

COPY

REPERTORY DANCE THEATRE

STUDY GUIDE

WORLDVIEW II

WORLDVIEW II was made possible in part by grants from Emma Eccles Jones Foundation, Marriner S. Eccles Foundation, The Institute at Deer Valley, National Endowment for the Arts, Utah Arts Council, Salt Lake City Art Council and the Salt Lake County's Zoo, Arts Program.

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Attending a performance of music, theater, or dance can be a rich and exciting experience, one full of great opportunities. Whether you are attending a performance in a theater or watching a demonstration in your school, you should realize that the audience is part of the performance, and the success of the event, in part, depends on you. You have a responsibility to show respect for the performers, for the theater, and for the other people in the audience. If you are prepared with an open mind, and if you are willing to give your full attention to the experience, you may have an unforgettable adventure...one that could change your life.

- Attending a dance performance is different than going to a sporting event or a movie, and requires different behavior than what is considered normal at a football game.
- An artist has spent years studying to perfect a skill. Performers want to communicate, want to create a special atmosphere, a kind of magic. They have spent a great deal of time preparing and rehearsing. Performers must concentrate and so must the audience.
- Be sure to arrive before the performance begins. If you do arrive late, wait in the rear of the theater to be seated until there is an intermission or break in the sequence of the performance.
- A dance performance is an event where mutual respect between the audience and the performers will add to the success of the experience. Leave your gum, candy, snacks, or anything else that might disturb you or other people in the audience at home.
- During the performance think ahead and prepare to stay in your seat until intermission or the end of the concert. You may disturb others if you need to leave your seat during the performance.
- You may be watching something totally unfamiliar to you. The movement language or other elements of the production may seem strange or unusual. The costumes are designed to add artistic dimension or reveal the lines of the human body. Leotards and tights are often worn to accentuate movement, design, shape, and form. The human body is a beautiful and expressive "instrument" and should be appreciated in an artful way.
- There are acceptable ways to show your appreciation to a performer. Applause at the end of a piece during the bow is the best way of expressing approval and thanking a performer.

HOW TO WATCH DANCE...LEARNING TO BE PERCEPTIVE

You don't have to have any special training or previous experience to be able to enjoy a dance concert. Dance is usually a silent language that everyone can understand. You will be taking in information with all your senses...with your eyes, your ears, and even with your muscles. You may be fascinated with the physical activity you see, or be intrigued with the music, or with the production elements---the lighting, costumes, or props. Your muscles may even react to the action with a "kinetic" response as you empathize with the movement. It is very natural to want to get up and dance up the aisles after watching an inspiring dance performance.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE DANCE PERFORMANCE

Clear your mind of other thoughts (general or personal). Open your mind and spirit to the moment; concentrate, and raise your awareness to the immediate environment.

-As the lights lower and/or the music begins, take a deep breath and relax in your seat. You are beginning to watch motion, movement, shape, line, rhythm, tempo, color, space, time, energy...dance.

-Allow yourself to release the notion that you already know what dance means, or has to mean, or that you have to figure something out. Release the notion that you have to look at dance as if you were reading a book. doesn't necessarily have a story line.

-If you watch the dance with openness, you may experience an emotion, an image, or a feeling which you may not be able to describe. You may not know why or where reactions come from, but don't worry. That is part of the magic of theater.

You may want to ask yourself some questions as you watch:

1. What are the **sensory properties** in the dance?

What do you see? What do you hear? What are the dancers actually doing?

2. What are the **technical properties** in the dance? What kind of space is being used? What shapes and designs are being made? What kind of energy, dynamics, or motional qualities are being used?

3. What are the **emotional properties** in the dance ? How does the movement make you feel ?

Every piece of choreography has a reason for being. Dances may be celebrations, tell stories, define moods, interpret poems, express emotions, carve designs, or visualize music. As you watch a dance, a story may occur to you because of your past experience. However, not all dances relate stories. The sequences do not have to make literal sense. Allow images and personal feelings to come to the surface of your consciousness.

After the performance, feel free to discuss your thoughts with others, but do not be disturbed if you find that others have a different reaction than yours. Think about your own personal images, and thoughts. Was it fun to watch? Did the dance remind you of experiences in your own life? Did the choreography inspire you to express yourself, write a poem, draw a picture, or make up your own dance?

Following the performance, we suggest that the class hold a period of discussion and sharing.

Dance Criticism

Criticism (writing or talking about dance) or evaluation of a dance performance is affected by past experience, sensitivity, involvement, and personal judgment. Try to be multi-dimensional in your responses by describing visual and auditory perceptions and feelings. When you evaluate a concert give your reasons for anything you liked or disliked.

Criticism entails three processes:

Description, interpretation and judgment of a particular piece being analyzed.

