

Dancer/choreographer shuns the 'sedentary life'

By Charlie Krig

Last week's cold spell felt warm to a group of Lincoln visitors. That was because their hometown, Winnipeg, Canada, commonly experiences winter temperatures colder than 50 degrees below zero.

But Salvatore Aiello finds warmth whether he dances at home in Winnipeg or on the road. In both cases he conducts strenuous work-outs, gives powerful performances and has his wife's companionship.

Aiello's dancing career covers 26 years: from his first lessons at the age of seven to his current position with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. His work with the company includes traveling during half of the year (he appeared last Saturday night with the ballet company in a performance sponsored by the Lincoln Community Concerts association) and performing in Winnipeg

during the remaining six months. Somewhere in between Aiello and his wife find time for vacations.

Aiello said he rarely has danced his own choreography because he can't see the total picture when he's participating in the performance. But his responsibilities with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet have increased and he's presently one of the company's three regisseurs, the persons who direct the pieces of choreography.

"I've really been getting into directorship," he said. "I 'retired' at the beginning of the year from dancing and just taught the company. I quit performing for about two weeks but then I realized that that wasn't all I was interested in. I went back and did a performance without practicing for those two weeks and did very well.

"But at the end I went off the stage and threw up. I couldn't afford to go without

rehearsing."

Although traveling has its drawbacks, Aiello said he prefers it to the "sedentary life" of performing with a company that stays in one city. He tried that for three years in Germany but he quit in order to return to the Winnipeg Ballet. His travels have taken him everywhere but "I haven't been to India," he said.

Aiello said he was "dragged" to his first dance lesson in a small town outside of New York City. It was tap-dancing, which is a "very natural way to start" in learning rhythm, he said. "I never left after that because it was a natural feeling.

"Then my parents got very worried because I was enjoying it so much. They even made me stop for awhile but I talked them into letting me continue," Aiello said.

"When you studied dance you sort of found out who your real friends were. I was popular in school probably because of the things I did. I performed on talent shows, which was very big in those days, so the other kids were in awe of me.

"I gained a little more respect from that. They got to realize he's some kind of celebrity."

Professional dancing has been his life ever since. Aiello also has tried some choreography and directing of dance companies. His creations include a work done for a dance company in Washington and a new piece that will debut in May, a dance based on a Navajo Indian lesson that will be "sort of a theatre piece with some acting," he said.

Sitting in a bus for four to five hours a day "cramps" his body, Aiello said, but another hazard is eating "fast food."

"The problem in traveling is not going to a good restaurant and overeating. It's going to some fast place and downing hamburgers instead of getting some good food," he said.

Aiello said one of the better results of his dance career happened ten years ago when he met a special woman while performing in another dance company. One year later he married her and they've been performing together since then. The couple celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary in Lincoln with an evening at the Lincoln Underground restaurant.

"We're together morning, noon and night and we have been for ten years. Usually couples never see each other but that isn't the case with us. We sit on the bus together, we eat together, we practice together, we perform together, we're together in all things," he said.

"But we never argue. We're in the same situations so we've got the same feelings about what goes on. We enjoy the same things, but we're mutually irate if something goes wrong."

He continued, "It's a good life and we enjoy it. My wife will eventually retire and then we'll raise a family. It is possible to lead a sort of normal existence in this job."

Aiello said he likes his work with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, too. He said it's a prestigious company due to its "royal" designation (it is one of only four "royal" dance companies in the world) but people don't realize how special that honor is.

"We're a company built on the fact that we're versatile. We have dancers with back-



Salvatore Aiello

grounds in tap, jazz, ballet, everything. It's getting harder and harder to find those kind of dancers anymore. People are starting to specialize in their training so you don't get a well-rounded dancer very often," he said.

He noted that more males are entering the field of professional dancing because they realize what is involved in the work. He also said world famous dancers such as Rudolf Nureyev have helped improve the image of the male dancer.

