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### Feminist Scholarship Review: Women in Theater and Dance

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# *Feminist Scholarship Review*

## *Women in Theater and Dance*

Trinity College, Volume VII, No. 1

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Martha Graham *Harlequinade* 1930 (solo) - photographer: Barbara Morgan

# *Feminist Scholarship Review*



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## *Feminist Scholarship Review*

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Letter from the Editor:

By examining the history of women in theater and dance, it is possible to see how this medium of art chronicles the change in women's roles in society. While in the past women's creative abilities have been repressed, we are gradually seeing a welcoming of expression, often through acting and movement. This collection of articles reveal that the shift is now towards the image of the woman who is in control—both of her body and her ability to create art.

In this edition of the FSR, contributors provide insight on the history of women in dance, personal reflections, and the changing role of women in the Russian theater. In Women Performing Women, Katharine Power examines the way women express emotion through the use of movement and their bodies. Power's account of the history of women in dance discusses many of the innovations women have made in this field. Josh Karter, on the other hand, highlights the need for women playwrights and directors in Russian theater. Unlike American theater, women in the Russian theater are still struggling for greater prominence in their field. Finally, in a personal reflection, Marjorie Smith reveals how she uses theater and play writing to convey her views of women in society. As the author of the annual freshmen orientation play, Marjorie explains the way in which she chose to address and present a play on rape. Also included in this issue is a bibliography compiled by Patricia Bunker and a videography by Susan Erickson on women in theater and dance.

Since my experience with the areas of theater and dance is fairly limited, I felt that this edition of the FSR could not only broaden my knowledge but also enlighten others. I hope that this collection of articles and reference materials adds to our understanding of the role of women in theater and dance.

  
Kimberly M Niadna

## Women Performing Women: The Body as Text

In an essay titled "Aller a la Mer," French feminist Helene Cixous condemns western theater as a patriarchal institution which serves to make women disappear.<sup>1</sup> Patriarchal theater, she asserts, has historically relegated Woman "to repression, to the grave, the asylum, oblivion and silence." She is loved only when "abused or absent." Electra and Antigone are "eliminated." Ophelia is "banned and her soul violated;" Cordelia "asserts a femininity which refuses to be the mirror of her father's raving" and so must die. A dramatist herself, Cixous tells us she stopped going to the theater because it was like going to her own funeral; she encountered there not the stories of living women, but only her own violent absence.

Rather than lend our complicity to a theater in which a woman has to die before the play can begin, Cixous calls for a new woman's theater, a theater which will make present she who has been absent: a theater in which woman's performing body will become the source of a radically new text. The process, she writes, will "take place where a woman's life takes place, where her life story is decided: inside her body, beginning with her blood." Cixous envisions woman performing body as a birthing event: "a body decoding and naming itself in one long slow push." By giving birth to her own theatrical presence, Cixous's performing woman stakes a claim to name herself...in one long slow push.

Cixous's essay (first published in 1977) is a call for a theater yet to be: "it is coming to pass," she writes, "this arrival of Woman into the world." But consider the following:

At the turn of the 20th century, a Californian by the name of Isadora Duncan discarded the corset for a diaphanous Greek tunic and set out to create a new art--a new dance--based on the beauty of the female body in motion. She envisioned woman dancing as "the highest intelligence in the freest body."

In 1916 Angelina Grimke wrote *Rachel*, a play about a young African American woman who, in her refusal to bear children, claimed her body as a site of resistance in a world of racist

hatred and violence.

At midcentury, choreographer Martha Graham fervently declared that “the body never lies” and with that manifesto, she constructed an elaborate theatrical language rooted in one basic motion: the dynamic contraction and release of the pelvis. Graham’s body text revealed an impassioned discourse of torment and ecstasy: a dialectic of woman’s desire, urgently performed

“The Owl Answers,” a 1965 play by Adrienne Kennedy, follows an African American woman’s journey to London in search of her “dead white Father.” Spinning through multiple identities for which she is ultimately condemned, Kennedy’s protagonist finally transforms herself from woman to Owl and thereby comes to embody the symbol of her own wisdom and darkness: her own ability to see (and signify) anew.

Maria Irene Fornes, in the 1977 play *Fefu and her Friends*, provides an audacious heroine who dares to reveal what lies beneath the surface of Woman’s smooth, dry, bodily exteriors: “a parallel life,” she calls it: “It’s there. The way worms are underneath the stone. If you don’t recognize it...It eats you.”

