



Dance

Ripeness Is All

A valuable sampler of talent welcomes autumn

by **Deborah Jowitz**

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As usual, Dancenow NYC opened the fall season at Dance Theater Workshop with a message of inclusiveness. This year's "40Up" programs featured those celebrating their 10th anniversaries as choreographers, while "Base Camp" focused on up-and-comers, and "Upclose" presented young dancemakers in a studio performance.

Originally, "40Up" referred to artists over 40, and some in this year's lineup passed 40 over 20 years ago. We may expect some stiff joints, but what we want—and get—are people who have honed their performing to make every shift in dynamics or mood luminous; no blank-faced, go-for-broke athletes here. The most physically arduous movement came from Mary Cochran, who, in Sara Hooks's *Rue*, crashed to the floor in such telling bouts of regret that her pink wig looked in danger of landing in our laps. In Gus Solomons jr's work-in-progress, Carmen de Lavallade, Hope Clarke, and Solomons make the swish of silk robes, the suddenness of a turn, and an intense glance tell us almost all we need to know about rage, desire, and jealousy. Megan Williams (still a relatively young woman) brought to Helen Pickett's *One Captured Kiss* the fully nuanced physicality and musicality she used to display in Mark Morris's company. It's almost a surfeit of pleasure to watch Art Bridgeman and Myrna Packer interact with their multiple video selves in an excerpt from their *Under the Skin*.

Gestures figured in quite a few works. In Larry Keigwin's *Finger Suite*, Valda Setterfield, Michael Blake, and Keith Sabado created witty conversation out of raised fingers and sly glances. Six alumni of Murray Louis's company (Blake, Janis Brenner, Betsy Fisher, Peter Kyle, Sara Pearson, and Robert Small) began an excerpt from Louis's gentle *Porcelain Dialogues* (1974) by quivering their interlaced hands. In *Forty*, Guta Hedewig and her younger performers argued with held-up fingers as they called out dates to track the passing time. Donlin Foreman elected for full-bodied gesturing in *Self Portrait w/Ghosts*, a meditative solo in which he seemed to relive fragments of high drama from the Martha Graham roles he once performed. *Welcome to My Garden*, Neta Pulvermacher's mystifying, sometimes charming channeling of Elvis Presley for four women, is still being worked out, but Clare Porter's hilarious *Interview* (2007) is superbly finished, down to the comedic timing and pathos of every gesture and word delivered by this harassed, overeager job applicant. An excerpt from Johannes Wieland's *New Work*, which premieres in May 2008, is adroit in a different way: The wonderful Isadora Wolf brought out all the wit and sweet neuroses of a woman dancing (so she said) to show a man she interviewed in the audience what happiness was all about. This program gave me a good dose of it.