

fun, and the political meaning gets across with a bang. Their new program is again full of hits, not musical ones, indeed, but deal directly at their favorite target, the dictators of every description. There is no reason to be too critical about the music, nor to be enthusiastic. The various composers try very hard to do as Harold Rome does and their modest songs serve, which is more than can be said of many a more pretentious score.

## WITH THE DANCERS

EDWIN DENBY

**I** THINK Argentinita is a wonderful dancer, because she gives you a pleasure like that of being in good company. She is a lady who makes you feel at home in her house. Most people must find her very natural, she doesn't try to impress you or grip you or any of those things. She treats you as an equal, and you leave the theatre feeling as though you'd spent the evening with a friend. I say Argentinita, but it's her company too, all five, who are like that. It is a subtle entertainment, warm, witty, expert, and unpretentious.

As a dancer she is certainly wonderful. The structure of her numbers and the flow of them; the exactness of the rhythms and the clearness of the gestures. Even when she hardly moves, there is in the air that extra sense of well-being all over that is dancing. And especially her waist, if you haven't noticed how beautiful the middle of a dancer is, you can learn from her.

It's the bearing of any Spanish gypsy dancer that makes me feel so good, the lift of the waist, the expressive stretch from the pit of the stomach to the small of the back. It's the bearing of a bull-fighter too, when he makes his passes. It lifts the hips and lightens the feet, it settles the shoulder, eases the arm and frees the head. And it seems to heighten the dancer's visibility. Perhaps expression in dancing, the sense of an impulse, comes from the diaphragm as Isadora said. A flamenco dancer always seems to have more expressiveness than he needs for a gesture, a kind of reserve of it that gives him an independent distinction; or dignity as I have heard Spaniards say, who are very sensitive

to this quality. Perhaps, looking at it technically, it is the strictness of this fundamental position that gives coherence and point to everything within the flamenco range; that gives the dancer the freedom to shift from serious to funny; that keeps the male dancer from getting all wet with stagy glamor. You see these are all problems that the modern dancer is puzzled by. Another thing that a gypsy dancer can do is go into or come out of a dance without embarrassment. She walks up to the guitarist and stands there clapping her hands a few times and then starts, or she stops dancing and sings a little, or she stops and lets someone else dance while she merely stands around or walks. This change between heightened movement and ordinary movement is a wonderful contrast on the stage, it puts the performer on an equal footing with the audience, it makes him a casual human being and his big moment all the more interesting. We have it in tap dancing, and the ballet can have it; and I wish our theatre could have more of it. For the gypsy of course it is no problem at all, except one of personal "dignity."

To get back to Argentinita, in particular. Her program arranges all sorts of Spanish and Spanish-American dances that are not flamenco, but which thanks to her good taste, her excellent company, and I imagine the flamenco discipline, are very agreeable. Pilar Lopez and Antonio Triana, her partners, are fine dancers (he, especially in gypsy numbers), the two musicians are a pleasure, and it's a particular pleasure to hear the little, accurate singing voices. Neither Argentinita nor her company showed the ferocity of some flamenco, the sudden stops, the incredible pressed timbre in singing or the savage coloring in costume. But I liked what I saw, integrity of refinement and a sovereign grace. And I liked, too, to feel again the personal independence a Spaniard cherishes, the sense of human dignity he has. He can never accept the fascist requirement to grovel. And he doesn't enjoy seeing other people grovel, either.

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I made a round of the musical shows in town to look at the dancing but I didn't see anything very special. In *The Boys from Syracuse* there is a good threesome by Balanchine combining acrobatics and tap with a bit of ballet expression; I really liked

the end, where the two couples walk off quietly into the dark, it was the one time I saw something with sexual feeling in a musical. In *Sing Out the News* there is a funny dance by Joey Faye as a little socialist that is extraordinarily mysterious. But the only show for me is *Hellzapoppin* (cheerfully imbecile) which also has the most cheerful dancing: Barto and Mann, Hal Sherman, and Adams. I saw the world's best strip-tease at the Apollo (125th Street) one Saturday midnight, done by Willie Bryant, who went only as far as his suspenders. And I hope everybody has seen the wonderful "Giants" dance in the movie *Dark Rapture*.

I have to make a serious jump to speak next of Martha Graham's *American Document*. It is a major work as everybody knows, with a moral to which everyone subscribes, stated by a narrator. It wants "to capture the feeling of America." I see Miss Graham's sincerity, her fine technic, her intensity. But I am troubled by the monotony of equal thrusts, the unrelaxed determination. There is something too constantly solemn, too unhumorous, too stiff about it; something sectarian. Even the "Walk Around" looks like an effort to me. Well, in detail there are many interesting things, and Martha and Eric did very well. But I missed the point of it.

## ON THE HOLLYWOOD FRONT

By GEORGE ANTHEIL

THE first bit of Hollywood news is most emphatically this: Boris Morros, erstwhile Music Director in Chief of Paramount Studios, is leaving. Morros, if you remember, was responsible for the extraordinary remark that "only modern composers should write the scores of the modern motion picture of today" and for a time he tried honestly to prove this point. He almost succeeded. Unfortunately he developed the overwhelming desire to see himself in newspaper print entwined with the greatest musical names of the age. This weakness led him (often without sufficient basis in fact) to announce publicly the acquisition by Paramount of persons like Stravinsky or Schönberg. He might