In the mid seventies, visual artist Carolee Schneemann, performing nude to a mostly female audience, extracted a narrow scroll from her vagina and proceeded to read from it. The scroll—a symbol of language, intellect, and history—suggested the advent of a new feminine text, a text birthed from vulvic space.

Contemporary artist Pina Bausch stages large-scale dance theater pieces in which the female body is repeatedly subjected to acts of violence and abuse. In *Gebirge*, the audience must confront a woman on all fours, her dress pulled up so that a man can slash her bare back with red lipstick.

And in the 1989 performance art piece *Sally’s Rape*, Robbie MacCauley places herself on the auction block and challenges the audience to bid for her: the history of slavery inscribed on MacCauley’s female body, naked for all to see.

By foregrounding the female body as the primary site of theatrical signification, the above examples (and there are numerous more) answer Cixous’s call for a theater based on woman’s “living, breathing, speaking body.” The new woman’s theater, so passionately envisioned by

Cixous, in fact asserted itself long ago. Hrotsvita van Gandersheim, a 10th century nun, wrote plays about Christian virgins who successfully thwarted male violence and desire in order to preserve their bodies for Christ. The history of western theater includes a history of women performing women, authoring themselves as Subjects to speak of desire, rage, and celebration. Women performing women position themselves center stage to speak a new language--to birth a new text--and the story they tell is the story of body.

by Katharine Power

1. Cixous, Helene. "Aller a la Mer." *Modern Drama* Vol 27, No. 4 (December 1984).



## Only Trying to Move One Step Forward

“Oh, how cute. A little feminist on our hands!” Father McCafferty responded in his oh-so familiar domineering way. I was in Sixth grade Religion Class at a Catholic, parochial school. We had been asked to tell what profession we most admired and whether or not we wanted to choose that as our lifelong career. I had simply answered, “I could see myself becoming a priest one day.” It was obvious by the way Father McCafferty reacted, and the manner in which he spoke, that not only would I never become a priest, but that being a ‘feminist’ wasn’t a very good thing to be. Confused, I asked him what the word meant. He chuckled. “A woman who tries to refuse her natural and proper subservient role.” As ignorant and bad as Father made it sound, I knew right then and there that I liked being considered ‘one of those.’

So it all started in Catholic grade school. Who would have guessed that from that point on I would have an obsession with the need to shake up these old-school, conservative, sexist men? And there were the women that needed a little shaking up, too.

When I came to Trinity, my feminism never faltered. However, my momentum did slightly break. Going to an all-girls’ high school, the new “co-ed” scene made me realize I had, for a long time, been living in a glass bubble. Men really *did* openly treat women as inferiors and women seemed to accept the role in which they were placed. I started to worry and wonder. Were women afraid of how they would be seen if they stood up for themselves? Was there a need to act flighty just to get what they wanted? Did women willingly play into the stereotypes that men originally placed on them?

Having a long theater background, I realized one of the ways I could pursue my feminist ideals was through the art of performance. I started to work on the Freshman Orientation “date-rape” play, thinking it would be an easy task to start off on. My goal became to scare the hell out of at least one man who thought it was normal to have sex with a woman without her consent. I wanted a man to think twice and make sure the woman he was with was not rejecting

the act, verbally *or* physically. I wanted a man to go away from the skit, realizing what one in every four women has to go through. But I realized my goal could not be limited to affecting men, but women as well. When it comes to rape, it seems that even some outspoken, headstrong women have what, in my mind is, the wrong conviction. As I spoke to a various assortment of females about the issue of date rape, many openly admitted that the girl, often times, asks for it. I was impressed these women could be so honest with such a bold assertion, but I was amazed. Normally, that kind of blaming-the-victim attitude comes from men. I was surprised and saddened that so many females felt that women were, often times, 'asking for it.' I knew my goal had to be changed. Not only was I now trying to change the opinions of disinterested men, but women, as well.

Many rape plays, stories, and movies take the traditional plot of man and woman meet, get drunk, woman does not want to have sex, but man forces her against her will, all the while she is screaming in protest. After discussions of this type of sexual assault, many men and women can convince themselves they would never be in that predicament in the first place, all the while completely disassociating themselves from the situation. I felt it was time men and women realized that rape can happen to anyone, at any time, any place; no matter what you say, how you act, or what you wear. My main goal was to create a play where women would have absolutely no venue to escape the reality of rape. I also wanted men to understand that a girl could have been sexually assaulted without saying "No!" or "Stop!"

