

Marginalized Papers?

bate at a time when even the wealthiest newspapers are struggling with sagging advertising and rising newsprint prices.

In a memo last month, Ridder and three colleagues said they were striving to avoid layoffs at the California newspaper and that "we will not let the vagaries of Silicon Valley damage the newspaper that we are so proud of."

Threatened layoffs did not materialize but the company—a 32-newspaper chain that includes the Philadelphia Inquirer, Miami Herald and Detroit Free Press—shut down the Mercury News's Sunday magazine.

The day after the tense budget meeting, Harris woke up at 3 a.m. with "a knot in my stomach" as "the stark reality of what happened had worked its way to the front of my brain." He had "become an unacknowledged co-conspirator," he said, concluding that resignation "was the only way to slow things down, to possibly get corporate to open their eyes. . . . I had witnessed enough."

Complaining about the "tyranny" of the stock markets, Harris said Knight

Ridder and other media companies are "trending in the wrong direction," aided by executives whose high salaries are "golden handcuffs" that can turn into "blindfolds" and "gags. . . . What is good enough in terms of profitability?"

He noted that Merrill Lynch analyst Lauren Rich Fine, asked whether 20 percent-plus margins were enough for newspapers, said on the "NewsHour With Jim Lehrer": "Well, it's never enough, of course. This is Wall Street we're talking about."

After Harris received a standing ovation, Oppel said: "History will show that was one of the most powerful and important speeches ever given at ASNE."

Hodding Carter III, president of the Knight Foundation, told Harris: "Your resignation makes a statement. . . . Is it possible to stay within and to be publicly prophetic about this business, or do you have to quit to speak publicly?"

Harris said in response that "the business would collapse" if all employees spoke out at once but called for a wider public debate on the role of newspapers.

A Dancer Stretches His Bach

By LISA TRAIKER
Special to The Washington Post

Watching Mark Haim dance to "The Goldberg Variations"—Bach's aria with 30 variations—is a bit like watching a mechanic take apart an engine. Haim, a Juilliard-trained dancer and choreographer, assigned himself the formidable challenge of crafting a full-evening solo to the 31 piano pieces Bach composed, a challenge taken up in the past by other choreographers, namely Jerome Robbins and Paul Taylor. On Wednesday evening Haim, accompanied by pianist Andre Gribou, performed his rendition at the University of Maryland's Dance Theatre in the new Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts.

Rich in texture, mood and drama, Bach's variations are eminently danceable. Haim's choreography is rather pedestrian. No virtuoso runs, lunging-stepping combinations—a few falls and rolls—which he presented in a straightforward and for the most part unadorned manner. Pianist Gribou played as essential a part in this endeavor as Haim did; at times during Haim's sparest movements, Gri-

bou became the more interesting of the two. Haim clearly choreographs by the book. Thankfully, he doesn't mimic Bach, but he doesn't illuminate him either, instead playing against the complexity of Bach's variations with counterintuitive choices, like his perfectly timed run through the audience and over the catwalks, and later his disrobing and redressing—both unremarkable but amusing on the surface.

In variation 3, Haim explored circles, bicycling his fists, carving arcs with his arms, swiveling his hips, rolling over. Two variations later, Haim offered diagonals: slashing arms, pointed and steeple shapes, elbows and knees. A few variations further along, swifty, loose languidness became the theme, but didn't necessarily match the musical impetus.

Haim tossed out structure altogether in Part 2, giving two randomly selected audience members control when variations 17-30 were performed (16 and 25 were left out due to an injury). Relying on chance within a controlled environment isn't a new gimmick but here it allowed Haim's affable personality to project, which didn't happen when Bach's glorious music overshadowed his choreography.

MOVIE DIRECTORY

PG ALL AGES ADMITTED. Parents Guidance suggested.

PG13 Parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

R RESTRICTED. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or guardian.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2001

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POKEMON 12:30, 2:45, 5:30, 8:00
TOMCATS (R)
SOMEONE LIKE YOU (PG-13)
THE BROTHERS (R)
THE BROTHERS (R)
HEARTBEATS (PG-13)
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