

## 'Garden of Boboli' innovative

By Anne LaJeunesse  
D&P Dance Editor

The Joffrey Ballet last week in Los Angeles premiered "The Gardens of Boboli," an inventive and inspired offering by young choreographer Mark Haim.

His alternately athletic and courtly ballet perfectly tailored to the eager, energetic Joffrey dancers, received enthusiastic audience approval. The six-part ballet opens with long-limbed Leslie Carothers enticing Taylor Walters into a regal minuet that quickly progressed into a gymnastic series of extended backflips performed by Carothers, supported by her partner.

The ballet's unusual third section treats the body as sculpture.

Under Penelope Curry's cool blue lighting Peter Barbutas and Roger Plaut, with controlled strength, supported an amazingly limber Parris Maynard, molding his body into implausible positions and creating a gravity-defying pas de trois.

Maynard's later bold and impish solo performance in the ballet's fifth section proves he has carved out his own niche in the constantly improving company.

His effortless execution of complex and demanding choreography make Maynard a dancer to follow.

Haim is best when fully exploiting the Joffrey dancer's lithe bodies and versatility in blending classic and modern styles.

However, the remainder of "The Gardens of Boboli," performed to the regal Tomaso Albinoni music, was an unfocused collection of styles reminiscent of George Balanchine and Paul Taylor, indicating that

Haim has not yet decided on his own form.

Combinations of jazz-inspired ensemble work, bold leaps and quirky changes of direction give Haim's choreography an exhilarating quality.

One section that proved labored and cliché featured Carothers flailing her arms at the attentive ensemble, who viewed her while stretched out on the floor, heads resting on their hands.

Haim proves to be an innovative choreographic force whose future work should be anticipated with delight.

The company also cleverly danced the elaborate grotesqueries of "Cloven Kingdom," featuring tuxedo-clad men and sleekly gowned women performing Paul Taylor's witty modern dance that juxtaposes man's polite and primitive natures.

The primal, apelike antics of Carl Corry, Tom Mossbrucker, David Palmer and Glenn Edgerton drew enthusiastic audience response.

John Rawlings' exaggerated mirrored headpieces accentuated the preening of Dawn Caccamo, Julie Janus, Elizabeth Parkinson and Victoria Pasquale.

Also presented was Gerald Arpino's ethereal "Round of Angels," featuring a serenely passive Carothers strongly partnered by Ashley Weater, gliding amidst the erotic and streamlined posturings of Tom Mossbrucker, Tyler Walters, Patrick Corgin, Peter Narbutas and Douglas Martin.

Set to the haunting Gustav Mahler "Adagietto from Symphony No. 5 in C# Minor," Carothers, supported by dancers

dressed in grey unitards, glides and swoops in a soaring imitation of flight, against a vast starry sky.

Also presented was Arpino's frothy and romantic "Birthday Variations," featuring Glenn Edgerton partnering Cameron Basden, Victoria Pasquale, Jodie Gates, Tina LeBlanc and Dawn Caccamo performing classic variations set to Giuseppe Verdi's "I Lombardi," and "I Vespri Siciliani."

The Joffrey Ballet season runs through Sept. 27.

For tickets, call (213) 972-7211.