I began to co-write the play with Annie Armstrong, '00. We tried to eliminate anything that would make women and men doubt the likelihood of rape happening in their lives. Therefore, we did not have alcohol as a factor, and we made the man and woman a couple, having dated, without sex, for two months. Although date rape, does indeed, most often occur under the influence of alcohol and between casual acquaintances, we decided to hit closer to home, letting the women in the audience know that it is possible for a boyfriend to rape. We also decided that, during the act, the rape victim would never actually say the words "Stop," but rather, express them physically (trying to push him off, attempting to wriggle free, etc). In this way, we tried to make clear to men that a woman doesn't always have to say "No" to *mean* "No!"

In the end, the performance of what came to be called In Between, went off better than expected. Playing the rape victim was, by far, the hardest role I hope I ever have to become. We decided not to hold back and really become graphic in the "rape scene." That way, we knew the audience would have a hard time just sitting back, disinterested and uncaring. We forced both men and women to evaluate the brutality of rape and how dehumanizing it is, not only for the victim, but all women as well.

I wonder if Father McCafferty would still give feminism a bad rap. Perhaps he would be proud of what I have tried to achieve. But I still don't think he's ever going to consider me for the priesthood. Being a "feminist" is not always easy. Many women and men confuse what I am with a label such as "femi-nazi." What they don't understand is that a feminist is simply someone who believes in the equal rights for men and women, in all sectors of society.

I am not looking to change the world. I am not trying to become female president. I am not even posing a solution to female inequality. But I do have dreams. I want a woman to understand that being a woman is, indeed, a powerful thing. I want a woman to know it's okay to yell. I want a woman to take up space. I want a woman to defy American popular culture's standard of beauty and have the confidence to know that she still can be one of Michelangelo's subjects. I want a woman to feel adequate. I want a woman to make \$1.00 to every man's dollar. I want a woman to know that being a feminist does include getting in touch with your own sexuality, but that does not mean you are a lesbian. I want a woman to study and learn about women's influence and contribution in history, without having to take a specialized course. I want a woman to feel a Sisterhood. I want a woman to unclench her fists. I want a woman to know she never "asked for it." I want a woman to know there's more out there than just being a housewife, but I want a woman to feel satisfied if she is one. I want a woman to find her hidden, inner voice. Am I asking for a lot? Perhaps. But for a woman? Not at all.

By Marjorie Smith

## **Approaches to the Gender Gap in Russian Theater**

As a theater director who has found himself working in the unlikely (but lucky) niche of staging American plays in the Russian language for theaters in Moscow, I've been presented with many opportunities to try to navigate through cross-cultural waters. There are small moments of insight, such as in 1992, when I found myself trying to explain a play's reference to "junk food" during the period when shelves in Russian food markets were empty. Or, the occasion during my first trip to Russia in 1991, when following an outing to a professional football (soccer) game, I returned with my Russian colleagues from the theater -- six men and one woman -- to the home of one of the men, a bachelor. The men, including the host, sat at table in the living room, while the woman, the theater's literary manager and a guest in this house, retired to the kitchen to prepare food for the evening. I went into the kitchen to give her a hand, and I joked about my surprise concerning the division of labor. Her reply: "men don't have hands."

As both an American feminist and a believer in the capacity of theater to raise socially relevant questions, I found myself on a new learning curve concerning the status of women in Russia and within the theater profession there. Along the way, I have become indebted to several of my colleagues in Russian and Eurasian Studies at Trinity, especially Professors Carol Any, Katherine Lahti and Michael Sacks, for their insights.

First, I came to realize that aspirations of women in Russia are not equivalent to those articulated by the Women's Movement here. Certainly, some women, especially in light of the range of entrepreneurial opportunities now available in the "new" Russia, seek to break through the variety of "glass ceilings" pervasive in the workplace. But in a country where, since the Revolution, most women have had to hold down two jobs (regular employment, maintenance of the household, including the once-daunting and time-consuming challenge of shopping, and childcare) and where concerns of the soul, such as family and friendship, are often given greater



weight in defining a life-well-lived than a pursuit of self-definition through career, the concept of “women’s liberation” is seen differently than in the United States. For some women, liberation means the ability not to work, to be able to give full energy to what they consider important aspects of life.