When you write or talk about a dance performance you should consider or analyze four different aspects of the dance.

1. The **choreographic elements**: the overall form, use of space, rhythmic and timing factors, use of dynamics, style, music, and movement invention.
2. The **performance elements**: the technical skill of the dancers, their projection, commitment, ability to communicate.
3. The **production elements**: the costumes, lighting, props, sets, music.
4. The **general impact**: the clarity of intent, concept, invention of the dance performance.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

What emotional reactions did you have? What moved you?

What was the most interesting feature of the performance?

What in particular do you remember about the experience?

Was there an apparent motive for the dance? Was it dramatic, abstract, a comedy, a mood piece, etc.

Were there any social, political, or historical elements?

Was the choreographer skilled in trying to convey the message?

What did you notice about the form?

How did the piece begin, where did it go, and how did it end?

Was there a logical sequence, or was the form fragmented?

Was there variety, contrast, balance, unity, repetition, and or harmony?

Were the performers skilled technically?

How well did they portray their characters or communicate with movement?

What kind of music was used?

Did the music support the ideas in the dance or conflict with? Did the movement go with the music or against it?

What were your reactions to the technical or production elements, the staging, decor, props, lighting, costumes? What made you react this way?

Was the performance a positive experience for you? Did it stimulate questions or ideas?

What could have helped your understanding or valuing of the dance performance?

RDT also presents two distinct solos representing the work of yet another master of the genre -- Daniel Nagrin. Created in 1948, *Strange Hero* and *Spanish Dance* portray forceful character studies of the post W.W.II era. *Strange Hero* is inspired by the satirical anti-hero of American gangster movies. *Spanish Dance* is a passionate abstraction of a flamenco dancer.

Also on the program is a work commissioned by RDT to honor the 2002 Winter Games. Focusing on the spirit of competition, Danial Shapiro and Joanie Smith triumphantly deliver *Turf*. Known for their athletic and daring choreography, Shapiro and Smith's *Turf* promises to engage and captivate.

RDT resumes its world journey with haunting Israeli music and a beautiful love duet titled *More About Love*, by Israeli-born choreographer Yacov Sharir. Mr. Sharir is a dual citizen of Israel and the United States and director of Sharir Dance Company, of Austin Texas.

Returning to the Capitol Theatre stage is the passionate, humanistic and sensuous dance -- *Proximidad*. Isabel Bustos, artistic director of *Retazos* -- Cuba's leading modern dance company, has created a solo that blends theatrical gesture and dance, while emphasizing human emotion. RDT performs *Proximidad* with four women and recently acquired the piece for its repertory in 1997.

This international concert, *Worldview II*, runs at 8 p.m. on October 2nd and 3rd at the Capitol Theatre, 50 West 200 South. Tickets are \$14 with discounts for students and seniors. Reservations are made through ArtTix (355-2787).

Worldview II is supported by the generous contributions of the following agencies and foundations: Emma Eccles Jones Foundation, Marriner S. Eccles Foundation, The Institute at Deer Valley, National Endowment for the Arts, Utah Arts Council, Salt Lake City Art Council, and the Salt Lake County Zoo Arts and Parks Program.

For a *free* pre-concert orientation, join Carolyn Brown, original cast member of *Septet* and Mr. Wu from *Cloud Gate Dance Company* in an informal lecture demonstration at the Rose Wagner Performing Arts Center, 138 West Broadway, Downtown Salt Lake City, on Thursday, September 24th at 7:30 p.m. This *free* community project is made possible through the funding provided by the Salt Lake County Zoo, Arts and Parks Program.

CROSSING THE BLACK WATER

RDT has been inspired by the winter Olympic games that are to take place in Utah in 2002. We are re-staging and commissioning dances from the five continents to gain an awareness and appreciation of modern dance from all over the world. This season we have acquired a piece from Mr. Lin Hwai-min who is the founder and Artistic Director of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre located in Taipei, Taiwan.

BRIEF HISTORY OF TAIWAN

Taiwan is situated in the Pacific Ocean about 100 miles from the southeastern coast of the Chinese mainland. It is 245 miles long and 89 miles wide. Taiwan province includes the Penghu Archipelago, a group of 64 islands previously known as the Pescadores, and 21 other islands. Mandarin Chinese is the official language in Taiwan, though other dialects are also spoken. Many people can speak English. The population exceeds 20 million, which makes the island one of the world's most densely populated places. Most of the people of Taiwan originate from the Chinese mainland.

Taiwan has a rich, colorful history. Waves of conquerors have swept the island since the early 600s when the Chinese began to settle its coasts. It became a protectorate of the Chinese Empire in 1206, the year the great Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan founded the Yuan dynasty. For centuries Taiwan was known as Formosa, a name derived from the 16th century Portuguese mariners who named it Ilha Formosa (Beautiful Island.)

