

## DANCE

### DUŠAN TÝNEK DANCE THEATRE

Dance Theater Workshop

219. W. 19th St.

Jul. 13-15 at 7:30 p.m.;

Jul. 16 at 2 p.m.

\$20/\$12; 212-924-0077 or dtw.org



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Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre makes great use of a group of excellent and evenly matched dancers with work that is kinetic, poetic, appealing, and smartly designed.

## Process And Product

Dancing dreams in vibrant color

BY BRIAN MCCORMICK

Process is as revealing as any lingerie or loincloth. In the studio, devoid of all the accoutrement of production, everything is clear. Even if the work is unfinished, all the predispositions and proclivities are evident—the choreographic vocabulary and approach, the artistic vision, and the caliber and camaraderie of the performers. Like witnessing a birth, it can produce a wide range of responses—from elation and honor to shock and discomfort.

An hour with the affable Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre in the David White Studio at Dance Theater Workshop (DTW) underscores the acclaim this young choreographer and his exceptional dancers have received since their debut in 2003. Formally structured dance, physical and musical, it relies on ballet technique to ground its dramatic and emotional humanist undercurrents. Theatrical flourishes and non-verbal narrative suggestions keep the action interesting; movement invention is less weighted than the conveyance of ideas and themes—nonetheless, all of choreographer's choices are carefully plotted into the work and keep the viewer actively engaged. Czech-born Týnek is a skilled craftsman with precise materials and tools at his disposal.

The dancers in the company are Alexandra Berger, Nicholas Duran, Matthew Dailey, Laurel Lynch, Eden Mazer, Vincent McCloskey, and Elisa Osborne. Half of them are conservatory grads, and you can tell; but they're all evenly matched and work well together. They make a superb ensemble, each having their own special presence that they combine in a way curiously reminiscent of Voltron.

This comes across when they are casually working out sections with each other, just as much as when they are running the piece from start to finish.

The company is preparing for a program of two world premieres. "Košile" (wedding shirt), a work for the full company of eight dancers, is derived from "The Bouquet," a collection of ballads by 19th century Czech poet Karel Jaromir Erben. Set to a range of music by classic and contemporary composers, the dance involves four female characters, each of which undergoes a change related to marriage or death.

The other world premiere is what the company shows in rehearsal. Titled "ScENes"—SEN is Czech for dream—this work for six has all the right stuff, including outstanding costumes designed by Karen Young—long, slightly bulky, red double-layered skirts, one short layer over a longer train of fabric, slit at the front to allow movement. (The skirts and other elements—collar, sleeve, etc.—are introduced over the course of the piece.) At times the dancers grab these sumptuous, uniform gowns and whip them around as they move, creating whooshing sounds and rushes of air. Danced to music by composer and violinist Michael Galasso, it is a suite of six short dances, which explore various relationships between members of the group. Lynch portrays a solitary figure that becomes engulfed and raised aloft by the group, huddled into a singular faceless mass of flowing ruby. Individuals get pulled, lifted, supported in slow moving tableau. Forces attract and repel dancers toward the center from the sides and diagonals in a kinetic kaleidoscopic of vibrant physicality. They turn towards and away from each other, centrifugal and centripetal energies predominate. Subtle dramatic moments erupt in gestures, poses, and pauses, and given slightly different inflection from the collective. Mystery, violence, joy, and sadness are suggested and referenced; among the images that melt from one slowly expanding cluster is Michelangelo's "Pietà."

After running the piece, Týnek and company go over steps and sections where dancers have questions; the ego factor seems completely absent. They behave like a well-functioning family, friends, like a team without an opponent.

I can't help but wonder if this has any impact on the work, or how the work is seen. Outside the studio, on stage, does that come across, or is this solely an insider's privilege? Either way, the work is remarkable and the dancers exceptional. You'll have to judge the rest for yourself.