

DANCE WEST

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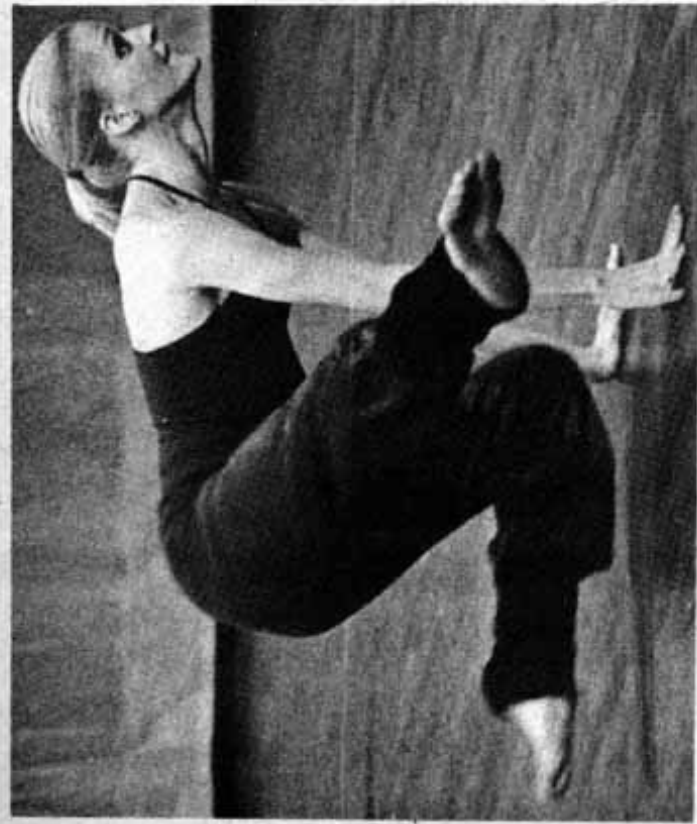
JUNE

YOU'RE MISSING
DANCE WEST
YOU'RE MISSING
A LOT!!!

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SUSAN SULLIVAN & NAOMI GRUBER



Left: Sandra Greer of the Gloria Newman Dance Theatre.

Photo: Mike Nozou



Right: Arthur Mikaelian in Donald McKayle's GAMES.

Photo: Jan Deen

GLORIA NEWMAN DANCE THEATER

Review by Carol Child

The performance by the Gloria Newman Dance Theatre at the Laguna Moulton Playhouse, Laguna Beach, proved how finely tuned Ms. Newman's dancers are. They seem imbued with a sensitivity towards dance and towards human life. They are personable and witty. Indeed, their charisma and sensitivity together with a well-rehearsed performance held the audience spellbound throughout most of the evening.

The evening began with Elizabeth Keen's *Raubes*, movement accompanied by film, in which there is no sound save the breathing of the dancers and the whir of the projector, and often, no sight of the dancers, as they lurk in the play of light and shadows cast upon them by the film. But, I spent less time trying to find the dancers than I did trying to

interpret the film. The over-all effect was pleasingly soft, though too blurry—never really in focus.

In sharp relief to the fuzzy dimness of *Raubes*, *Marches from American Staff* leaps forward as the dancers exuberantly capture Donald Byrd's spirited choreography, competing ~~and~~ charismatic fervor in a variety of athletic and dance fetes, demonstrating their wit, versatility, and ability to draw the audience into all the fun of a Fourth of July picnic. Gladys Kares exhibited particular strength, control, and display of versatility in her confident execution of the broad range of movement.

Originally set in 1951, Donald McKayle's *Games*, retains its stance as a riveting theater piece. Set, costume, and lighting yield authenticity to the children's street play, while the dancers move through the ghetto games and rhythmic songs so artfully and articulately in that eerie summer ghetto light that the audience sits absolutely transfixed.

Diversions, a Gloria Newman premiere set a-

gainst Haydn's *Baryton Trios*, drew the evening's performance to a dulcet crescendo. Sandra Greer and Tony Wilson move beautifully as one through their breathtaking *pas de deux* in which she lifts him. And, again, Gladys Kares demonstrates her versatility, wit, and compelling stage presence. Striking indeed, are cowboys swaggering to Haydn's adagio, costumed and illuminated in pink and mauve—cowboys and Haydn seem to go together naturally. The work moves lyrically and wittily from one dimension (a look at what we do in our leisure time) into another, until finally, and rather stunningly, the dancers keep on dancing after the music stops.