On the other hand, it was readily apparent to me that women’s voices were not well represented on the Russian stage. There are two primary reasons for this. The first is that, unlike America, Russian theater is by-and-large a director’s, rather than playwright’s, medium. Re-interpretation of classics, rather than the nurturance of emerging writers, is dominant. This once made good sense: under Soviet censorship, a directorial concept and actors’ gestures could pack considerable political wallop for an audience trained to read between the lines, at a time when controversial new work was not possible. The second is that control of most state-supported, institutional theaters is still firmly in the hands of men, many of whom are in their sixties and seventies (I can think of only one major theater in Moscow with a woman Artistic Director). For an American, noting that the most fervently creative periods on the stage here have been during times of greatest social uncertainty and transition, the 1930’s and late 1960’s/early 70’s, it has been curious that during the upheavals of the late decade, the Russian repertory remains dominated by classics.

This is a very short essay, and the previous paragraph is very much an over-simplification. There is some provocatively contemporary new work being staged, especially on the theatrical fringes, and some women playwrights, such as Liudmilla Petrushevskaya, have gained a degree of prominence. But theater in Russia is still very much a male-dominated enterprise, informed by an authoritarian methodology: actors serve the vision of the “master” director, typically a man.

What stance, then, should a male-with-feminist-sympathies, American guest director take?

My own response begins with a mindfulness of what a genuine privilege it is to be able to work

in Russia. The calibre of professional training of a Russian actor and the meticulous care lavished on the creation of each production create an overall quality of theater that is arguably the best in the world. The knowledge and passion of Russian audiences and the extent to which they pack a huge number of theaters on any given night are the envy of those working to sustain “serious” theater in the U.S.

Within the constraints of a polite guest, I have tried two strategies. The first, easier in theory than practice, is simply to direct works by American women. My first production was ‘night, Mother by Marsha Norman. Whether or not this two-character play, which focuses on the relationship between a mother and daughter, is a feminist work has been the subject of considerable discussion in this country. But I thought that the play, a classically structured, psychological drama, would provide a good trial run. During the first weeks of performance, the theater provided their audiences with a written questionnaire eliciting their reactions to the production. An interesting pattern emerged in the responses: women spectators were far more understanding and appreciative of the play than men. I was pleased.

The simpler-in-theory-than-practice caveat works on two levels: First, to say that one should stage plays by women begs questions of content and style. It presumes that women’s voices, per se, are valuable, and I think that this is true -- but only to an extent. And this argument goes well with my predilection to go slow in the area of stridency, in part to honor guest status, but more important, to acknowledge cultural differences. But, I can vividly imagine an opposing point of view, that honest artistic expression should not be confined by such diplomatic concerns. A second, more serious complication is that approval of productions stills rests with the artistic establishment. For example, I recently proposed a production of Constance Congdon’s wonderful play, Tales of the Lost Formicans, to the Artistic Director of a prominent theater. For some reason (it is very hard to press for a truly candid response), the proposal was set aside, and the theater suggested a couple of alternatives, both plays by men. Since one of the two was a worthy, progressive work in its own right, I decided to accept and not insist on my

original choice. The most likely explanation for the rejection of Formicans is that it was not understood or did not resonate with the male senior artistic staff, a gulf which I felt would defy my attempts to try to explain the piece.

The second strategy, which involves the methodology of the rehearsal process, is easier to implement. In this country, as we have witnessed the rapid emergence of women directors and of women-centered performance ensembles, a focus of discussion has been whether this would impact the creative process, itself. Indeed, women have played vital roles in the development of now widely-adopted collaborative approaches to the creation of productions, where means are found to let the explorations of actors, designers and technicians significantly influence the end result. As a director, I have been drawn to this way of working, and once my Russian actors, accustomed to a more authoritarian style, gained confidence that I was not abdicating a leadership role, they expressed pleasure and considerable satisfaction in the process. And, I trust that it is a small but significant measure towards empowering the voices of women (and men) within the ensemble.

Amid the dizzying transformations in Russia, it will be interesting to revisit these questions in the next few years.

by Joshua Karter

## A Bibliography of Women in Theater and Dance

Following is a very selective list of autobiographies and memoirs by women who have distinguished themselves in the fields of theater and dance. They are a very interesting group, and a surprising number of them were prolific authors, writing on the craft and technique of their chosen profession and on the arts in general. The following list, then, is only a jumping off point for further exploration of the contributions women have made to the performing arts of theater and dance. All of the titles are available in at least one of the libraries of the CTW Consortium, so the Consortium call numbers are included.