Taiwan changed hands many times between the 17th and 19th century when it was invaded by the Dutch, the Spanish, and the French. At the end of the first Chinese-Japanese War in 1895, China ceded the island to Japan. With the defeat of Japan in World War II, China regained the area. When communists overran the mainland of China in 1949, Taiwan became the refuge of Nationalist China. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek led his defeated forces to the island and made Taipei the capitol of Nationalist China. The United States aided Chiang's government as a barrier to further communist expansion. Taiwan is now a republic.

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHER: LIN HWAI-MIN

According to legend, Cloud Gate is the name of the oldest known dance in China, a ritual dance that was performed 5,000 years ago. In 1973 choreographer Lin Hwai-min adopted this classical name as the name of the first modern dance company ever organized by Chinese dancers. One of the most renowned choreographers in Asia, Mr. Lin often draws his inspiration from Asian myths, legends and folklore, and blends traditional theater elements with Western dance techniques in his choreography, creating a unique dance style that is both distinctive and exciting.

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHY: *CROSSING THE BLACK WATER*

Historical evidence shows that the Chinese crossed the Black Water, now known as the straits of Taiwan, from Mainland China to settle in Taiwan before the 11th century. *Crossing The Black Water* is an excerpt from *LEGACY*, a full-length work that depicts the sage of Taiwanese ancestors who braved the violent sea to settle on the island 300 years ago.

Mr. Ray Cook re-staged the work on RDT and members of Performing Dance Company, students at the University of Utah modern dance department. Mr. Cook set the work using a score that he notated. Labanotation is a method of writing movement down in much the same way that music is written down. Mr. Wu I-fang from Cloud Gate Dance Theater came from Taiwan to coach the piece.

Guest Choreographers

Lin Hwai-min

Founder and Artistic Director of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, Mr. Lin studied Chinese opera movement in his native Taiwan, modern dance in New York, and classical court dance in Korea and Japan. He founded the company in 1973. One of the most renowned choreographers in Asia, Mr. Lin often draws his inspiration from Asian myths, legends and folklore, and blends traditional theater elements with Western dance techniques in his choreography, creating a unique dance style that is both distinctive and exciting. In 1983, Jaycees International named Lin Hwai-min one of the ten outstanding young persons in the world for his artistic achievements. He has been the recipient of the most prestigious arts awards in Taiwan. An acclaimed writer, his novel *Circada* is an all-time bestseller in Taiwan and several of his works have been translated into English and published in the USA. He holds an MFA from the Writer's Workshop, University of Iowa. Mr. Lin founded the Department of Dance at Taiwan's National Institute of the Arts in 1983 and served as its chairman for five years. In 1993 and 1994 he was the founding dean of the institute's graduate dance program. He has also been a guest artist in the Dance Department at UCLA and has taught and performed at the American Dance Festival. In 1990, he was a Fulbright Scholar at the Department of Performance studies, Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. Lin Hwai-min has been invited to direct *Rashomon*, a new opera to be premiered in September 1996 at the Graz Opera House, Austria.

Daniel Nagrin

Daniel Nagrin's career as a dancer, choreographer and teacher spans five decades, from the world of Broadway where he was once voted Best Male Dancer, to films, to solo concert artist, to lecturer and artist-in-residence on the university circuit. Early, he was associated with one of the founders of modern dance in America, Helen Tamiris. They worked together on Broadway and co-directed the TAMIRIE-NAGRIN DANCE COMPANY. He later directed *The Workgroup*, an improvisational dance company. Mr. Nagrin is the creator and performer of an extensive solo dance repertory which he has toured since 1957 throughout the United States, Europe and the Pacific. He has had extensive experience teaching movement for actors and has been engaged for many long-term residencies and summer workshops at major universities including nine summer workshops with the American Dance Festival. After ten years as Professor of Dance at Arizona State University, he is now a retired Professor Emeritus of Dance. Mr. Nagrin has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards including outstanding recognition by the National Endowment for the Arts, Arizona State University, the State University of New York and the American Dance Festival. In addition, Mr. Nagrin has authored numerous book on dance including, *How to Dance Forever*, *Dance And the Specific Image: Improvisation* and *The Six Questions: Acting Technique For Dance Performance*.

Isabel Bustos

Isabel Bustos is professor and choreographer at the National School of Modern Dance and is on the faculty of the Superior Art Institute in Havana, Cuba. She began her training at the National School of Ballet, was a dancer with Cuba's National Modern Dance Group and the National Dance Company of Ecuador, and studied choreography at the Sorbonne University in Paris. She is a member of the Cuban National Union of Writers and Artists and she was given the prestigious "Distinction of National Culture" award from the Cuban Ministry of Culture in 1993. Ms. Bustos founded her own dance company, DANZA TEATRO RETAZOS, in 1987 and began a new step in the development of Cuban Contemporary dance. Isabel Bustos has created a very unique repertory, a blending of theatrical gesture and dance. She has synthesized many aspects of Latin American culture into a compelling form of expression which offers a glimpse into a world where imagination and reality intersect. Fantasy, metaphysics, the unexpected, the subconscious and spirituality are some of her basic themes.

