

Masquerade

It was a night filled with treats while some of the nation's best dancers preformed tricks of their trade for A Halloween Thriller. On the great stage of newly renovated New York City Center, patrons were wowed and amazed with seventeen beautiful performances. We watched as legs extended, feet arched and rhythms wrapped us, begging us to join each movement with our applause. And we did.

As the lights dimmed, you could feel your breath still as Bebe Neuwirth with Jennifer Dunne, Mary Ann Lamb, Mary MacLeod, Dana Moore, Brad Musgrove, Brian O'Brien, Mimi Quillin and Samantha Strum opened the show with 'Magic To Do' from Pippin. Their grace and joy readied the audience for a spectacular night. No one could have done it better!



Bebe Neuwirth performing "Magic To Do" from Pippin

National Dance Institute's 150 New York City kids performance of an adaptation of Michael Peter's choreography of Michael Jackson's Thriller video was a rhythmic, heart singing, beautiful homage to two dearly missed masters. It reminded us that new masterpieces are being created and performed all the time! Kudos to Mary Kennedy for this rendition of a modern classic!

As the room heightened with energy, the great ladies of dance and theater, Donna McKechnie, Carmen De



NDI Kids performing "Thriller"

Lavallade and our beautiful host, Chita Rivera, taught us what it means to own the stage.

As Chita introduced our honorees for the evening, Nancy MacMillan, Victor Elmaleh, Michele Riggi and the National Museum of Dance, I thought how lucky we are that such giants from different communities support the world of dance and our mission to support dancers at every stage of their careers.



Nancy MacMillan, Michele Riggi, Victor Elmalen, Ankan Palitz, Chita Rivera, Janice Becker, Judith Jamison, Nigel Lithgoes, Susan Wichts, Stewart Wicht with Fiona Wicht [Photo: Ryan McCune/PatrickMcMullan.com]



Carolina Ballet's Dracula

Carolina Ballet principal guest choreographer, Lynne Taylor-Corbett's New York première of 'Dracula' struck the perfect chord with everyone. Marcelo Martinez and Liyan Vigo's performances left your mouth watering.

With a slight of hand, or rather glowing hands, the Tap City Youth Ensemble delighted our audience with their Tap Dancing Skeletons. The youth of the American Tap Dance Foundation really got into the spirit of the holiday. Their rhythmic presentation reminded us of our youthful joy. Thank you to Tony Waag, Susan Hebach, Tamil Sakurai and the young 'hoofers' for showing us the way!

Bringing in the fright night feeling, director and choreographer, Ann Marie DeAngelo world premiered



Tap City Youth Ensemble's Tap Dancing Skeletons

her one-act ballet, The Bell Witch. If you were unsure before how to mix 'spooky' and theatrical dance; Ann Marie and performers Lynn Cohen, Oriada Islami and Adam Hundt showed you how.

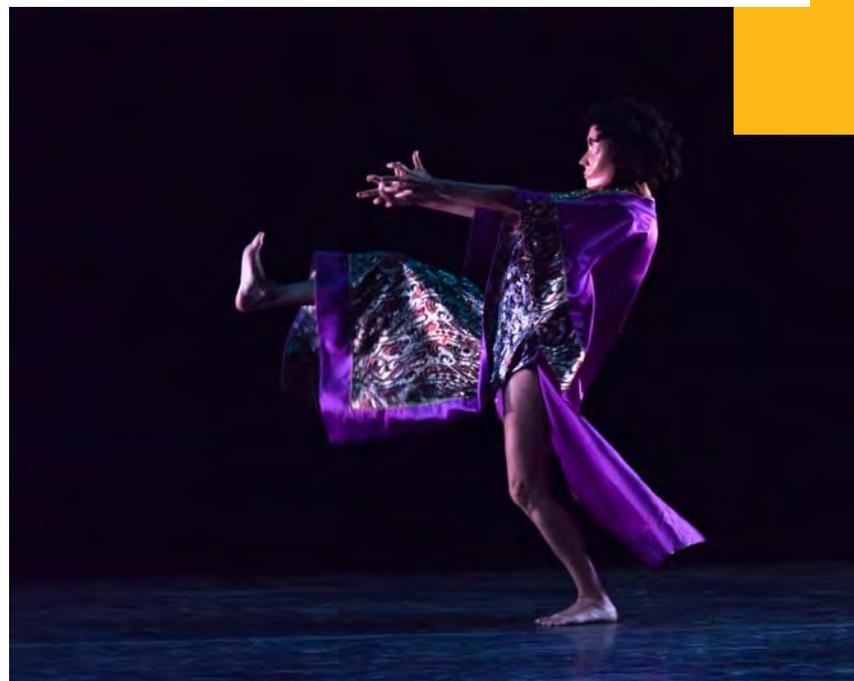


"The Bell Witch" world premiere



Peter Pucci's "Surfing"

Peter Pucci's lighthearted 'Surfing' kept the audience in great spirits. Its good natured comical poke at our West Coast siblings in California did not 'pearl'. Instead, it offered cool refreshment on an evening that dancers



Betsy Fischer's "Henentax"

were giving their ultimate gift to the world; their dance. Dancers Eric Dunlap, Angelo Laroche, Nick Ross, Tommy Scivens and Elena Valls' 'hang-ten' was a perfect ten, expressed through the audience's laughter.

