

DOW  
507.97 ▲ 59.41 (+0.57%)

S&P 500  
187.76 ▲ 6.55 (+0.55%)

NASDAQ  
105.40 ▲ 13.28 (+0.67%)



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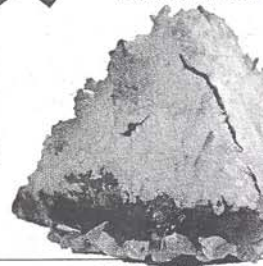
# The NEW YORK Sun



TODAY  
Sunny, High 56

TONIGHT  
Clear to partly cloudy.

TOMORROW  
Partial sunshine. HI



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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2005

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## DANCE Birds of a Feather

By AERON KOPRIVA

City Center was transformed into an aviary of athletic exoticism on Monday night. Only the plumage in the audience, couture gowns of organza and crêpe-de-chin, rivaled the dancers on stage at this year's Dance for Medicine gala. David Parsons, artistic director and founder of the event, brought his own brand of fleet daring to the program, which consisted of modern works performed by topflight dancers from such companies as the New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theater, Martha Graham Dance Company, and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

### DANCE FOR MEDICINE *City Center*

Mr. Parsons's troupe appeared in "Swing Shift," a stealth sequence of darting kicks and fiery turns. The choreography manically obeys the rhythms of Kenji Bunch's electric string music, giving the work the look of a postmodern tribe. Mr. Parsons's crowd-pleasing "Caught" was equally energetic. Four principals of the New York City Ballet (Peter Boal, Wendy Whelan, Albert Evans, and Maria Kowroski) then performed Ulysses Dove's "Red Angels."

Sensual gratification reached its climax in Martha Graham's apocryphal "Embattled Garden." Isamu Noguchi's serpentine garden of poles and a stylized tree of knowledge create the scene for Graham's restaging of our myth of origin. The bright colors belie the dark vindictive tale that lurks when Adam's first wife Lilith, played fiendishly by Elizabeth Auclair, intrudes upon what is commonly known in Milton as "the first morning of the world." Upside down in the tree writhes Christophe Jeannot as the Stranger.

The two-dimensional illustrative gestures blend well with Carlos Surinach's overtly Occidental score. And the erotic charge created by the two couples escalates to naughty bedlam. Lilith quivers her palm over her belly. Eve shimmies in a circle; Adam's ankles clutch her thighs. Tadej Brdnik dynamically captures the guilt and passion of Adam. In what is perhaps Graham's most poignant reversal, Adam lay as a newborn child between the legs of Eve.

So inventive is the portrayal of coitus, in fact, the choreography began to cloy. As usual, Graham's expressionist urges looked as if they were crashing a gala party. But in the midst of their two-week season, the Graham dancers are at the height of their powers.

The evening closed with excerpts from Alvin Ailey's "Revelations." The sense of exaltation was contagious in this high-energy classic. Kirven J. Boyd was enchanting in his solo under the rapture of a single light.

The promise of heaven became the curse of hell in "Move, Members, Move." The three male dancers (Chris Jackson, Clifton Brown, and Kirven J. Boyd) produced show-stopping combinations. The audience couldn't have enjoyed themselves more, even starting to clap with the final number "Rock O' My Soul."

The concluding "Defile" brought out the dancers for a final bow. They seemed to have had fun. The classically honed dancers remained on stage for a few moments longer to boogie to Earth, Wind & Fire. Priceless.