Guest Choreographers

Merce Cunningham

Trained at the Cornish Institute of Allied Arts in Seattle, Merce Cunningham became a soloist in the Martha Graham company from 1939-1945. He presented his first solo concert in 1944 with composer, John Cage and continued to present annual concerts until the formation of Merce Cunningham Dance Company at Black Mountain College in the summer of 1953

Since that time Cunningham has choreographed well over one hundred works for his Company and other companies including the Boston Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, the Culberg Ballet and Ballet Rampert

Merce Cunningham is one of the first choreographers to challenge the conventions of the founding generation of modern dance. The innovations he has employed have propelled dance in completely new directions.

The use of chance procedures in creating and executing movement, removing dance's dependence upon musical parameters and liberating dance from an exclusively centerstage focus are among his methods. Cunningham's work is marked by his unique collaborations with renowned, visual artists, composers and filmmakers including John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and Elliot Caplan and Charles Atlas.

Cunningham has been honored with distinguished awards including The Dance magazine Award, 1960; the Medal of the Society for the Advancement of Dancing in Sweden, 1964; the Gold Medal for Choreographic Invention at the Fourth International Festival of Dance in Paris, 1966; an honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Illinois, 1972; the New York State Award, 1975; The Capezio Award, 1977; the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for lifetime achievement, 1982; the Mayor of New York's Award of Honor for Arts and Culture, 1983 ; the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, 1985; and the National Medal of Arts from President Bush are only some of the acknowledgments of Cunningham's unequivocal status as a master of dance.

Danial Shapiro and Joanie Smith

Danial Shapiro and Joanie Smith established Shapiro & Smith in 1987. Since then their work has enjoyed enthusiastic reception for performances and residencies across the U.S., in Europe, Asia and Canada. Shapiro and Smith met during their years dancing with Murray Louis and Alwin Nikolais. In 1985, they spent a year in Helsinki, Finland on a Fulbright Lectureship grant awarded to Ms. Smith and they began the development of a collaborative process through which they created their work. Their choreography has been commissioned by companies as diverse as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Judith Marcuse Dance Company of Vancouver, B.C., Phoenix Dance Company of Leeds, UK, and the PACT Dance Company in Pretoria, South Africa. Shapiro & Smith have built international reputations as teachers and have taught their unique blend of dance and athleticism at major international festivals and set repertory for over 50 college or university dance programs throughout the U.S. They have been the Company in Residence at Montclair State University since 1990, and Ms. Smith currently holds the Barbara Barker Endowed Chair in the Department of Theater Arts and Dance at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Yacov Sharir

Yacov Sharir graduated from the Bezalal Academy of Art in sculpture and ceramics. He continued his studies in dance at the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance, the Bat-Sheva Dance Company School, the Stuttgart Ballet, and Ballet Theatre Contemporaine. A dual citizen of Israel and the United States, Sharir was the founder of American Deaf Dance Company, which pioneered the inclusion of deaf artists in professional dance. He subsequently founded Sharir Dance Company, the resident professional dance company of the University of Texas at Austin. He has choreographed for such companies as the Hartford Ballet, Dallas Ballet, Bat-Sheva Dance Company, and Kibbutz Dance Company of Israel, along with more than thirty works for the Sharir Dance Company.

This performance is made possible through funding from the Utah State Legislature,
State Board of Education, Utah Arts Council and Salt Lake County (ZAP Tax).

In order to continue this service to the schools,

WE NEED YOUR EVALUATION.

Please fill out this questionnaire and return in the enclosed envelope by November 1, 1998.

Thank you.

Repertory Dance Theatre
WORLDVIEW II QUESTIONNAIRE
1998-99 SEASON

GROUP LEADER'S NAME _____

SCHOOL _____

ADDRESS _____

Street

City

State

Zip

1. Grade(s) attending _____ Size of Group _____

2. What is the title of your position? _____

3. How would you rate the quality of the performance?

Poor

1

2

3

4

Excellent

5

4. Please rate your group's reaction to the performance.

Not interested

1

2

3

4

Enthusiastic

5

5. Was the show appropriate for the age of your group?

() Too young for my group

() Just right

() Too old for my group

6. Did the performance stimulate:

Group discussion?

() Yes

() No

Group projects?

() Yes

() No

Individual activities?

