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## DANCE REVIEW

### Martha Graham Lives, and Is Interviewed



Andrea Mohin/The New York Times

"Martha@... The 1963 Interview": with, from left, Lisa Kron, Katherine Crockett, Catherine Cabeen and Richard Move, at Dance Theater Workshop

By ROSLYN SULCAS

It's a pity that Richard Move's new "Martha@...The 1963 Interview" is running at Dance Theater Workshop just after the recent Martha Graham Dance Company season in New York. This 70-minute re-enactment of a 1963 conversation between Graham and the dance critic Walter Terry — a recording was discovered in the archives of the 92nd Street Y last year — is both a primer for her work and an enticement to see it.

In the interview Graham, then 69, speaks about some of her greatest works and roles. Medea, Clytemnestra, St. Joan, Jocasta, the Bride in "Appalachian Spring" are all given vivid life in her declamatory mix of lofty sentiment and earthy realism. The aphorisms, the oracular musings ("think of yourself as dancing towards your death") are all there, but the force of her conviction is utterly compelling.

Mr. Move, who first performed his Graham impersonations in the mid-1990s, has created distinctive work of his own in the intervening years. But Graham, it seems, won't leave him alone, and in this piece he explores a more fragile side of that great, lonely artist and her studied mask of genius.

Of course Graham is perfect drag material. The exaggerated makeup, the signature high bun, the draped robes, the mannered theatricality — all are fodder for amusement when a 6-foot-4-inch man inhabits them. And on Wednesday night the audience was clearly ready to laugh.

But the straightforward conviction with which Mr. Move and Lisa Kron (as Walter Terry, in another sex reversal) played their parts slowly exerted its spell. After a while the laughter diminished; Graham might have sometimes been funny, intentionally or not, but Mr. Move doesn't try to be.

Neither does Ms. Kron in a performance that is almost as good, although inevitably overshadowed. Recreating timing and cadence from the recording, she lets Terry's slightly camp persona emerge through the words. His admiration, even veneration, for Graham, his anxiety about asking the right questions and desire for the audience to like her are transparent. But it is Martha who is the star, and Mr. Move brilliantly incarnates her lingering emphasis on the final word of each phrase, the flirtatious glances at the audience, the ramrod back, the sheer authority with which she held her listeners.

Two dancers, Katherine Crockett and Catherine Cabeen, who perform some of the roles discussed, are exemplary. But this is the weakest part of the show, since in isolation the work tends to look like the kind of parody Mr. Move avoids elsewhere.

There isn't, besides the dancers, much theatrical interference. Authentically 1960s-looking plastic globes hanging above Ms. Kron and Mr. Move reveal images and symbols from Graham dances, or glow with color. Later a recorded segment of the recreated interview (made to sound like the original) plays while Mr. Move dances as the Bride with Ms. Cabeen.

It's a resonant moment and suggests that Mr. Move could perhaps have made something more ambitious, Wooster Group-style, of the material. But perhaps he wanted Martha to shine. As she should.

*"Martha @...The 1963 Interview" continues through Saturday at Dance Theater Workshop, 219 West 19th Street, Chelsea; (212) 924-0077, [dancetheaterworkshop.org](http://dancetheaterworkshop.org).*