



NEW DANCE AT THE YARD.

Alison Shaw

Chilmark's Dance Center, The Yard, Gives Show of Work by Four Choreographers

By HILARY STOUT

Figures in trousers and shirts, white and off-white. Two women; three men. Dependent and independent. Together and apart.

Music abstract, then melodious, then rhythmic and catchy.

Dancers, all five together, in unison. Dancers in pairs. Dancers alone.

They were dancing a new piece called *Beside the Night* at The Yard's barn theatre in the Chilmark performing arts colony's annual August Dance Premieres.

They danced four new pieces, all choreographed by Yard artists, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday

nights — beautifully expressive pieces, spare and exceptional sequences of modern dance that brought these exquisite moments:

• *Beside the Night*, choreographer Monica Levy.

Bodies telling of uncertainty, incompleteness, unpredictability.

A dancer arches backwards. Another catches her in mid-fall. Entwined bodies, lifts and spins together, but moving apart. Never staying together long, always moving to another partner, another group.

Moves becoming urgent, brusque, violent.

Never sure who is with whom or what will last and what won't.

As told by the words of poet Rainer Maria Rilke quoted in the program: "And you are left, to no one belonging wholly, not so dark as a silent house, not quite so surely pledged unto eternity as that which grows and climbs the night."

• *Deep Tides*; choreographer Patricia Nanon, founder and director of The Yard.

Beautiful change of rhythms, melodies and moods.

Rushes of movement.

The marvelous little boy look on dancer Bill Bissell's face in playing catch with an imaginary ball.

Beginning. Three figures imprisoned in spotlights. Three dancers in three separate showers of light, moving but unable to move out of their spaces.

Lovely.

• *Past Perfect, Present Tense*; choreographers Jim Coleman and Terese Freedman.

A bare stage. Empty, dark. The desolate floor, like a school gym dance floor, scene of heartbreak, anger and passion.

A man in jacket and tie. A woman in jacket and bright peacock-blue blouse.

The music of Elvis. *Heartbreak Hotel, Hound Dog, Love Me Tender.*

Dancing. Light, spry, jitterbuggy.

Together, close.

Figures in white doused in light on platform off-stage behind screen, hugging, motionless while dancers dance.

Bodies entwined on floor.

Body sliding out from under the other. Away.

Violent, disturbing tempo. Man without shirt. Woman in lingerie. Moves abrupt, pulling.

Sad.

• *Four Choral Preludes*; choreographer Mark Haim.

The music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Six figures facing each other in formal black and white.

Again, curiously, the device of a figure on a platform behind a screen, visible when the spotlight plays on him.

Jumpy, jittery, stamping, flying. Dancers clearly enjoying their performing.

Wonderful floorwork.

Big, bold moves to marvelously loud harpsichord.

Reverential end.

• They will perform the works again in Boston Sept. 12 and 13 and at the Riverside Dance Festival in New York Sept. 18 to 21.