

"CURTAIN UP"

& "INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE"

At the Suzanne Delall Center, 6-30 November 1997

By Giora Manor

"ימי הביניים", צילום: גדי דגון

"MEDIEVAL AGE", PHOTO: GADI DAGON



▶ This year's performances of the "Curtain Up" showcase series attended by the dance community of Israel, as well as foreign guests, mainly directors of dance festivals and other animators and buyers from abroad, were mostly quite interesting, often original in their concept and exceptionally well-danced.

The series (which takes place annually or every other year according to the number and artistic level of entries offered) was organized in a novel way. Instead of a few intensive hectic days with performances overlapping at impossible hours, the series was spread out throughout each weekend in November. This arrangement made it easier to choose, attend and enjoy the shows.

Among the up-and-coming choreographers (a somewhat loose definition), there were no entirely new names. But some, as for example Noa Dar, a promising choreographer, showed mature works on a high professional level. Likewise, Anat Danieli premiered a fascinating and accomplished new group work. Another by now quite well-known choreographer, Inbal Pinto, offered a witty duet; Tamar Borer premiered a dance for herself and her group, which deserves an analytical description. "Shakatak" was the title of a stomp-step-breakdance piece by Zahi Patish and the "Tractor's Revenge" Rock musicians - fascinating to watch and listen to...

Ido Tadmor, the "head and feet..." of his own group, presented his third creation, "Uranus," as did "Clipa Theatre" with their new piece, "Middle Age" (which I assume should be "Middle Ages" as it deals with medieval themes and symbols, not mid-life crisis.

WHAT WAS EXPOSED WHEN THE CURTAIN ROSE

from a year of studying in India. Yael Moav and Ela Shek also performed.

The artists all showed a very earnest regard for the intricate art of Indian dancing. But even the traditional evocation of the god Ganesh, the divine patron of dance, and the lighting of candles and incense did not help in turning the performance into something exciting.

Raphael Meshilkar moves well, has a beautiful body, knows how to move his eyebrows and his eloquent fingers, Indian fashion, but, somehow, seems not to be emotionally involved in the dancing. Perhaps he concentrated too much on technique and not enough on expression. Vera Goldman's explanations were rather didactic.

Even the very good idea of composing an Indian style dance to texts from the Song of Songs in order to make it closer to Israeli spectators didn't quite come off, as it was rather timid and lacked temperament.

Far Eastern dance is always dramatic and follows a storyline. It needs a much more theatrical approach to get to an audience used to Western dance.

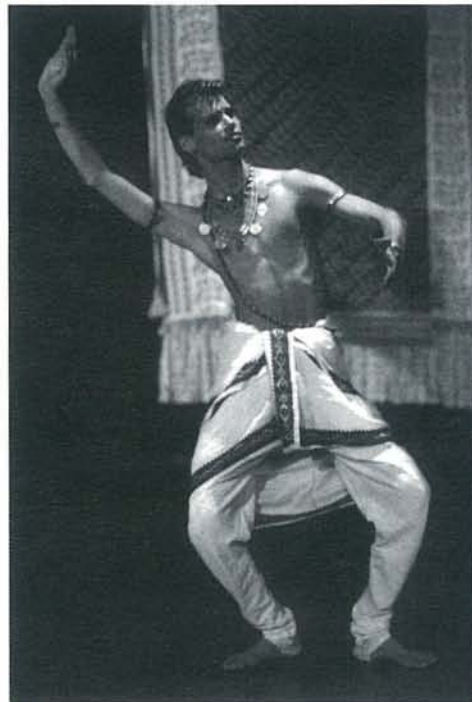
"PARVE BALLET" KOSHER BUT NOT EXCITING

"The Israel Ballet" premiered a new piece, choreographed by its artistic director, Berta Yampolsky, entitled "Ecstasy." To the sounds of mainly drums and other percussion instruments, incongruously intermixed with female (Bulgarian) singing, the very well-trained dancers moved in insipid patterns with the women wearing trendy miniskirts made of metallic material and the man in dark trousers with a bare torso and an occasional vest.

I always thought that ecstasy had something to do with excitement, the losing of control, possession by spirits and emotion. The drumming was lethargic, the movement sleep inducing.

Observant Jews are not supposed to mix meat with milk. But there is a third category of kosher food, neither meat nor milk but neutral and called "parve" (a strange term of unknown etymology). Yampolsky's new piece is exactly that.

The company also presented another recent piece she had choreographed, "Two by Two and



Everyone," to Mendelssohn's "Concerto nr.2 for Piano and Orchestra". The excellent dancers, led by Nina Gershman, went through romantically-tinged pas-de-deux, ensembles and small scenes, the sort of ballet Yampolsky does best. It wasn't innovative, but allowed the dancers to present their best side.



רקדן: רפאל משילקאר, צילום: אלדד ברון

DANCER: RAPHAEL MASHILKAR, PHOTO: ELDAD BARON

