

DANCE REVIEW

7 Choreographers Pick a Sin and Run With It

By JENNIFER DUNNING

BECKET, Mass., July 15 — A good time was had by nearly all on Sunday afternoon when "The Seven Deadly Sins" spilled out across the stage of the Ted Shawn Theater at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Many in the audience rose in a standing ovation. And the performers and choreographers seemed to have had a lot of fun putting this oddity together. But the parts amounted to less than one might have expected.

Ballet choreographers have been drawn like lemmings to "The Seven Deadly Sins" since the 1933 production by George Balanchine, Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill. Always difficult, the piece has now drawn

seven modern-dance and Broadway choreographers, each of whom chose a sin and created a free-standing dance of 10 minutes or less in a well-staged suite. Some episodes were fascinating. Most had little to do with the sin at hand.

Richard Move's "Lust" was the most Brechtian of the pieces, and Mr. Move drew a stunning performance from Helene Alexopoulos, a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet. A Dresden shepherdess of a ballerina, Ms. Alexopoulos was a figure of broken sensuality in a long, slow-moving solo in which she remained in a pitiless spot of white light at the front of the dark stage.

Taped phone-sex advertisements and conversations set the context before they were overtaken by crackling static. Dressed in a

delicately sexy black-and-white body stocking designed by Pilar Limosner, Ms. Alexopoulos seemed at first glance a beautifully lithe creature who oozed the requisite heat.

Mr. Move made the most of the ugliness of ballerinas' knotted feet, however, slowly allowing Ms. Alexopoulos's large bare feet and hands and weirdly double-jointed arms to take over the dance. By the end, as she reached out in a beautifully timed split-second appeal, Ms. Alexopoulos seemed a malfunctioning robot as devastating as Paul Taylor's Big Bertha but full of pathos, a lost object of anonymous lust.

The solo needed tightening. The brief appearance of two paparazzi was puzzling. Mr.

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Choreographers Pick a Sin And Offer Their Spin on It

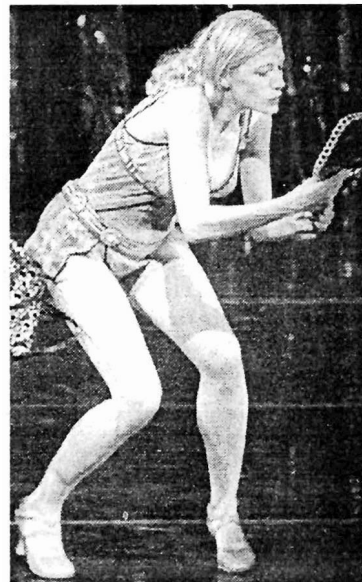
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Move needs to upgrade the black wig, and Ms. Alexopoulos should shed her wedding ring at the next performance. But this was otherwise first-rate work from both.

Chet Walker's "Anger," set to music by Astor Piazzolla, was a seething Broadway tango danced by Ms. Alexopoulos, Robert La Fosse, Desmond Richardson and Rasta Thomas, an exquisite young ballet dancer too seldom seen on New York stages. Annie-B Parson created a complete bizarre little world in "Greed," set to music by John Zorn and Weill, in which five women squabbled over several small well-chosen props. The wonderfully brazen performers were Tymberly Canale, Molly Hickok, Kate Johnson, Krissy Richmond and Rebecca Wisocky, the Sandra Bernhard of dance.

Dancing Hershey Kisses, brilliantly costumed by Liz Prince, were a high point of the afternoon in Lawrence Goldhuber's "Gluttony," set to music by Mark Mothersbaugh and Yello. Their giddy bourrées and Chinese ribbon dancing were brilliantly conceived by Mr. Goldhuber, who, dressed in a fat suit, fell asleep at a picnic and dreamed of a priapic hot-dog and two nuzzling drumsticks.

David Dorfman's "Sloth" got off to a witty start but soon fell apart in a tangle of clever in-jokes and other verbal play. And Jamie Bishton's "Envy" would have been much stronger if he had limited the piece to



Alan E. Solomon for The New York Times

Tymberly Canale dancing the "Pride" section.

the audition it started out as. Mr. La Fosse's "Pride," set to music by C&C Music Factory with appropriately fabulous costumes by Karl Lucifeld, was a knock-'em-dead finale, complete with mirror ball and gold curtain. But less naïve nose-thumbing would have made "Pride" even more fun.

The dynamic lead cast was completed by Paul Matteson and Stephanie Liapis.