

# Dance Theatre of



**They're back!!!**



Nearly two years has elapsed since Arthur Mitchell and the Dance Theatre of Harlem premiered to sell-out crowds at Civic Auditorium.

On April 7th, the 44-member company returns for four evening performances and a matinee, this year sponsored by Evergreen Events in Portland.

The Dance Theatre of Harlem is recognized and respected as a major presence in American dance, not only for its technical virtuosity but for the diversity and vitality of its performers and repertoire.

During its second visit to Portland, the company will present two completely different shows from its extensive repertoire.

Among the pieces selected are *Frankie and Johnny*, a ballet based on the famous old ballad about betrayed love, which was first performed in 1938 as part of the dance theatre project of the Works Progress Administration; and a Dance Theatre of Harlem adaptation of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, which premiered this winter.

Composer/choreographer Geoffry Holder will be represented by *Banda* and *Songs of Averno*. *Banda* is the dance of a spirit that lives in a graveyard who tries to help the mother of a dead child understand the difference between life and death. *Songs of Averno*, danced for the company by the "magnificent" Virginia Johnson (Mary Clark, *Dancing Times*, Sept. 1981), was originally choreographed for Carmen deLavalade.

In contrast to the more modern pieces, Dance Theatre of Harlem will also demonstrate its classical excellence by performing the full length version of Balanchine's *Firebird*.

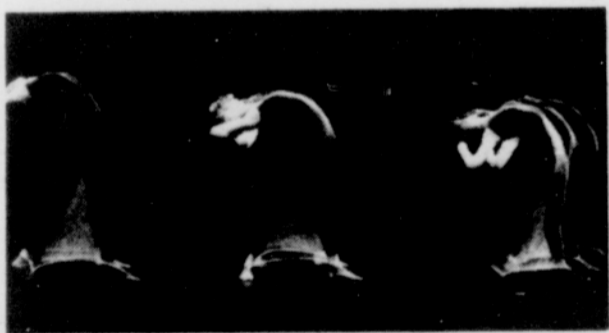
There has probably never been a story quite like the DTH story in American Dance.

The company has performed to sell-out crowds world wide and has distinguished itself as a powerful force not only in classical ballet but in ethnic modern dance as well. Dance Theatre of Harlem is a "dance landmark" (Dora Sowden, *The Jerusalem Post*).

Dance Theatre of Harlem was started by Arthur Mitchell, former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, as his personal commitment to the Harlem community following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Incorporated in February, 1969, it began in the basement of a Harlem church. In 1971, a generous donation by Mrs. Bernard F. Gimbel enabled Dance Theatre of Harlem to purchase its present permanent home.

Dance Theatre of Harlem began as a community school and aspiring ballet company with thirty students and two teachers. Its premise was to promote interest in and teach young people the art of classical ballet, modern and ethnic dance, thereby creating more self-awareness and better self images in the students. Dance Theatre of Harlem has grown to become a school of the allied arts where over 1100 students from across the country and around the world learn dance, sewing and costume apprenticeship, and choral and percussion ensemble techniques and its ballet company is internationally acclaimed. Dance Theatre is now an organization in a much larger community to which all people desiring cultural enrichment can turn.

Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook, DTH co-directors, have created a ballet company which in ten years has made two command performances before the Queen Mother of England; has broken attendance and box of-



# Harlem