

Bennington College

Presents

MARTHA GRAHAM  
and  
Dance Company

LOUIS HORST, Musical Director

Sunday and Monday, July 2nd and 3rd, 1944, in the Theatre

I

EL PENITENTE

|            |   |   |   |   |                |
|------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Music      | . | . | . | . | Louis Horst    |
| Properties | . | . | . | . | Isamu Noguchi  |
| Costumes   | . | . | . | . | Edythe Gilfond |

Characters:

|               |   |   |   |   |   |                  |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------|
| Penitent      | . | . | . | . | . | Erick Hawkins    |
| Christ Figure | . | . | . | . | . | Merce Cunningham |
| Mary Figure   |   |   |   |   |   |                  |
| Virgin        | ) |   |   |   |   |                  |
| Magdalen      | ) | . | . | . | . | Martha Graham    |
| Mother        | ) |   |   |   |   |                  |

Action:

1. Entrance of Performers
2. Flagellation of Penitent
3. Vision of Penitent  
    The Virgin Pleads  
    The Christ Blesses
4. Death Cart  
    The Death Cart is the symbol for sin.
5. Seduction  
    The Magdalen seduces the Penitent
6. The Fall of Man
7. The Christ condemns
8. The Penitent bears the cross on his back
9. The Crucifixion  
    The Penitent atones and wins salvation
10. The Festival Dance

The Penitentes are a sect that believes in purification from sin through severe penance. Even today, in both Old and New Mexico, they practise their ancient rites, including the crucifixion. The dance bears no factual relationship to these practices, but is done rather as a story told after the manner of the old minstrels. The three figures enter, assume their characters, and perform as a group of players acting in a Mystery Play. The action is divided by a return to the entrance theme. The Festival Dance at the end is a version of a popular dance of celebration without ritualistic content.

II

" DEATHS AND ENTRANCES"

|                        |   |   |   |   |                |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Music                  | . | . | . | . | Hunter Johnson |
| Artistic Collaboration | . |   |   |   | Arch Lauterer  |
| Costumes               | . | . | . | . | Edythe Gilfond |

This is a legend of the heart's life. The action takes place in a room and the halls of an ancient house. It concerns three sisters, "doom eager", as the three Bronte sisters were "doom eager", to fulfill their destiny.

It concerns the restless pacings of the heart on some winter evening. There are remembrances of childhood, certain dramatizations of well-known objects, dreams of romance, hatreds bred of longings and madness. It is "imagination kindled at antique fires".

There are "Deaths and Entrances" of hopes, fears, remembrances, dreams, and there is ultimate vision.

This is essentially a legend of poetic experience rather than a story of incident. In the secret life of the heart there are invisible actors and "Deaths and Entrances" with no barriers of period or time. Rather, there is a suspension of time and subsequent intensification of experience at the sight of some simple remembered object; a shell, a glass goblet, a vase.

The characters are:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| The three sisters:             | Martha Graham<br>Sophie Maslow<br>Jane Dudley |
| The three remembered children: | Nina Fonaroff<br>Pearl Lang<br>Marjorie Mazia |
| The dark beloved:              | Erick Hawkins                                 |
| The poetic beloved:            | Merce Cunningham                              |
| The cavaliers:                 | John Butler<br>Richard Hylton                 |

The title is a line from a poem by Dylan Thomas.

- INTERMISSION -

III

"EVERY SOUL IS A CIRCUS"

A Satire

|          |   |   |   |   |                |
|----------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Music    | . | . | . | . | Paul Nordoff   |
| Set      | . | . | . | . | Philip Stapp   |
| Costumes | . | . | . | . | Edythe Gilfond |

Characters of the Arenic World:

|                         |       |  |
|-------------------------|-------|--|
| Empress of the Arena    | . . . | Martha Graham  |
| Ring Master             | . . . | Erick Hawkins  |
| Acrobat                 | . . . | Merce Cunningham   |
| Ideal Spectator         | . . . | Jane Dudley  |
| First Arenic Performer  | . . . | Nina Fonaroff  |
| Other Arenic Performers | . . . | Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lang,<br>Marjorie Mazia, Ethel Winter |

Action:

- |                                   |       |   |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---|
| 1. Prologue: Empress of the Arena | . . . | Martha Graham   |
| 2. The Ring Master                | . . . | Erick Hawkins   |
| 3. Parade                         | . . . | Sophie Maslow, Marjorie Mazia, Nina Fonaroff,<br>Pearl Lang, Ethel Winter                   |
| 4. Training Ring                  | . . . | Martha Graham and Erick Hawkins   |
| 5. Entrance of the Spectator      | . . . | Jane Dudley   |
| 6. The Show Begins: Star Turn     | . . . | Martha Graham   |
| 7. Garland Entry                  | . . . | Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lang, Marjorie Mazia,<br>Ethel Winter, Merce Cunningham                |
| 8. Arenic World (a) Triangle      | . . . | Martha Graham, Erick Hawkins, Merce Cunningham  |
| 9. "Poses and Plastiques"         | . . . | Nina Fonaroff, Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lang,<br>Marjorie Mazia, Merce Cunningham               |
| 10. Arenic World (b) Duet         | . . . | Martha Graham and Erick Hawkins   |
| 11. Aerial Interlude              | . . . | Nina Fonaroff, Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lang,<br>Marjorie Mazia, Ethel Winter, Merce Cunningham |
| 12. Finale                        | . . . | Entire Company  |

This is not the literal circus of canvas and sawdust ring but a circus of ridiculous situations and silly behaviors. In every woman there is the desire to be featured in a "star turn," as the apex of a triangle and as the beloved of a duet. In the life of every woman there is some force which, however temporarily, holds the whip hand. Throughout the circus of her life every woman is her own most appreciative spectator. In this circus of the silly woman's life, the sum total of episodes and of interludes does not add up to mature dignity but to a tragic, addled confusion.

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|                   |       |               |
|-------------------|-------|---------------|
| CHOROGRAPHY       | . . . | MARTHA GRAHAM |
| Assistant Pianist | . . . | Helen Lanfer  |

Stage management by Merrell Hopkins  
 Lighting designed and executed by Joann Straus,  
 Rita Friedman and Margot Loebl

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Exclusive Management

AUSTIN WILDER, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York City

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The concerts on July 2nd and 3rd, 1944, mark the 10th anniversary of the collaboration of Bennington College with artists in the fields of the dance, music for dance, and design for dance. Over this period various works have been commissioned and have had their premières at Bennington. In the current program, two of these works, "El Penitente" and "Deaths and Entrances" are being presented.