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# Young dancers, choreographers have Emelin showcase

**By Georgette Gouveia** *Staff*  
George Balanchine once told Jerome Robbins that a choreographer has to make many ballets to create one wonderful ballet. The same principle applies to viewers: you have to watch many works to discover the few special ones.

Such was the case of "A New Generation of Dance in Westchester," a showcase for selected young dancers and choreographers that was presented by the Dance in Education Fund over the weekend at Mamaroneck's Emelin Theatre. The program featured some excellent performers and a few pieces that were first-rate and original. But to get to them, the viewer had to trudge through a number of poor and mediocre works.

On the plus side, Jo-Ann Bruggemann, cofounder of American Ballet Comedie, contributed a delightfully clear-cut piece set to Bach called "Contra Blue," one of two works the Fund commissioned for the Steffi Nossen Dance Company. In its use of swinging arms, diagonal leaps and rolling bodies, "Contra Blue" is reminiscent of Paul Taylor's joyous works set to baroque music. The 14 girls, howev-

er, did not fully convey the light, bouncy quality of this piece.

The Nossen dancers seemed more at home in Gaetan Young's "Snake Charmers." Wearing Nancy Johnson's pink- or blue-speckled spandex body suits, their hair done up in long, curling ribbons and one eye painted blue, the girls looked like Martians who stumbled into a rock video. To Jah Wobble and Holger Czukay's spattering score, they thrust their shoulders and held up splayed fingers as if waiting for their nail polish to dry.

"Snake Charmers" is a slick work at best, but the dancers did capture its glacial sexiness.

The third commissioned work, Marcus Schulkind's "Verdaccio," is filled with spacious movements that

skirt covered with numbers, Susan Hogan gave the movement and text the right blend of sarcasm and fresh-faced wistfulness.

"Psyche-Art P501" by Lisa Green, Wendel Pierce and Ralph Zito uses balloons, tap-dancing and stop-and-go texts and movements to show the absurdity of reducing Art to a set of theories. Pierce and Vernon Scott were funny as the bookish men, and Rachel Boykan was appropriately harried as the dancer they assault with their endless ideas and talk.

The program also featured three fine dancers — Peter Sparling of the Martha Graham Dance Company, Holly Fairbank and Jennifer Salk, all of whom were more interesting than their solos. Ms. Salk, who can undulate like a snake or set

her arm swinging like a shuttler flapping in the breeze, is a particularly charismatic performer.

Some of the works reaffirmed two often exciting trends in dance — the blend of text and movement and the use of rock video techniques. Unfortunately, many of the works underlined the dance world's continued interest in repetition for its own sake. The avant-garde artists of the '60s proved that there is beauty in repeated sounds and movements. How much longer will performers go on using repetition with no larger purpose apparent?

Two supposedly humorous works fell flat. Mark Haim's "Servitude" was a not-so-funny look at trembling peasants and the second movement of Bach's second Brandenburg concerto. Trudy Martin's

"Tales," with its nonsense vocal line and wide-eyed, blank-faced dancers moving back and forth on a diagonal, was pointless and embarrassing.

Except for the three commissioned works and Sparling's appearance, which was made possible by the Fund, the pieces were selected by dance educator Bessie Schomburg, Margaret Beals and Catlin Cobb, dancers and choreographers; Norton Owen, assistant director of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival;

Carol Walker, dean of the dance department at the State University of New York College at Purchase; and Froma Benerofe, Dance in Education Fund board representative.