

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Hello, I'm Edgar Loessin with Loessin at Large. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has come and gone. I hope you were able to attend at least one of the performances. Each had special high points of artistry. Towering over all is still Alvin Ailey's "Revelations". This national treasure is approaching its fiftieth birthday. I have no doubt it will be around forever.

On Wednesday night the company performed Ulysses Dove's "Episodes" which had its debut in 1989. Danced to an original score by Roger Ruggieri it reveals the many diverse skills of the dancers. And, what incredible skills these men and women have. This dance seems to be about relationships, how they are formed, change and fall apart. The score is bombastic and metallic, hard edged and piercing as a bullet. Mr. Dove's choreography adheres rigidly to the music. The dancers fly through the air like missiles and dance in unison at times with robotic precision. Sometimes they move with the speed of lightning. At other moments they are in slow motion creating the tension of a high wire aerialist. One feels after seeing "Episodes" that there is no physical movement or emotional nuance these finely trained dancers can't do. The choreography of two of the other major works, "Love Stories" and "Ife/My Heart" does not challenge the performers or give them the creative, inspirational material they so richly deserve. "Acceptance in Surrender" and "Solo" on the other hand do display the wide range of abilities.

As the company approaches a half century of distinguished artistic achievement, it would indeed be wonderful if a truly strong, exceptional choreographer would appear on the scene to carry the group to even higher glories.

This is Edgar Loessin with Loessin at Large and I'll see you at the next opening..