### **Baker, Josephine, 1906-1975.**

*Josephine*, by Josephine Baker and Jo Bouillon. New York: Paragon House, 1988, c1977. (GV1785.B3 A3 1988)

The story of the well-known African-American dancer and entertainer who spent much of her life as an ex-patriot American in Paris.

### **Barrymore, Ethel, 1879-1959.**

*Memories: an autobiography*. London: Hulton Press, 1956. (PN2287.B34 A3 1956)

The autobiography of the female member of America's first family of the theater.

### **Bernhardt, Sarah, 1844-1923.**

*Memories of my life, being my personal, professional, and social recollections as woman and artist*. New York: B. Blom, 1968. (PN2638.B5 A3 1968)

The reminiscences of "the Divine Sarah," perhaps the greatest actress France has produced—certainly the best known one.

### **Campbell, Patrick, Mrs., 1865-1940.**

*My life and some letters*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1922. (PN2598.C23 A3)

The autobiography of the English actress for whom her friend George Bernard Shaw wrote the part of Eliza Doolittle in *Pygmalion*.



**Cornell, Katharine, 1893-1974.**

*I wanted to be an actress: the autobiography of Katharine Cornell*, as told to Ruth Woodbury Sedgwick. New York: Random house, 1939. (PN2287.C62 A3 1939a)  
The story of one of America's foremost actresses, who was especially known for her portrayals of Elizabeth Barrett, Juliet, and Candida.

**Danilova, Alexandra, 1903-1997.**

*Chorua: the memoirs of Alexandra Danilova*. New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1986. (GV1785.D24 A3 1986)  
The memoirs of the Soviet-born ballerina who worked in the West with Balanchine and Diaghilev.

**De Mille, Agnes, 1905-1993.**

*Dance to the piper*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1952. (GV1785.D36 A3 1952)  
The first of a series of autobiographical writings of this well-known American choreographer and dancer.

**Duncan, Isadora, 1877-1927.**

*My life*. New York: Liveright, 1927. (GV1785.D8 A3)  
The autobiography of this controversial and legendary American concert dancer and choreographer.

**Fonteyn, Margot, Dame, 1919-1991.**

*Margot Fonteyn: autobiography*. New York: Knopf, 1976. (GV1785.F63 A35)  
The story of one of the finest ballet dancers of the mid-twentieth century, who danced with the (English) Royal Ballet and was Nureyev's partner.

**Gordon, Ruth, 1896-1985.**

*My side: the autobiography of Ruth Gordon*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976. (PN2287.G64 A295 1976)  
The autobiography of the comic actress, playwright, and screenwriter, who was the original Dolly Levi in *The matchmaker*.

**Graham, Martha, 1894-1991.**

*Blood memory*. New York: Doubleday, 1991. (GV1785.G7 A3 1991)  
The story of America's pioneer of modern dance.

**Hayes, Helen, 1900-1993.**

*On reflection; an autobiography*, by Helen Hayes with Sanford Dody. New York: M. Evans; distributed by Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1968. (PN2287.H35 A32)  
The reminiscences of the actress often referred to as the "First Lady of the American Theatre."

**Hellman, Lillian, 1906-1984.**

*Three.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1979. Contents: *An unfinished woman.*--*Pentimento.*--*Scoundrel time.* (PS3515.E343 Z4994)

The three volumes of autobiographical writings by the well-known playwright who wrote *The little foxes*, *The children's hour*, and *Toys in the attic*.

**Hepburn, Katharine, 1909-**

*Me: the stories of my life.* New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1991. (PN2287.H45 A3 1991)

The story of Hartford's own star of stage and screen.

**Jamison, Judith, 1943-**

*Dancing spirit: an autobiography*, by Judith Jamison with Howard Kaplan. New York: Doubleday, 1993. (GV1785.J26 A3 1993)

The autobiography of the widely recognized African-American modern dance artist so closely associated with the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre.

**Kemble, Fanny, 1809-1893.**

*Fanny Kemble: journal of a young actress*, edited by Monica Gough. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990. (PN2598.K4 A3 1990)

One of the journals kept by this prolific actress of a famous English theatrical family on her experiences on the stage.

**Le Gallienne, Eva, 1899-1991.**

*With a quiet heart; an autobiography.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press 1974, c1953. (PN2287.L3 A35 1974)

The autobiography of a famous actress who devoted her life to the cause of classical dramatic repertoire in twentieth-century America.

