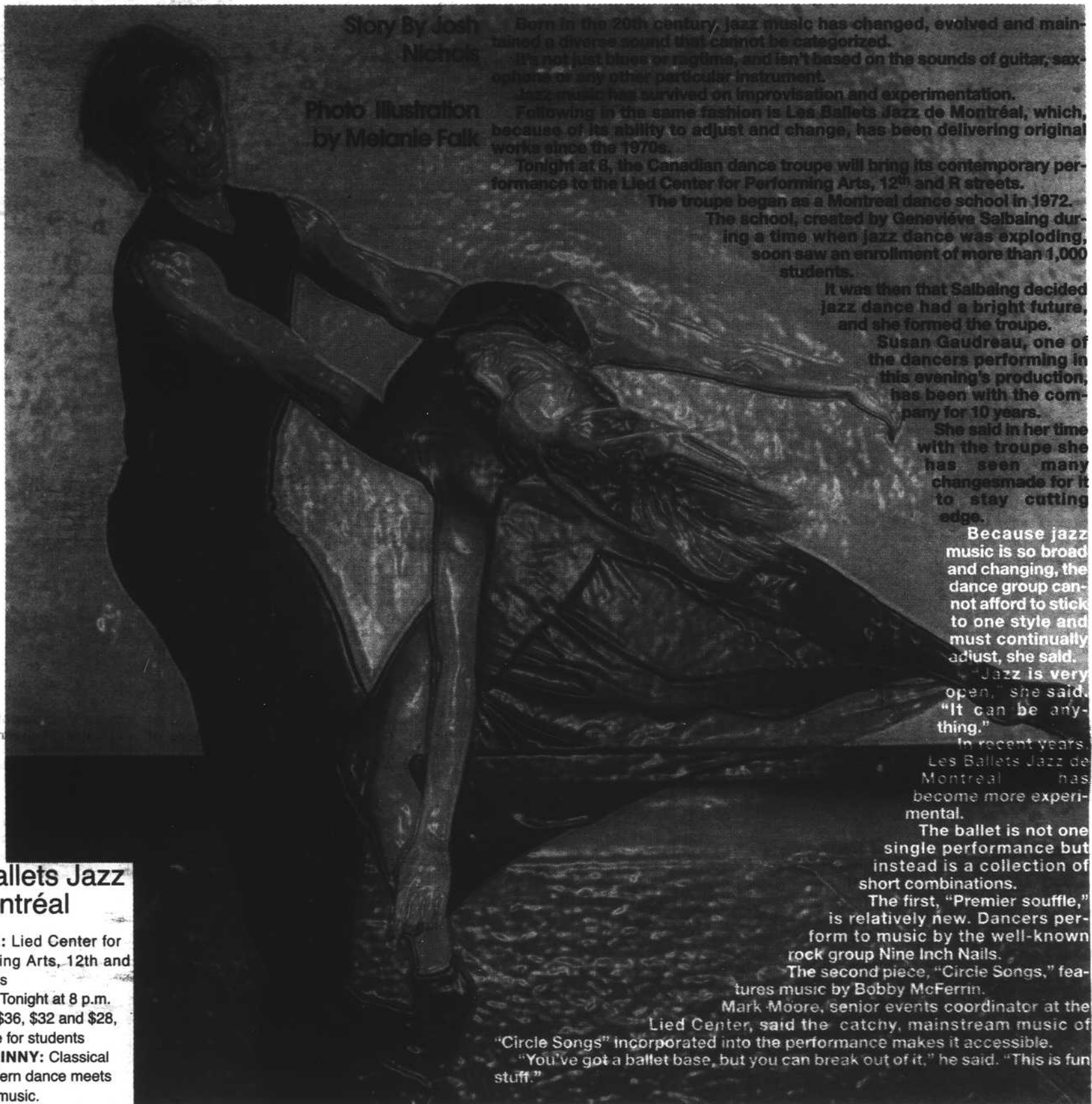


Ballet melds with jazz at Lied



Story By Josh Nichols

Photo Illustration by Melanie Falk

Born in the 20th century, jazz music has changed, evolved and maintained a diverse sound that cannot be categorized. It's not just blues or ragtime, and isn't based on the sounds of guitar, saxophone or any other particular instrument.

Jazz music has survived on improvisation and experimentation. Following in the same fashion is Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, which, because of its ability to adjust and change, has been delivering original works since the 1970s.

Tonight at 8, the Canadian dance troupe will bring its contemporary performance to the Lied Center for Performing Arts, 12th and R streets.

The troupe began as a Montreal dance school in 1972.

The school, created by Geneviève Saibaing during a time when jazz dance was exploding, soon saw an enrollment of more than 1,000 students.

It was then that Saibaing decided jazz dance had a bright future, and she formed the troupe.