() Yes

() No

7. When did you use the Study Guide?

() Before and after the trip

() Only before the trip

() Only after the trip

() Did not use the Study Guide

() Did not receive the Study Guide

8. Please rate the usefulness of the Study Guide to your program.

Not Useful

Very Useful

1

2

3

4

5

9. Can you find ways to link the content of the performance to the State Core Curriculum in any of the following areas:

Music

Visual Arts

Dance

Language Arts

Social Studies

Other _____

10. In what way do you find these kinds of performances valuable for your students.

RDT would appreciate you or any of your students writing comments which we could pass on to the State Board of Education or the Legislature who have made this performance possible. Thank you.

Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT)

PO Box 510427

Salt Lake City, Utah 84151-0427

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Thank you.

Repertory Dance Theatre
WORLDVIEW II QUESTIONNAIRE
1998-99 SEASON

GROUP LEADER'S NAME Marie Weibel

SCHOOL Bluffdale Elem.

ADDRESS 14323 S. 2700 W.

Bluffdale Ut 84065
City State Zip

1. Grade(s) attending 6th Size of Group 100

2. What is the title of your position? classroom teacher

3. How would you rate the quality of the performance?

Poor 1 2 3 4 Excellent
5

4. Please rate your group's reaction to the performance.

Not interested 1 2 3 4 Enthusiastic
5

5. Was the show appropriate for the age of your group?

Too young for my group Just right Too old for my group

6. Did the performance stimulate:

Group discussion? Yes No
Group projects? Yes No
Individual activities? Yes No

7. When did you use the Study Guide?

Before and after the trip
 Only before the trip
 Only after the trip
 Did not use the Study Guide
 Did not receive the Study Guide

8. Please rate the usefulness of the Study Guide to your program.

Not Useful

1

2

3

4

Very Useful

5

9. Can you find ways to link the content of the performance to the State Core Curriculum in any of the following areas:

Music

Visual Arts

Dance

Language Arts

Social Studies

Other

Learning acceptable behavior in a new setting

10. In what way do you find these kinds of performances valuable for your students.

This may be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many of our students. I hope it encourages them to participate in a new art form.

RDT would appreciate you or any of your students writing comments which we could pass on to the State Board of Education or the Legislature who have made this performance possible. Thank you.

Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT)

PO Box 510427

Salt Lake City, Utah 84151-0427

Letters are uncensored & uncorrected!

This performance is made possible through funding from the Utah State Legislature,
State Board of Education, Utah Arts Council and Salt Lake County (ZAP Tax).

In order to continue this service to the schools,
WE NEED YOUR EVALUATION.

Please fill out this questionnaire and return in the enclosed envelope by November 1, 1998.

Thank you.

**Repertory Dance Theatre
WORLDVIEW II QUESTIONNAIRE
1998-99 SEASON**

GROUP LEADER'S NAME Sulinda Moore

SCHOOL Canyon View

ADDRESS 3050 E. 7800S

SLC UT 84121
City State Zip

1. Grade(s) attending 6 Size of Group 95

2. What is the title of your position? Elem. Teacher

3. How would you rate the quality of the performance?

Poor Excellent
1 2 3 4 5

4. Please rate your group's reaction to the performance.

Not interested Enthusiastic
1 2 3 4 5

5. Was the show appropriate for the age of your group?

() Too young for my group Just right () Too old for my group

6. Did the performance stimulate:

Group discussion? Yes () No
Group projects? () Yes No
Individual activities? Yes () No

7. When did you use the Study Guide?

Before and after the trip
 Only before the trip
() Only after the trip
() Did not use the Study Guide
() Did not receive the Study Guide

8. Please rate the usefulness of the Study Guide to your program.

Not Useful

1

2

3

4

Very Useful

5

9. Can you find ways to link the content of the performance to the State Core Curriculum in any of the following areas:

- Music
- Visual Arts
- Dance
- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Other _____

10. In what way do you find these kinds of performances valuable for your students.

We feel it is important to expose our children to many different areas of the arts. Most of our students had never seen or heard of Modern Dance. They enjoyed the experience.

RDT would appreciate you or any of your students writing comments which we could pass on to the State Board of Education or the Legislature who have made this performance possible. Thank you.

Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT)
PO Box 510427
Salt Lake City, Utah 84151-0427

Utah's Repertory Dance Theatre Just Keeps Getting Better, Better

BY HELEN FORSBERG

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Just when one thinks Utah's Repertory Dance Theatre has explored almost every aspect of modern dance, the troupe comes up with something new.

In "Worldview II," presented Thursday at Salt Lake City's Capitol Theatre before a student audience, it is "Crossing the Black Water." The stunning drama, created by Lin Hwai-min, founder of Taipei's Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, is an excerpt from a full-length piece, "Legacy."