**Makarova, Natalia, 1940-**

*A dance autobiography.* New York: Knopf, 1979. (GV1785.M26 A35 1979)

The autobiography of the well-known and loved Soviet ballerina who defected to the West and became associated with the American Ballet Theatre.

**Markova, Alicia, Dame, 1910-**

*Markova remembers.* London: Hamilton, 1986. (GV1785.M3 A3 1986)

The story of the ballet dancer who participated in the establishment of modern English ballet and who, with Anton Dolin, one of her dance partners, formed the Markova-Dolin company.

**Martin, Mary, 1913-1991**

*My heart belongs.* New York: Morrow, 1976. (ML420.M332 A3)

The memoirs of the musical comedy star who is known for her roles as Peter Pan, Maria in *The Sound of Music*, and Nellie Forbush in *South Pacific*.

**Miller, Norma, 1919-**

*Swingin' at the Savoy: the memoir of a jazz dancer*, by Norma Miller with Evette Jensen. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996. (GV1784 M556 1996)

The story of Harlem's legendary Savoy Ballroom during the Swing era by one of its dancers and choreographers.

**St. Denis, Ruth, 1880-1968.**

*An unfinished life: an autobiography*. New York: Harper, 1939. (GV1785.S3 A3)

The autobiography of the rather exotic American interpretive dancer who teamed up with Ted Shawn to do concert tours and to form a school, these collaborative efforts being known as Denishawn.

**Tallchief, Maria, 1925-**

*Maria Tallchief: America's prima ballerina*, by Maria Tallchief with Larry Kaplan. New York: Henry Holt, 1997. (GV1785.T32 A3 1997)

The story of one of America's greatest ballerinas, who was born on an Indian reservation, was married to Balanchine, and became the best known dancer in the New York City Ballet.

**Terry, Ellen, Dame, 1847-1928.**

*The story of my life*. New York: Schocken Books 1982. (PN2598.T4 A3 1982)

The memoirs of one of the best loved actresses of the nineteenth century, noted especially for her portrayals of Shakespearean roles.

## **Women in Dance: A Selected Videography**

### **Acrobats of God**

A satirical treatment of the creation of a ballet with particular emphasis on the creative efforts of the choreographer, featuring the Martha Graham Dance Company.

**TC: VID 1420**

### **The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**

*alternative title: An Evening with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater*

Features "Divining"/Judith Jamison

**TC: VID 0907**

### **American Ballet Theatre in San Francisco**

Features "Great Galloping Gottschalk"/ choreographed by Lynn Taylor-Corbett

### **Anna Sokolow**

One of the most notable modern dance choreographers, Sokolow speaks about her career, with historical film clips, and shows the choreographic process during rehearsals of "Room".

**TC: VID 1764**

### **Barbara Morgan**

Barbara Morgan discusses the details of her photographs of Martha Graham, along with other topics.

### **Betty Jones**

Documentary of the teaching and performance of Betty Jones, founding member of the Jose Limon Dance Company. Includes her own recollections of her life in dance.

**WU: GV1783.S65 no.8**

### **Beyond the Mainstream**

Explores the non-traditional modern dance trends. Includes interviews with Trisha Brown and Yvonne Rainier.

**TC: VID 0064**

**WU: GV1783 .B49 1980**

### **The Catherine Wheel**

Performed by the Twyla Tharp Dance Company

**TC: VID 0463**

### **Circle the Earth: A Peace Dance with the Planet (Anna Halprin's World Dance for Peace)**

A compilation of New Age modern dances celebrating peace and harmony

**Clytemnestra (Dance in America)**

Martha Graham agreed to choreograph and reconceive her 1958 work, the first evening-long piece in modern dance. Yuriko Kimura dances the title role which was originally performed by Miss Graham with soloists from the Graham Company. Clytemnestra is based on Aeschylus' trilogy "The Oresteia."  
WU: GV1782.62 .C69 1980z

**Cortege of Eagles**

Presents Martha Graham and her company in a dance performance of Queen Hecuba at the fall of Rome. Features Martha Graham as a bereaved queen who, when faced with the inevitable consequences of violent times, is driven to terrible violence herself.  
TC: VID 1408

**Dance and Myth: the World of Jean Erdman**

Traces the life and work of dancer, choreographer, and director Jean Erdman. Features archival photographs, footage of Erdman at work, interviews with Erdman and her collaborators, and performances of her dancers. (3 volumes)

**Dance and Social Consciousness in the 30's and 40's (Eye on Dance; 117)**

Includes interviews with Anna Sokolow and Sophie Maslow.

