot Caplan, and the Cunningham Company were there, shooting one of Mr. Cunningham's new works, "Beach Birds." When we arrived, we saw many people doing many different jobs, but there was no sense of rush or bustle; the atmosphere was sharply focussed yet calm. We slipped into a director's chair, next to David Vaughan, the archivist for the Cunningham Company, and started to look around. Two walls of the huge room had windows facing the river, and for a moment we were mesmerized by the soft gray waters and the luminous afternoon sky. Then we studied the dancers—lean, handsome people with intently alert faces. Nine or ten of them were in the middle of the room on a large wooden stage. They were in costume: leotards and tights with boldly marked areas of inky black and foaming white. The long sleeves of the leotards, part of the black zone, extended into gloves. Never had these dancers' hands looked so creaturely. "Beach birds . . . seagulls," we murmured. Mr. Vaughan smiled and said, "The costumes were actually designed quite separately, by Marsha Skinner, an artist from New Mexico. She came to New York, sketched people in class, then went home and worked on her own."

We thought about this while a gaffer sprayed white smoke thickly around the stage, the assistant director said "places," and the cameras rolled. Amid the artificial fog, the black-and-white figures seemed unmoored. The more precise their gestures and poses, the more unearthly they became. Then we had a wild thought: suppose you didn't know that Mr. Cunningham's process of composition relied on chance procedures, or that he and his collaborators worked independently of one another. Suppose all the resonances among dancing, sound, and design that one takes as isolated coincidences within a given dance could be counted on somehow to flow together into a larger organic meaning. Suppose there were more to coincidence in the universe than mere chance.

At that moment, Mr. Vaughan's voice gently broke in on our train of thought. "There is an epigraph to 'Beach Birds,'" he said. "It goes, 'Between the river and the ocean, Beach Birds.'"

**MERCE CUNNINGHAM DANCE COMPANY**—In a two-week engagement that will run through March 29. March 17 at 7:30: "Neighbors," "Beach Birds" (New York premiere), and "Trackers." . . . March 18 at 8: "Exchange," "Native Green," and "Loosestrife" (New York premiere). . . . March 19 at 8: "Neighbors," "Channels/Inserts," and "Loosestrife." . . . March 20 at 8: "August Pace," "Beach Birds," and "Trackers." . . . March 21 at 2: "Neighbors," "Inventions," and "August Pace." . . . March 21 at 8: "Inventions," "Channels/Inserts," and "Loosestrife." . . . March 22 at 3: "Exchange," "Beach Birds,"

and "August Pace." . . . March 24 at 8: "Inventions," "Change of Address" (New York premiere), and "Trackers." . . . March 25 at 8: "Channels/Inserts," "Change of Address," and "Loosestrife." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

**FELD BALLETS/NY**—Final performances of the engagement. March 17 at 8: "Love Song Waltzes," "Savage Glimpse," and "Wolfgang Strategies." . . . March 18 at 8: "Ion," "Evoe," "Love Song Waltzes," and "Wolfgang Strategies." . . . March 19 at 8: "Contra Pose," "Skara Brae," and "Wolfgang Strategies." . . . March 20 at 8: "Ah Scarlatti," "Clave," "To the Naked Eye," and "Endsong." . . . March 21 at 8: "Clave," "To the Naked Eye," "Love Song Waltzes," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . March 22 at 2: "Contra Pose," "Ion," "Charmed Lives," and "Skara Brae." . . . March 22 at 7:30: "Hello Fancy" (performed by students from the New Ballet School), "Clave," "Evoe," "Endsong," and "Wolfgang Strategies." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

**KEITH GLASSMAN**—With five other dancers in "Backfield," a new, evening-length work. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. March 19-20 at 8:30. Tickets at the door on the evenings of the performances.)

**PEGGY SPINA TAP COMPANY**—A premiere, as well as twelve works from the repertoire, with musical accompaniment from the Joel Forrester quartet. (Spina Loft, 115 Prince St. March 21-22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 674-8885.)

**MUNA TSENG AND PHILL NIBLOCK**—The choreographer and the composer present a new collaboration. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. March 19-22 at 8:30. Tickets at the door on the evenings of the performances.)

**CARLOTA SANTANA SPANISH DANCE COMPANY**—A twelve-member troupe in the opening performances of a one-week engagement that will run through March 29. The program consists of "El Encuentro de Dos Mundos" (premiere), "Quebrantos" (a solo work), "Las Raíces de Almería," and "Tablao Flamenco." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. March 24-25 at 8.)

## NIGHT LIFE

FRED is a friend of a friend, and, over the past couple of years, we've dropped by various Irish bars to hear him play trombone. We saw him twice at the Nancy Whiskey Pub, where he romped through several sweaty hours with the Rumprollers, whose signature song is "Let's Rump the Night Away." And we saw him once at Paddy Reilly's, on Second Avenue, where he played in a raucous, genre-bending outfit known as Black 47. Unfortunately, we have also missed many gigs. We've never seen Fred play trombone with the Irish-born singer Pierce Turner, with Tony Bennett's orchestra, or with the heavy-metal band Angat. We've never seen the short film "Homage to Artaud," in which Fred sits and stares obsessively at an eggbeater. We've only heard secondhand reports of the East Village performance piece that friends remember as "Modern Dancer + Fred."

It has always been difficult to predict where, if anywhere, Fred's projects would lead. In recent months, though, there has been an extraordinary buzz about Black 47. The band is led by a politically minded Irish expatriate named Larry Kirwan—to be fair, Fred also has a last name, Parcels—and its shows at Paddy Reilly's have attracted a flood of musicians and record-company executives, not to mention Greenwich Villagers of every variety. We recently stopped by the bar at two in the

morning, and the show was so packed that the doorman just shook his head sadly and said, "You can go in if you want, but it's hell in there."

Black 47 has just released its first album, a wild, sardonic outing that manages to quote rock, reggae, and rap, among other things. (The record has already been raved about in *Rolling Stone*, which is astonishing when one considers that it's only available at Paddy Reilly's.) Black 47 is also starting to play considerably larger venues: the band will be at the Lone Star Roadhouse on March 17 and at Wetlands on March 27. It would appear that Fred's dancing days are over.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

**ALGONQUIN HOTEL**, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Welsh vocalist IRIS WILLIAMS completes an engagement in the Oak Room on March 21. MARY CLEERE HARAN succeeds her, beginning on March 24. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

**BALLROOM**, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, green-walled room with brass railings and mounted O'Keefian animal skulls. Look closer and you'll find that the skulls are wearing earrings. After the show, be sure and check out the adjoining restaurant/tapas bar, which looks like the indoor food market of your dreams, and features a mural filled with people resembling Bob, Carol, Ted, and Alice. IVAN LINS, a Brazilian pop singer who recently released an album titled "Awa Yio," begins a two-week engagement on March 17. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen. Closed Mondays.

**BIRDLAND**, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. The schedule, in part: BO DIDDLEY, JR., on March 18; the CHRIS CARTER band on March 19; and KEN PEPLAWSKI's quintet, featuring Byron Stripling, March 20-21. Music from nine. Dripping.

**BLUE NOTE**, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists; it's an institution and it knows it: how many other



Vince Giordano at Red Blazer Too