Its story is that of Taiwanese ancestors who braved the stormy seas to settle on the island 300 years ago. A huge sheet of parachute silk, deftly manipulated by the dancers, is at first a sail and later a hauntingly beautiful image of rocky waters.

This is a large piece focusing on the cohesiveness of the community. Movement is dark and dramatic, evoking images of jerking in the water and the pulling of ropes. Artistic director Linda C. Smith expanded her cast with members of the University of Utah's Performing Dance Company to make it all work.

There are piercing screams and percussive sounds and some remarkable individual performances by Todd Allen, Michael J. Eger and Jim Moreno.

The concert is very much about individual performances even in an ensemble pieces such as "Turf." This work by Shapiro & Smith premiered in "Worldview I" last year and is indeed worth a second look.

"Turf" is an ingenious mix of a lot of things — athletic, acrobatic movement, dramatic intensity, a driving musical score and a good dose of humor. But nothing is overdone.

The wit is particularly well-played out in the dance's second movement, in which Allen places rugs under the feet of Angela Banchemer Kelleher and then Eger literally pulls them out from under.

Still, the piece has an intense undercurrent that comes from the choreography and from exceptional individual performances, whether danced alone or in the group.

Concert solos include two gems choreographed by Daniel Nagrin

■ If You Go

Repertory Dance Theatre's "Worldview II" will be presented at the Capitol Theatre, 50 W. 200 South, Salt Lake City, today and Saturday at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$14, with student and senior discounts available. Call 355-ARTS.

in 1948: "Strange Hero" and "Spanish Dance."

"Strange Hero" features a stellar performance by Eger, who plays the sinister, anti-hero fellow. Dancing to the music of Stan Kenton and Pete Rugolo, but more to his own rhythm, Eger flies through the work's athletic challenges without falling out of character.

"Spanish Dance" is a perfect vehicle for new company member Lynne Listing. She evokes a subtle Flamenco flavor through her graceful arm movements and well-timed use of dramatic gesture.

Isabel Bustos' "Proximidad," which premiered on "Worldview I," is a dance of four identical solos, a performance akin to a four-ring circus. It is impossible to watch all four at the same time, and it is difficult to decide which one to watch. But bits and pieces here and there reveal four passionate interpretations by four very different women.

Moreno and Chara Huckins are a striking duo in Yacov Sharir's "More About Love," a fluid piece choreographed in circular motions. The two echo each other's movements perfectly in an evolving embrace.

One might not associate humor with legendary choreographer Merce Cunningham, but Thursday's young audience chuckled at different times during his "Septet." Some laughed at galloping movements, others at subtleties.

Their laughter was a refreshing response to a piece that primarily appeals for its starkness, simple lines and sculptural poses. The piece, set to Satie's "Trois Morceaux en Forme de Poire," was enhanced by the live piano accompaniment of Ricklen Nobis and Barlow Bradford.

Worldview II is an RDT coup

by Kathleen Shorr
RECORD GUEST WRITER

Last weekend, Repertory Dance Theater presented a rich blending of world dance, Asian and 20th century masterpieces.

They called it WORLDVIEW II and it left WORLDVIEW III with a very hard act to follow.

Lin Hwai-Min's "Crossing the Black Water" was not first on the program, but it was so monumental that it could have been last. Lin (in China they put last names first) is the founder and director of Taipei's Cloud Gate Dance Theater, and "Black Water" is an excerpt from a full-length piece, "Legacy," which depicts the epic voyage of the early Chinese who braved the storm-tossed straits of Taiwan to settle the island before the 11th century.

From the look of the dance, it must have been quite a trip.

"Black Water" begins with an empty stage and the sound of a solo flute. A man enters hauling behind him a white silk sail the size of Texas. A drum sounds and a boat, made of people, inches its way across the stage in fits and gasps.

A storm ensues and the sail becomes the sea, rushing over the terrified explorers who are tossed like matchsticks in its waves. It is only prayer and heroic communal effort that save them from the wild silk sea.

"Black Water" is riveting and it left one hoping that RDT will eventually acquire the entire piece. Members of the University of Utah's Performing Dance Company filled out the cast for this piece and danced beautifully alongside their professional peers.

Merce Cunningham's "Septet," choreographed to Eric Satie's "Trois Morceaux en Form de Poire" (Three Pieces in the Form of a Pear) opened the program and pianists Ricklen Nobis and Barlow Bradford played it live.

"Septet" is a charming curiosity, being one of the last pieces Cunningham choreographed using only his own intuition. It is clearly a Cunningham piece, but it has a formality and tidiness that his later work does not possess.

Watching "Septet" is like having a comfortable seat in the Athens Museum of Antiquities and having someone thoughtfully revolve an ancient Greek vase for you so that you can see what all those dancers are doing.