**Dancing on the Edge: Selections from the American Dance Festival Archives**

Includes Pilobolus and State of Darkness / Molissa Fenley  
WU: GV1783 .S65 no.5-6 v.1-2

**Dansaren**

Follows the young and gifted Katja Björner through years of intensive training at the Royal Swedish Ballet School as she develops into an international ballet star.

**Day on Earth**

Presents a 1972 performance of Doris Humphrey's 1947 pastoral dance work of the same title, featuring Juilliard student dancers.  
TC: VID 1418

**Denishawn: the Birth of Modern Dance**

The story of one of America's most influential modern dance companies, founded by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn.  
TC: VID 1285

**Doris Humphrey Technique: the Creative Potential**

Written and directed by Ernestine Stodell, this video features the 1934 film, *Air for the G String*, excerpts from a 1936 film on the Humphrey technique, and contemporary performances of *Quasi-Valse*, *Two Ecstatic Themes*, and *Etude Patetico*.  
TC: VID 1760  
WU: GV1782.5 .H85 1992

**An Evening of Dance and Conversation with Martha Graham**

Performances of three of Graham's creations: *Errand into the maze* -- *Acts of Light* -- *Cave of the Heart*.  
TC: VID 0988

### **Five Dances by Martha Graham**

El Penitente (1940) -- Steps in the Street (1936) -- Diversion of Angels (1948) -- Herodiade -- Maple Leaf Rag (1990)

**TC: VID 2193**

### **Four Pioneers**

Introduces four major choreographers--Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Hanya Holm--who revolted against the conventions of ballet to produce American modern dance. Each choreographer explains her view of the meaning dance should have within the arts. Includes a full production of Doris Humphrey's Passacaglia by the American Dance Theatre at Lincoln Center in 1965.

**TC: F-018 (16mm film)**

**WU: GV1783.F68 1990**

### **Four Women**

A dance interpretation of the ballad by Nina Simone about four common stereotypes of Black women.

### **Glances at the Past: Performance of the Minuet (*Eye on Dance; 59*)**

Includes interviews with Catherine Turocy and Ann Jacoby.

### **Hanya: A Portrait of a Dance Pioneer**

Traces the career of Hanya Holm, dancer-choreographer, from the 20's through the Broadway stage. Includes archival footage from the 30's and 40's and interviews with many of her students.

**TC: VID 0967**

### **Irina Nijinska & Ann Jacoby (*Eye on Dance; 187*)**

Guests discuss key contributions associated with the performance and experimental choreography of two female artists: Francoise Prevost (1680-1741) and Bronislava Nijinska (1891-1979)

### **Isadora Duncan Dance: Technique and Repertory Performed by the Isadora Duncan Dance Ensemble**

Combines demonstration of Duncan techniques with a narrated history of the Duncan schools and examples of Duncan's choreography through three complete works.

**TC: VID 1759**

### **Jane Comfort and Company**

How I Got Like That -- Cliff Notes: Macbeth -- Artificial Horizon -- Portrait -- Awake in the Invisible Room -- Four Screaming Women -- Let's Just Sit Back and Think General Thoughts -- Street Talk -- Soap Opera.

### **Jane Comfort & Wilhelmina Frankfurt (*Eye on Dance; 153*)**

Discussion of the effects of pregnancy on dancers.

### **Luciana Proano, Astrid Hadad (*Eye on Dance; 324*)**

Luciano Proano, Peruvian-born dancer and choreographer, and Astrid Hadad, a Mexican vocalist and performance artist, discuss how they draw upon their ancestral heritage for works dealing with contemporary attitudes and issues. They talk about major concerns of their work, particularly the status of women in their respective countries, and their ideas of the artist's role in society.



### **Making Dances: Seven Postmodern Choreographers**

Interviews, rehearsal and performance sequences with contemporary choreographers, including Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Meredith Monk, and Sara Rudner.

**TC: VID 1925**

### **Margot Fonteyn**

A documentary on this famous ballerina featuring performance footage and interviews with her contemporaries. Presents Fonteyn herself as she speaks candidly about her career ranging from her first dancing lesson to her worldwide success, and discusses her lifelong love affair with her husband and her involvement in political intrigue and revolution.

### **Martha Graham: An American Original in Performance**

Includes "A Dancer's World", "Night Journey" and "Appalachian Spring".