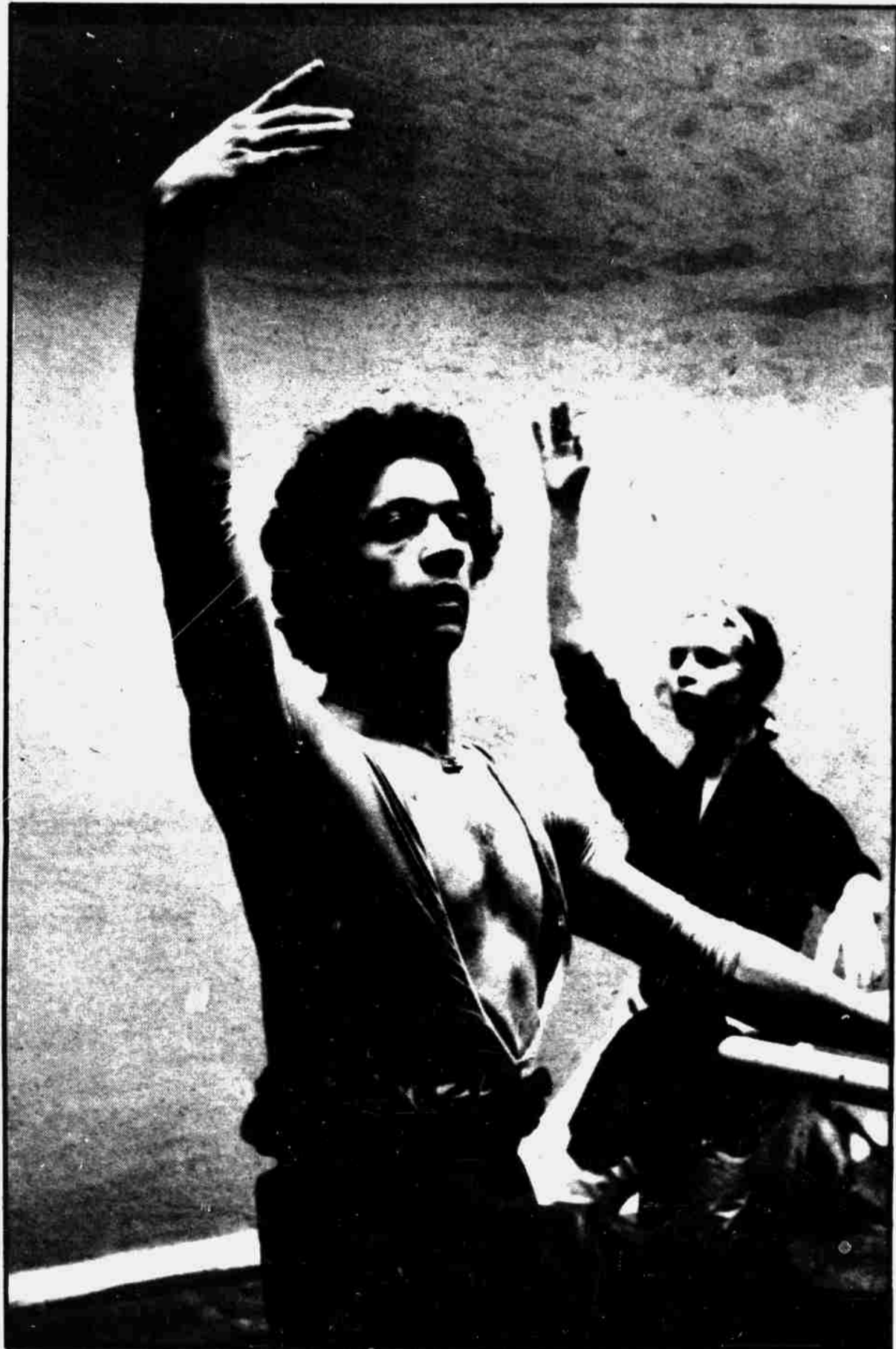
"Dancers used to work for nothing but that was good. You got rid of the people who didn't want to work but at the same time the people who were good said they wouldn't dance unless they got more money. As a result, the quality goes up," Aiello said.

A recent "dance boom," as Aiello called it, is helping companies get better performers and schedule more engagements. He said the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is booked for appearances two years in advance. Yet, some audiences don't appreciate the modern ballet the company does, he said. "Personally, I would like to see classical and modern ballet kind of blend—just call dance, dance, and people can appreciate what they're seeing."

And where's the toughest audience? "They're probably our worst audience in Winnipeg because they have a chance to see us all the time. They're the hardest to please," he said.

Aiello said his own days in dance are numbered. He said most dancers hit their peak at 35 years of age. "Some people keep going much past that but that's sad because the muscles don't keep their tone," he said. Dancers are most flexible at age 21, he added.

But being 33 years old doesn't bother Aiello. He's enjoying dance as a performer, he said, but later, when he retires, being a director and choreographer will be just as exciting.



