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Joffrey II dancer Conn shows off in 'Trysts'

★ Review
BY MARY ANN BUSBY
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There were two premieres Thursday night at Robinson Center Music Hall.

Joffrey II dancer, Robert Conn, made his hometown debut, showing off exciting moves in a worldwide premiere of the contemporary ballet, "Trysts," by Diane Coburn Bruning.

The performance began 15 minutes late with a playful contemporary ballet, "The Gardens of Boboli," by Mark Haim.

The work was energetic and innovative — some of the dancers' movements looked as if

"IN STEP"



Dance

they had begun a step, only to change their minds in mid-air and gracefully change courses.

Under soft lighting, dancers in pastel costumes twisted and turned to music by Tommaso Albinoni. Tracey Sartorio, Maia Wilkins and Adam Sklute especially stood out, with clean footwork, fine lines and command of the stage.

The men exhibited great strength and flexibility as they

twisted and lifted each other.

After a short pause, the program resumed with a Pas de Deux from "Flower Festival at Genzano" featuring Conn and Marlene Kandall in traditional classical costumes.

Conn had nice extensions, height in his leaps and his beats were on the mark. After warming up to the crowd, he gave a triumphant performance. Miss Kandall's personality shined through as she flirted with the audience.

After a 10-minute intermission, the audience was treated to the 23-minute premiere performance of Ms. Bruning's "Trysts." The ballet, created at Joffrey II workshop last

spring, opened with nine dancers on stage in two-tone, muted costumes.

Prokofiev's "String Quartet No. 2" set the mood for a athletic piece. Conn's solo in "Trysts" showed off his dramatic abilities.

Men carried women curled in their arms. As the women unfolded, they showed off beautiful extensions, only to be dragged across the stage. The women were thrown on stage as if diving into the men's arms.

There was almost too much in "Trysts" — too many different moods. One man in the audience said he really had to work on that one.

The matter, Walker said, is that the