### **Martha Graham: Dance on Film**

A compilation of three works dealing with Martha Graham, one of which is an introduction by Graham to her methodology, the other two being complete dance works produced by Nathan Kroll.

**TC: GV1782.6 .M37 1995 (laserdisc)**

### **Martha Graham: The Dancer Revealed**

A documentary of this founder of modern dance. Includes interviews with Agnes de Mille, Erick Hawkins, Ron Protas and others. Excerpts from: Acts of Light -- Errand into the Maze -- Frontier -- Appalachian Spring -- American Document -- Primitive Mysteries -- El Penitente -- Night Journey.

**TC: VID 1734**

### **Martha Graham in Japan**

Three ballets performed by Martha Graham and her troupe. Acts of Light (1981, music, Carl Nielsen) -- Errand into the Maze (1947, music, Gian-Carlo Menotti) -- Rite of Spring (1984, music, Igor Stravinsky).

### **Martha Graham in Performance**

A Dancer's World-- Night Journey -- Appalachian Spring.

**TC: VID 0908**

### **Meg Harper, Elizabeth Streb & Blondell Cummings**

New expressions of female identity in dance.

### **Meredith Monk (4 American Composers; 3)**

Incorporates performance and conversation with Meredith Monk, composer/choreographer/filmmaker.

**TC: VID 1395**

### **Molissa Fenley**

Features an interview with Fenley in which she discusses her choreography and her approach to the creative process, as well as footage of important pieces in her repertoire.

### **On Dancing Isadora's Dances**

Annabelle Gamson is shown rehearsing and performing dances choreographed by Isadora Duncan while she describes special aspects of Duncan's style and her influence on the world of dance.

**WU: GV1785.D8 O5 1988**

**Performance: The Living Art**

Documentary on the performance art movement. Includes interviews with Meredith Monk and Joan Jonas.

**Praise House**

Combines elements of theater, dance, and music based on the rhythms and rituals of Africa. Julie Dash collaborated with Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, founder and choreographer of Urban Bush Women, to explore the source of creativity and its effect on three generations of African American women.

**Remembering Thelma**

A profile of dance instructor and performer Thelma Hill. Contains rare footage of the original Alvin Ailey Dance Theater and the New York Negro Ballet of the 1950s.

**WU: ON-ORDER**

**Retracing Steps**

Explores avant-garde dance in the 1980's through interviews with young choreographers, including Molissa Fenley, Wendy Perron, Johanna Boyce, and Diane Martel, and excerpts from dance performances.

**TC: VID 1924**

**Seraphic Dialogue**

Presents Martha Graham and her company in a dance interpretation of Joan of Arc. Features Graham as Joan of Arc at the moment of her exaltation when she looks back at phases of her legend as a maiden, warrior, and martyr.

**TC: VID 1417**

**Speaking of Dance**

Part 2 of this series of conversations with contemporary masters of modern dance profiles Anna Sokolow.

**WU: GV1783.S65**

**Syvilla: They Dance to Her Drum**

A portrait of Syvilla Fort focusing on the beauty of her choreography, the virtuosity of her dancing, and her role as teacher of a generation of African American dancers.

**Tap: With Gregory Hines**

Includes "Women in Tap": trio followed by solos by Jennifer Lane, Camden Richman, and Dianne Walker, joined in the finale by Hines.

**Trailblazers of Modern Dance**

Documentary of Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Dennis and Martha Graham, and their contributions to modern dance.

**TC: F-083 (16mm film)**

**Trisha Brown**

Trisha Brown, recipient of the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, speaks with Charles Reinhart about her life in dance.

**Walter Sorell, Susan Manning & Susanne Linke (*Eye on Dance; 184*)**

Reflections on Mary Wigman, modern dance pioneer and major proponent of the German expressionist movement in dance.



**When the Fires Dance Between Two Poles: Mary Wigman, 1886-1973**

One of the founders of modern dance discusses her work and her theories; includes footage of performances of her most notable pieces.

**With My Red Fires and New Dance: Two Masterpieces of Modern Choreography by Doris Humphrey**

Performed by a company especially assembled by the American Dance Festival in 1972 to honor Doris Humphrey, these two selections are part of a trilogy focusing on human relationships.

**TC: VID 0968**

*Also, see UC Berkeley's Media Resources Center's website at:  
<http://library.berkeley.edu/MRC/>*

by Susan J. Erickson