



Courtesy of Lois Greenfield

Momix performs "DNA."

Momix pulls dance into modern age

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Editor

With bodies like rubber bands, stretching, flexing and going slack on a series of invisible axles, Connecticut's Momix is an integral part of the current frenetic effort to drag dance into the modern age.

Moses Pendleton, the eccentric genius behind the last big dance thing, Pilobolus, formed the Momix troupe in 1980 when, according to Pendleton, Pilobolus lost its creative bite.

Dance Preview

Momix will perform tonight at 8 p.m. in Kimball Hall.

A mixture of the sacred and the profane, the sensual and the ephemeral, Momix, and Pendleton himself, at once invite and defy description. One could make lists: Monty Python, great Eastern Bloc gymnasts, the Oompah-Loompahs from "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory," reggae, afro-beat, Tom Waits, the Flying Karamazov Brothers, pagan ritual, Christian ritual ...

The list pales when compared to the actual event.

The men and women of Momix — Alan Boeding, Lisa Giobbi, Timothy Latta, Carolyn Minor, Joseph Mills and Cynthia Quinn — are fluid, bold contortionists capable of becoming something as solid and staid as a Gothic arch or as organic and sensual as a moving human wheel. They can inflate one another, turn their toes into fire or wear clothes that never touch the skin. Human beings turn into impossible ideas, into far-fetched concepts.

Pendleton, 37, the "artistic director" of Momix, creates kinetic alien worlds made from music, motion and shape, along with tense static statues that defy gravity.

Although Pendleton is often the mouthpiece for Pilobolus and Momix, the dance troupe is actually a shared creative commitment. All dancers are listed as choreographers and Momix's use of props, lighting, music and "costume" is the result of a small community of inspired artists.

In a huge, unheated mansion in Washington, Conn., Momix creates its surreal netherworld of artistic medium hopscotching. Not officially tied to dance, sculpture, gymnastics, theatre, music or conceptual art, Momix delves into them all like brilliant, precocious children.

'Big Town' proves more than a gamble

By Geoff McMurtry
Staff Reporter

"The Big Town," Douglas 3
"The Big Town," by drawing your attention to enough other things, manages to avoid becoming a boring reread of a 1940s gambler movie. Despite limitations in plot and suspense, "The Big Town" turns itself into a minor classic, with excellent late 1950s style, an attractive looking atmosphere, an incredible use of sound track and an excellent assortment of characters.

Movie Review

Though no one in this film has the sort of bizarre personality normally associated with a "great character," everyone in it shows a maturity of emotions and attitudes not usually seen in Hollywood. Matt Dillon has definitely stepped into a new realm of role choices.

The story is simple and time-tested: Cully (Dillon) is, by nearly everyone's testimony, "the best damn arm I've ever seen." That means when he shoots craps, he gets great dice rolls. He's spotted in his tiny, rural, '50s hometown by Hooker, an ex-crap-shooter himself. Hooker talks him into going to Chicago to try the big-time gambling circuit, and, against his dear widowed mother's

objections, he does. In Chicago, he's hired by an organization of Hooker's former colleagues, a group that hires guys like Cully to go around to various crap games in town and clean out the customers. The games are always open to these professional "arms," because their honesty is guaranteed by the company.

But it's never revealed why every salesman's convention in the city is cleaned out by pros.

Cully finds out through an "arm" he works with about the Gem Club, a place where all the professional crapshooters meet every Sunday to play each other. This is the real test, because here you use your own money, not the company's and because everybody at this game knows the odds and isn't likely to lose money on lucky numbers the way the usual suckers do.

Cully, of course, gets into the game, breaks the bank his first night and earns the admiration of the city's gamblers and the eternal enmity of the game's owner (Tommy Lee Jones), a "former gangster, or some kind of Mafia strong-man, or maybe just an ex-marine."