When the announcer said that the American Repertory Ballet was presenting something new, we knew it was going to be special. In honor of their board member, Nancy MacMillan, Douglas Martin cast a spell on the audience. Dancers Stephen Campanella, David Dubois, Alexander Dutko, Shaye Firer, Monica Giragoslan, Talin Kenar, Joshua Kutzberg, Katie Moorhead, Karen Leslie Moscato, Marc St. Pierre, Edward Urwin, and Claire van Bever were a dream.



American Repertory Ballet "Pathways" (excerpt)



The Raven

When Betsy Fisher took the stage, she perfectly articulated the Mary Wigman quote "It was wonderful to abandon oneself to the craving for evil, to imbibe the powers which usually dared to stir only weakly beneath one's civilized surface." What an incredible feat.

The spine-tingling and breath-taking execution of David Fernandez's Raven by NYCB's Charles Askegard, Daniel Ulbricht and Savannah Lowery was stunning. We were swept us away with the dark motif of The Raven.

Tap...tap... tap...tap.tap.tap... Noah Racey and New York Song and Dance slowly and perfectly tapped their

way into the hearts of every audience member.

Melinda Sullivan's voice sweetly balanced the cool, simple, but well informed sounds of the tapped toes and heels of fellow members; CK Edwards, Danny Gardner and Luke Hawkins accompanied by

musicians Jason Yudoff,

Ross Patterson, and Alex Beckmann.



New York Song and Dance



Lipsinka



Gisele Pas De Deux Act I

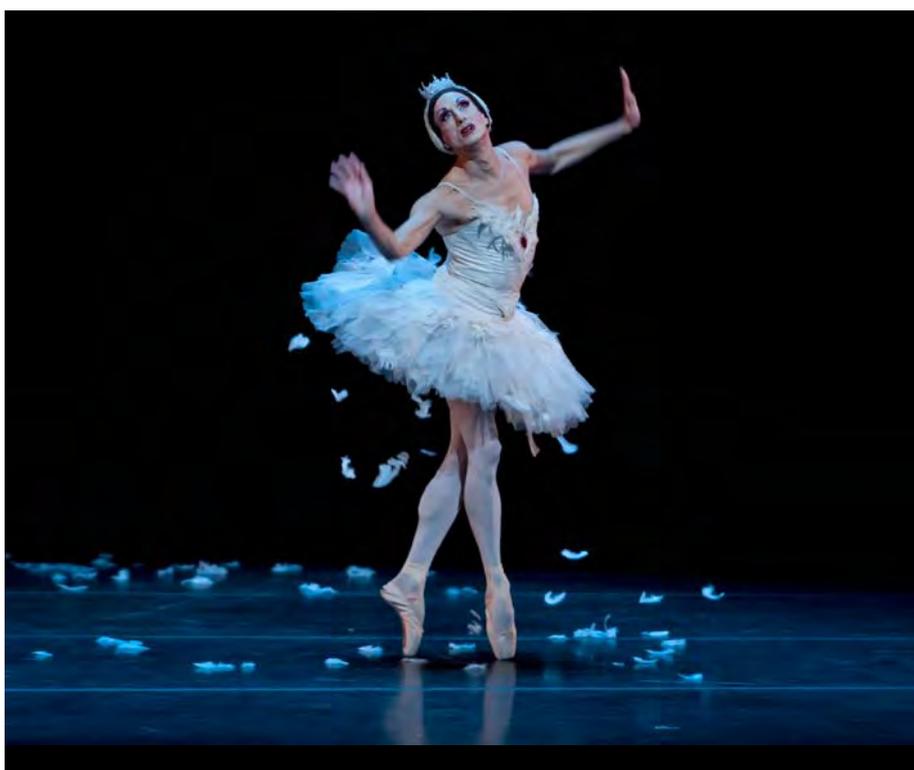


Mark Stuart Dance Theatre's "Interference"



above: Streetbeats

below: The Dying Swan



What can one say about Lipsinka's performance other than that it was a perfect example of what we call 'New York Iconic'? Bravo!

I sometimes forget the beauty of the ballet *Giselle*. When classics are done and redone again and again, one can get saturated with every staging, but Al-Gul Galsina's staging of Marius Petipa, Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot's choreography made me wonder why I have stayed away so long. Houston Ballet's Karina Gonzalez and Conner Walsh hushed the audience in quiet excellence as they danced to *Giselle Pas De Deux Act II*.

Who said contemporary art lacked artistic value? Mark Stuart Dance Theatre's *Interference* was fun, lively and challenged the original video choreography of Ne-Yo's music video 'Beautiful Monster'. Dancers James Brown III, Rosie Lani Fedelman, Reed Kelly, Yanira Marin, Tiger Martina, Morgan Matayoshi, Mark Stuart and Jaime Verazin showed strength and demonstrated how skilled artists are revitalizing dance audiences in popular culture.

Michael Fokine's *Dying Swan* is comedic genius. As Ida Nevasayneva & Paul Ghiselin danced on perfect point, we witnessed how revolutionary this dance is.

And the 2011 Rolex Award goes to....Nigel Lythgoe

The presentation of the Rolex Award was like watching the stars align, signaling that everything is right in the universe.

Two amazing icons, Judith Jamison and Nigel Lythgoe shared the stage for this special evening. One could see the admiration they had for each other as Ms. Jamison presented the 2011 Rolex Dance Award to Mr. Lythgoe.

The performance closing did not disappoint with all the highs of the 2011 'A Halloween Thriller' performance. The Street Beats Group ended the show with high energy, enthusiasm, rhythm and fun. What a way to send the attendees of Career Transition For Dancers 26th Anniversary off for a night of dancing, dinner and live action.