Susan Gaudreau, one of the dancers performing in this evening's production, has been with the company for 10 years.

She said in her time with the troupe she has seen many changes made for it to stay cutting edge.

Because jazz music is so broad and changing, the dance group cannot afford to stick to one style and must continually adjust, she said.

"Jazz is very open," she said. "It can be anything."

In recent years, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal has become more experimental.

The ballet is not one single performance but instead is a collection of short combinations.

The first, "Premier souffle," is relatively new. Dancers perform to music by the well-known rock group Nine Inch Nails.

The second piece, "Circle Songs," features music by Bobby McFerrin.

Mark Moore, senior events coordinator at the Lied Center, said the catchy, mainstream music of

"Circle Songs" incorporated into the performance makes it accessible.

"You've got a ballet base, but you can break out of it," he said. "This is fun stuff."

PREVIEW Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal

WHERE: Lied Center for Performing Arts, 12th and R streets

WHEN: Tonight at 8 p.m.

COST: \$36, \$32 and \$28, half price for students

THE SKINNY: Classical and modern dance meets modern music.

New U2 cuts best part of 'Million' album

By Cliff Hicks
Staff writer

When you're as big as U2 is, you really can take on any side project you want to and get away with it.

This time around, U2 front man Bono actually wrote the story for Wim Wenders' latest picture, "The Million Dollar Hotel," so he took a big hand in scoring it, asking friend and collaborator Daniel Lanois to help him, and the results make for pleasant listening.

The band also has contributed tracks to three of director Wenders' other films — "Until the End of the World," "Faraway So Close" and "The End of Violence."

In between albums "Zooropa" and "Pop," U2 also got together with producer Brian Eno and made "Passengers: Original Soundtracks Vol. 1," a collection of soundtrack pieces for (mostly) fictional films.

The soundtrack kicks off with one of the two new U2 songs on the album, "The Ground Beneath Her

REVIEW "The Million Dollar Hotel" Soundtrack

ARTISTS: Various artists

LABEL: Interscope Records

GRADE: B+

FIVE WORDS: New U2 worth the million.

Feet," although observant U2 fans will note the lyrics are not Bono's, but instead written by noted author Salman Rushdie.

Still, it's a building and soaring song in the style of "Stay (Faraway, So Close!)" that proves what U2 fans have suspected for a while — if U2 has Brian Eno on one hand, it needs Daniel Lanois on the other.

U2's last album, "Pop," was a good album, but not a great one. It seemed like the songs never really stuck, and something was missing. Most likely, it was Lanois. Both "Achtung Baby" and "The Joshua Tree" were co-produced by Lanois and Eno, and the two need each other to strike a balance of sorts between

Eno's space-pop and Lanois' field guitar.

The only completely new, completely U2 song on the album is "Stateless," a quiet, brooding song that wouldn't have seemed out of place on "Zooropa." It gives one a great deal of hope for the next U2 album that's tentatively scheduled for release before the end of the year.

Speaking of "Zooropa," a song from that album, "The First Time," makes an appearance here. Twice in fact, the first time being the band's original and the second time covered by Lanois and the revolving collection of musicians referred to as "The Million Dollar Hotel Band."

This brings us to the major problem with the soundtrack — even though it's nearly an hour long, there are two different versions of "The First Time" and three different versions of Lou Reed's "Satellite of Love," two of which star Milla Jovovich (who's in the movie) doing her best Nico impression. Sure, each of these songs is great in its own right,

but it can get a bit repetitive.

Also on the album are a few fantastic collaborations between Bono and Lanois, including the soundtrack's centerpiece and most lovely song, "Falling At Your Feet."

Lanois' fingerprints are much more obvious on the soundtrack than Eno's, and the results mean the soundtrack is generally more of the atmospheric emptiness of "The Joshua Tree" than the bubbly techno-murmurs of "Zooropa," but the two U2 tracks stay dead smack in the middle.

All of this means that the soundtrack was really more of Lanois' project than Eno's, but they're both putting equal time in on the new album, which is always a good thing.

The soundtrack closes with nearly all of U2 (Bono playing guitar, Larry Mullen playing drums and Adam Clayton playing bass — only guitarist Edge is nowhere to be heard) with Tito Larriva and the MDH Band performing a Spanish cover of the Sex Pistols "Anarchy In the USA." I kid you not. It's an upbeat way to end a



mostly blue soundtrack.

Don't expect to see "The Million Dollar Hotel" coming to theaters near you any time soon, as the film does not yet have a U.S. distributor, despite sporting big-name stars such as Jovovich and Mel Gibson, but oh well, you can't win 'em all.

Now if U2 would just get its ass in gear and finish its new album, as the soundtrack offers nothing but optimistic promises, leaving U2 fans wanting more.