Daniel Nagrin originally choreographed "Strange Hero" for himself. Michael Eger, looks nothing at

all like Nagrin, but he captured the intensity and quicksilver timing of the master. Cigarette in mouth, Eger was the ultimate gangster anti-hero. Tough, sly and cunning he came to a bad end, but getting there was breath-taking.

"Spanish Dance," also by Nagrin, gave us Lynne Listing as a fierce collection of sharp edges just barely containing an inner fire. There is not one Spanish step in the whole piece, but the energy is unmistakable and the piece could be subtitled "Flamenco Americano."

"More About Love" by Israeli choreographer Yacov Sharir, is a blissfully trusting, happy and tender duet. In contrast, Cuban choreographer Isabel Bustos provided a real hair-tearer in "Proximidad," four identical solos performed simultaneously.

The four women begin in unison and somewhere along the line they fall out of sync. The words to the song are in Spanish but we know something is terribly wrong. At the end each soloist's spotlight closes to form a small circle of light on the floor around each woman as she ends, still writhing.

The evening ended with Shapiro and Smith's "Turf," commissioned last year to celebrate the upcoming

Olympics. "Turf" begins with a male soloist establishing his territory, in this case a rug. He is challenged by a second male and the competition is on, only there are never enough rugs to go around.

"Turf" has a wonderful score by Scott Killian and it is spectacularly athletic. In its funniest section, two men outdid each other trying to build a "red carpet" for a beautiful woman so she would be able to cross the stage without ever touching the floor. It turns into an extremely witty commentary on competition and frustrated chivalry.

In other sections, dancers unrolled themselves out of prayer rugs, leapt over runners (no pun intended) and the incomparable Chara Huckins performed a tactile, sensuous solo on a rectangular Persian. "Turf" has unquestionable brilliance, but along the way it seemed to get a little muddled. Maybe I needed to see it again.

All of RDT was dancing splendidly, including newcomers Angela Banchemo Kelleher, Lynne Listing and Raymond Robinson. Todd Allen was moving better than ever with new fluidity.

This concert took us faster than the Concorde to New York, Cuba, Chicago, China and back. Don't miss the next trip.

DANCE REVIEW

Percussive Chinese piece highlights 'Worldview II'

By Scott Iwasaki

Deseret News dance editor

REPERTORY DANCE THEATRE, "Worldview II," at the Capitol Theatre on Oct. 1, 11 a.m. Additional performances Oct. 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m., with a matinee Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. Tickets available through Artix at 355-ARTS (2787).

While Salt Lake is waiting for the 2002 Winter Games, the Repertory Dance Theatre brought in works from China, Israel and Cuba for "Worldview II." And for good measure, the company performed some works from a few American choreographers.

The program highlight was Chinese choreographer Lin Hwai-min's "Crossing the Black Water," which portrayed the time when the Chinese first crossed the straits of Taiwan.

The big percussive work was backed by waving and sailing illusions. The physical aspect of the work mixed with the visually captivating contrasts was also mesmerizing.

RDT used grunts, screams, lunges and climbs to bring forth primal survival emotions.

This was one of the program's action pieces. The others include Daniel Nagrin's "Strange Hero" and Isabel Bustos' "Proximidad." "Strange Hero" brought to mind old black & white gangster movies. Michael J. Eger did his spunky impression of James Cagney. Talk about energy — the elfin Eger was a bundle of dynamite as he drew his fingered pistol and spun into angst-filled rages.

"Proximidad" looked at life from the yearnings of a Cuban woman, but the message was universal.

The four dancers — Chara Huckins, Angela Banhero Kelleher, Lynne Listing and Julie Robinson — ran in place, offered their souls and dealt with oppression in a few short minutes.

While the movements were essentially the same for all the dancers, it was interesting to

see the four subtle interpretations. There were time when a hold or a movement would be held for just a split second longer. And there were times when they were all in unison. Either way, it was a nice smack in the face.

As for Nagrin's "Spanish Dance," the movements were percussive, although there wasn't any sound — Listing danced in bare feet. But just as the title suggests, the work was an abstract take on flamenco.

The tender "More About Love," by Israeli artist Yacov Sharir, was the romantic work of the evening. Jim Moreno and Huckins appeared to be dancing for each other. Together, they danced complementary steps moved this work.

Opening the program was Merce Cunningham's "Septet." The statuesque, casual feel of the work was a comfortable way to start the performance. On that note, Shapiro & Smith's comedic, energetic and competitive "Turrit" closed the whole show.

RDT—Worldview II, An Asian Interconnect

by Karen Anne Webb
Special to *The Journal*

Repertory Dance Theatre brought a veritable world tour of modern dance to the stage of the Capitol Theatre with *Worldview II*, the company's season opener the week-end of Oct. 2 and 3.

