

DANCE MAGAZINE: DUO LAYERS THE VISUAL WITH THE EMOTIONAL

BUGUSI/FOREMAN DANCE
NEW VICTORY THEATER
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Buglisi/Foreman Dance was born seven years ago when Jacquelyn Buglisi, Terese Capucilli, Christine Dakin, and Donlin Foreman—all former principals of the Martha Graham Dance Company—decided they weren't ready to retire. Since then, more than a dozen dancers have joined them: seasoned New York favorites, like Elizabeth Roxas from Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Nancy Turano from Ballet Hispanico, along with talented youngsters just out of school. The resulting company of seventeen, big by modern dance standards and exceptionally diverse, is a splendid instrument, exploited to the full by Buglisi and Foreman in their choreography.

Of the two, it is Buglisi's work which most intrigues. She works in images that seduce the eye as much as the imagination, with shapes, luminous textures, and stilled moments in time that offer an adventure in perception. Her new *Sand* is bathed in golden light. There is string music by Philip Glass and high, high lifts for three couples (Roxas and Kevin Predmore, Dakin and Stephen Pier, Miki Orihara and Foreman), who look like totem poles or figureheads afloat on a golden sea. The partnering is complex and charged with eroticism. But the emphasis is on sharing, not splayed female limbs and crotches. Not that Buglisi shies from stretchiness. In her choreography for Roxas, she revels in the eye-catching interplay of her limbs, even as she spotlights her speed and thrilling falls and her partner's elegant line. For Orihara, she works a different palette. Here the accent is on birdlike fragility and lyricism.

Foreman's *Mean Ole' World* was the season's other premiere. With a marvelous jazz score by Lisa DeSpain performed live by Catfish Corner, this is a work that makes you want to join the swing-era revelers onstage. The seven women are in glamorous reds (the period dresses are by Elisa Jimenez), and they really go to town, both with the fine trio of men and without them, jamming like the band on a night out with friends...

Happily, in Buglisi's *Against All Odds* (*Quand Meme*), choreographed in 1998 and this season's curtain raiser, Capucilli has a role worthy of the great tragedian she is. Who else could impersonate Sarah Bernhardt, with her larger-than-life passions, her quick-change personalities, her eloquent physicality? As the legendary diva, Capucilli is nothing less than spellbinding.

Buglisi is a rarity in today's world, a woman who delights in the many splendid forms of female being. Probably no woman, other than Graham, has plumbed such emotional depths choreographically. When the curtain rises on last year's *Suspended Women*, one sees a row of doll-like phantoms, in long gauzy skirts iridescent like mother-of-pearl. They wear their hair down, and as they begin to move in their semi-undress, with their frayed bodices and petticoats, they seem both erotic and beautiful, caged birds suspended in time. The music is by Ravel. Men appear, and with them desire and violation, pleasure and pain. And then it is over, and the women are left, blank and beautiful, with their dream of recuperated innocence.