



"Adagietto No. 5" Music: Gustav Mahler. Choreography: Royston Maldoom. Dancers: Stephanie Baxter, Mel Tomlinson.

The dancers of Dance Theatre of Harlem are Lydia Abarca, Laura and Susan Brown, Elena Carter, Brenda Garratt, Yvonne Hall, Virginia Johnson, Laura and Susan Lovelle, Gayle McKinney, Melva Murray-White, Sheila Rohan, Roslyn Sampson, Karen Ann White and Roman Brooks, Homer Hans Bryant, Ronald Perry, Walter Raines, Paul Russell, Allen Sampson, William Scott, Samuel Smalls, Mel Tomlinson, Derek Williams and Joseph Wyatt. There are no ballerinas or premiers in Dance Theatre of Harlem; nevertheless, after the manner of stars, there are some of more dazzle or gleam than others. Their radiance illuminates everything that Dance Theatre of Harlem dances.



"Serenade" Choreographer: George Balanchine. Music: Tchaikovsky. Dancers (left to right): Denise Nix, Virginia Johnson, Lorraine Graves, Lowell Smith.

Of two girls named Brown, Laura is the more immediately arresting, because of her soft, pliant grace; her sweetness and charm.

Of the two Lovelles, Susan has a vivid, almost startling beauty. Her face, like the faces in African sculpture, looks both archaic and contemporaneous. In physique she is the essential "Balanchine dancer," fleet, extravagantly arched, with a breath-taking extension.

Among the men at DTH, Paul Russell is the principal virtuoso. A dancer of vibrant personality and brilliant technique, he is also an excellent partner.



"Troy Game" Choreographer: Robert North. Dancers: Company men.

Ronald Perry, rising twenty (and with merely six years training) is likely to be the first Black American danseur noble. Classically handsome, nobility is implicit in his presence, form and manner. He has, besides, a cool serenity, which gives his partnering an intriguing quality.

Most of the twenty-five dancers of Dance Theatre of Harlem are charter members. Abarca joined Mitchell at HSA and went with him in the famous exodus; Johnson, who received her early training at the Washington School of Ballet, came to DTH in 1969. Abarca and Johnson, more by their beauty and talent than by the fact of seniority, are the ballerinas at DTH, but each of the other outstanding dancers has a distinctive quality.

Gayle McKinney is doe-eyed, a dancer-actress of beguilingly various moods, and a strong, urgent attack in her dancing.

Melva Murray-White has a yearning, yielding temperament, a tantalizing elusiveness—and a jump of surprising power.

Sheila Rohan is DTH's Nefertiti, delicate, poised, remote—a cool, exact, enigmatic beauty.

Roslyn Sampson, Mitchell's perennial "Little One," looks and even dances like a lovely Persian kitten.

To match the distinctio of the girls, the men have great virility, but of different temperaments.

Walter Raines (trained at School of American Ballet and a dancer, in Cranko's time, of the Stuttgart Ballet) is



"Manifestations" Choreography: Arthur Mitchell. Music: Primous Fountain III. Dancers: Stephanie Dabney, Lowell Smith. Photo: Jack Vartoogian.

an actor-dancer of great subtlety, suave and authoritative. Raines' *Haiku* and *After Corinth* are in DTH's repertoire.

Derek Williams, born in Jamaica, and of eclectic dance training, is serious, dignified, with an elegance scarcely seen in the American ballet since Royes Fernandez stopped dancing.

Both Raines and Williams are superb partners: chivalrous, and tender of their ladies, with an effortless courtesy of manner.

William Scott is a dancer very reminiscent of Arthur Mitchell, in his speed and attack, and in his humor. Scott is DTH's ballet master, and has choreographed a jazz ballet for the company: *Every Now and Then*.

Joseph Wyatt is yet another exciting dancer at DTH. He has a sleek facial handsomeness but, perversely, a compact, powerful body. Wyatt's haughty profile is the fascinating mask of an explosive physical energy. And Wyatt's strong, sure, soaring leap makes him the bronze Nijinsky.

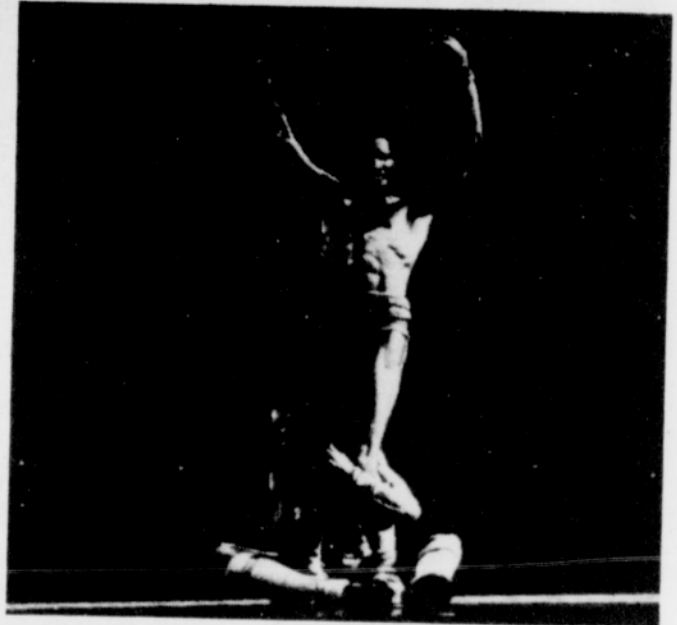


"Doina" Choreography: Royston Maldoom. Dancers: Yvonne Hall, Eddie Shellman.

Virginia Johnson, one year older than Lydia Abarca, is DTH's prima and she has the looks and the style to warrant the title. Johnson is one of those rare dancers who sheds a glowing light on a company.

She has a gracious manner and a classically beautiful face: oval, with delicate aquiline features, and a fine, pale, almost translucent skin. Her hair springs back from her high forehead, her brows arch over large, lambent eyes, as they do in portraits of noble ladies in 15th century paintings. Under her regal composure Johnson seems to be hoarding a thousand secrets.

Her fathomable calm has been broken by Karel Shook, who has just extracted from Johnson a new character, that of the virtuoso ballerina in *Don Quixote*. Johnson and Russell are dancing this pas de deux together for the first time this season, to as much acclaim as Russell and Laura Brown have already won for *Le Corsaire*.



"Troy Game" Choreographer: Robert North. Dancers: Lowell Smith (standing), Keith Saunders.

A for Abarca places this dancer first on the roster. And there she belongs! Her looks, her style, her manner have the harmony of sheer perfection. Abarca is a living ode to beauty, incapable of an ugly gesture or a false movement.

She is as grave as Johnson is serious but Abarca and Johnson are altogether unlike each other. In place of Johnson's grandeur, Abarca has the lovely, mournful wistfulness of the great Romantic ballerina. She is the dreaming soul of dance.

Virginia Johnson is DTH's princess; Abarca, DTH's exquisite nymph. One is destined for roles of fire and hauteur; the other for all the lyrical, poetic roles in ballet.

Dance Theatre of Harlem has the principals for a fine *Giselle*, with Johnson as the glittering, icy Queen of the Wilis, and Abarca as the most beautiful wili of them all.

**From Classical
To Modern
To Ethnic**