The science fiction buff might also have said the concert crossed the bounds of normal spacetime, as a number of the American works on the bill reflected specific touchpoints in the evolution of modern dance in this country. Whatever one's frame of reference, it was an intelligently crafted evening.

Although each work held a place in the roster as a least a repository of cultural treasure, the two highlights of the seven-work evening were Lin Hwai-min's *Crossing the Black Water* and Shapiro and Smith's *Turf*.

Artistic Director Linda C. Smith has alluded to seeking an "Asian connection" for the company—and has she found it in the work of this remarkable choreographer! *Crossing the Black Water* is the first section of an evening-length work called *Legacy*, about the colonization of Taiwan 300 years ago. There may be some parallels here with the local culture in getting pioneers to cross vast wastes, but American pioneers had the main land beneath their feet on their trek west. The Chinese departing to Taiwan had only the sea.

As Lin's work amply demonstrates, the sea is never an easy mistress. The helms-

man (Jim Moreno) appears; the sail slowly unfurls behind him as he crosses the stage in an almost surrealistic-time signature. The bulk of the performers enter the stage in his wake and begin moving to the beat of drums. Anyone with eyes to see will catch that they are not only travelers but the boat itself. The ride is bumpy.

The device of the sail melds fluidly from sail to ocean; ocean waves and dancers become symbolic of primordial chaos. Yet a still, centering point arises amid the terror and disaster. She is identified only as the 'woman who prays' (Chara Huckins). In the end, it is she rather than the helmsman or the sailman who leads the people to landfall. It is as if Lin were reminding us the wave of emigration became as much a spiritual journey as a physical one.

In the middle of the piece, a number of dangerous-looking bits of body sculpture and acrobatics suggested the trials of crossing the 'black water' of the title; screams erupted; the boat may have come close to foundering. Whatever the specifics, the emotive force of that section suggested with complete clarity struggle against insuperable odds. The imagery became so powerful that, at the work's apotheosis, one saw not dancers on a stage but sailors and peasants in tatters wading in the shallows of the island they will now call home. When in the final measure of the piece, they prostrate themselves as one, their joy and relief are palpable. What a story, and what art and craft in the telling! More! More!

Shapiro and Smith's *Turf* could not

have been a more different piece than *Black Water*, but it worked on just as many disparate levels. It had no sympathetic story to draw on. It was more in the nature of a largely humorous look at the human absorption with personal space. This phenomenon will probably not find its way into too many works of Lin's; too much individual space carved out in the metaphorical boat in his piece would have left his dancers foundering on the hither shore of China. Occupation with individual space, its allocation and violation is a very Western thing.

Although Shapiro and Smith pull on a dynamic range of movement qualities—percussive, beautifully-shaped jumps as well as phrases that employ the fluidity of a lava flow—they play with them all in unexpected ways. For a humorous piece, there is great latitude of mood. Rugs figure in prominently as props. There are small ones with which the dancers seem to be playing a game like musical chairs. In a different venue, Todd Allen attempts to do the Sir Walter Raleigh thing with the oblivious Angie Banchero Kelleher while the equally oblivious Mike Eger tries to sabotage his props. A diagonal runner defines the territory of Raymond Robinson, none of the other dancers dare breach his space until he himself singles out Lyone Lising, and a moment of kinetic chaos becomes sensual beyond compare. In a final, perhaps more serious scenario, Huckins goes into a kind of Persian-cat mode over the largest rug used yet. In the end, she has defended her territory—yet she is left alone. Beneath

the humor, are Shapiro and Smith asking us what the cost is to us of this space we force ourselves to define and guard?

Of the shorter works on the program, Daniel Nagrin's *Strange Hero* and *Spanish Dance* (danced, respectively, by Eger and Lising) were sharp and stylish. Isabel Bustos' *Proximidad*, a kind of solo for four, ended almost before it began, its movement spoke of torture of the soul. Joining the other company women was guest artist Julie Robinson, who brings to her movement conviction and great clarity of phrasing.

Yacov Shafir's *More About Love* was a sweet motif-inspired love duet danced the first night by Huckins and Moreno. Alternating were Allen with Kelleher, who has returned to the company after a six-year hiatus. In her absence, Kelleher has matured and flowered as an artist, assuming that lovely doe-like quality that characterizes who truly let the music and movement move through them. It is a treat to have her back.

Merce Cunningham himself described the last piece on the bill, his own *Septet*, as "a conventional dance done to conventional music." It is that. Despite the way it is littered with steps from the ballet vocabulary and moments of multiple-body sculpture that would be at home in a Greek garden, it is a curiously static piece. Perhaps even at this point in his career, Cunningham was moving toward the idea that dance not be bound to the motive (or emotive) force of the music.