Photos by Mark Billingsley

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EVENING

- 6:00 NEWS
- EMERGENCY ONE
- DICK VAN DYKE SHOW
- SUN: ZARABANDA
- 6:30 NEWLYWED GAME
- MARY TYLER MOORE
- TO TELL THE TRUTH
- CONCENTRATION
- \$125,000 QUESTION
- ODD COUPLE
- SEE HAW Guests: Patti Page, Brush Arbor, Buddy Alan.
- 7:30 JOKER'S WILD
- LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE Charles Ingalls faces losing his farm when he makes purchases in anticipation of an inheritance from a wealthy relative, a bequest that turns out to be worthless. (60 min.)
- THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN Steve Austin must work fast to recover a stolen \$5 million masterpiece from crimelord Chilton Kane and return it to a touring Russian art exhibit.
- GOOD TIMES J.J., Thelma and Michael Evans fear for their lives when they discover that their mysterious new boarder is the only surviving witness in a trial against a very dangerous crook.
- MONDAY NIGHT MOVIE "The Initiation Of Sarah" Stars: Shelley Winters, Kathryn Crosby, Kay Lenz. An innocent freshman co-ed is drawn into bizarre rites of a strange sorority. (2 hrs.)
- ADAM 12
- IN PURSUIT OF LIBERTY "The First Freedom" The series' final episode explores whether freedom of the press is an indispensable instrument of or a serious threat to national government. (60 min.)
- 7:30 HOLLYWOOD CONNECTION
- BABY, I'M BACK Ray Ellis'

- seven year absence from home takes on a menacing tone when two strong-arm men show up to collect a "loan-shark" debt that's grown astronomically.
- MOVIE *** 1/2 "Chato's Land" 1972 Charles Bronson, Jack Palance. A post-Civil War posse, seeking an Indian who killed a sheriff, begins fighting within its own ranks. (2 hrs.)
- MOVIE *** "Lovers And Other Strangers" 1970 Bea Arthur, Gig Young. Each of five stages in courtship and marriage are depicted through an intimate look at the relationships of friends and relations at the wedding of a young couple who prior to the wedding had been living together for 18 months. (2 hrs.)
- MONDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES "Midway" Stars: Henry Fonda, Glenn Ford, Robert Wagner, James Coburn.
- MONDAY NIGHT MOVIE "The Initiation Of Sarah" Stars: Shelley Winters, Kathryn Crosby, Kay Lenz.
- M.A.S.H. Long-awaited mail from home brings with it varying personal problems for B.J., Radar, Hot Lips and Klinger.
- ONE DAY AT A TIME When the apartment building is purchased by a woman, Schneider's romantic efforts to insure his superintendent's job may get him into more trouble than he can handle.
- LOU GRANT Lou is plunged into the world of the Hare Krishna movement when Tribune editor Hume fears his son is lost to the strange religion. (60 min.)
- ORIGINALS: WOMEN IN ART "Navelton In Process" A profile of sculptor Louise Nevelson, whose innovative environmental art is constructed of "found junk" abandoned in the streets of New York.

- 8:30 NEWS
- TURNABOUT "Unfit America" This physical fitness segment visits a Parcourse exercise program and features guests: Billie Jean King, professional tennis player; Joan Uillyot, M.D.; Kathy Copeland, director; and Helen Breyman, 70 year-old sports person.
- STAR TREK "Min" (60 min.)
- NEWS
- ODD COUPLE
- DICK CAVETT SHOW
- THE TONIGHT SHOW Guest host: Bill Cosby. Guests: Loretta Lynn, Cheryl Tiegs. (60 min.)
- POLICE STORY "Firebird" A young police officer, his hands severely burned and crippled in a helicopter crash, is determined to prove he can resume his career. (R)
- FOREVER FERNWOOD
- MOVIE *** "The Barkleys Of Broadway" 1949 Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers.
- CBS LATE MOVIE *** 1/2 "How To Break Up A Happy Divorce" Stars: Barbara Eden, Hal Linden.
- 11:30 GUNSMOKE
- CBS LATE MOVIE ** "The Wicked Dreams Of Paula Schultz" Stars: Elke Sommer, Bob Crane.
- POLICE STORY "Firebird"
- FORBYTE SAGA Soames makes a vain appeal to Irene for a son. (60 min.)
- 11:30 AFFIRMATIVE LIFE POWER
- SERGEANT BILKO
- TOMORROW Host: Tom Snyder. (60 min.)
- NEWS
- GROUCHO
- NEWS
- DRAGNET
- NEWS
- NEWS
- MOVIE *** 1/2 "Lovers And Other Strangers" 1970 Bea Arthur.

monday

MIDWAY



One of the most crucial naval battles of World War II is recreated in the epic 1976 motion picture 'Midway,' making its television premiere Sunday, Feb. 5 on NBC-TV's 'The Big Event' and concluding Feb. 6 on 'NBC Monday Night at the Movies.'

The confrontation between the United States Pacific Fleet and the Imperial Japanese Navy nears its explosive climax in part two on Monday night as military commanders on both sides endeavor to smash the opposition. The battle of Midway opened the path to an eventual American victory and dealt the Japanese their worst sea defeat of the war—but at a heavy cost to both sides.

An all-star cast includes Henry Fonda and Toshiro Mifune as opposing admirals (both pictured) along with Charlton Heston, Robert Mitchum, Hal Holbrook, Glenn Ford, Robert Wagner, James Coburn and Robert Webber.