Cully's blind boss, Ferguson (Bruce Dern), hated him at first because he's "Hooker's boy," which means he's good but also reminds him that his wife is Hooker's ex-girl-

friend. Ferguson now tells him all about when he and Hooker worked together and nobody could beat them and they beat some "flash, punk-kid, just like you, Cully," and the kid threw battery acid in his face and blinded him.

The plot's excursions could be distracting but in this case aren't because the main conflict isn't riveting.

Eventually, the stakes increase, leading to a big showdown with the mysterious sinister guy, with several surprise twists at the end which were hinted at strongly earlier in the movie.

However, one area in which "The Big Town" proves exceptional is its use of sound. The sound track is loaded with '40s and '50s country and blues-rock classics, well-placed, never intruding like the 1980s video interlude look.

The sound track includes everything from Bo Diddley's "Who Do You Love" to classics by Buddy Holly and Hank Williams. Every time Diane Lane appeared there was a different version of Huey "Piano" Smith's, "Fever," including the original.

Other than the use of sound, what makes "The Big Town" special is not the oft-overused story line, or the downplayed melodrama, or even Diane Lane's strip-tease (although that didn't hurt) but rather its charac-

ters and the way they interact. The heroic characters have faults, the evil villains have their better moments, and while it's always there, the line is nearly invisible between good guys and bad guys, good girls and bad girls. No one's fantasies are lived up to in "The Big Town."

Cully must make choices, some of which seem to be between two rights, and some of which are between two wrongs. The characters around him help out with varying degrees of self-

lessness, selfishness, understanding and downright viciousness.

If for nothing else, "The Big Town" is an interesting experiment for the way it managed to combine some of the better elements of Hollywood slickness and independent film honesty. Enough in fact, to make up for its shortcomings.

Matt Dillon may be on his way to putting away the little teenage rebel that has tied him down. Tommy Lee Jones is always a great villain.

French Underground schedules play

Veteran performers Sue Perkins and Gail Erwin take the stage at Omaha's French Underground in "White Women's Blues," a musical written by Gail Erwin. "White Women's Blues" is the first musical production for Smiling Panther Productions Inc.

"White Woman's Blues" is the story of two little girls who grow up as best friends. The girls both have secrets — some they keep, some they share. After high school graduation they go separate ways. Throughout their lives their secrets come to haunt them. Because they are singers, these women sing about their troubles, doubts, and joys.

Perkins has appeared in leading

roles at the Center Stage, the Firehouse Dinner Theater, and the Omaha Community Playhouse. Recently Erwin appeared in "Quilters" at the Playhouse. Erwin is currently playwright-in-residence at the Emmy Gifford Children's Theater.

The music is written by Erwin and arranged by Joseph Joubert and Kate Schrader. Schrader will direct the band. The production is co-directed by Mark Hoeger and Roberta Larson, both of the Emmy Gifford Children's Theater. Costumes are designed by Ruth Ciemnoczolowski, while scenery and lighting are provided by Heartland Scenic Studios.

Performances for "White Woman's Blues" are set for Oct. 2-

Nov. 14, at the French Underground, 1017 Howard St. Performances on Thursdays will be at 7:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. A special early performance will be held on Saturday Oct. 24 at 7 p.m.

3 bands playing on campus Sunday

The Kimball-Lied Performing Arts Committee will present an outdoor concert with Mother's Big Band Jazz, the Young Executives and High Heel and the Sneekers Sunday in the Sheldon Sculpture Garden from 3 to 6 p.m.

This is the second annual UNLive concert and there is no admission charge. Refreshments will be served.

UNLive is sponsored by the Kimball-Lied Committee, UPC, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Association, the Lincoln Arts Council and KFRX.

Correction

George Ritchie was chapel organist at Duke University. He performed his recorded work "Organ Works of J.S. Bach" on a Bedient organ. That work is

available on the Titanic Records label.

The Daily Nebraskan regrets errors that appeared in the Sept. 30 article on Ritchie.

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