

The New York Times

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2005

DANCE REVIEW

Where Dance and Theater Join the Circus, Enthusiastically

By JENNIFER DUNNING

The Snappy Dance Theater of Boston breezed into New York on Friday night for a single formal program, at the Winter Garden of the World Financial Center. May it soon return.

Martha Mason, a founder of the troupe in 1997 and its director, has said in an artistic statement that Snappy grew in part from her frustration with the "do as you're told" philosophy of companies she had performed with. Much of the choreography presented in 15 handsomely produced short pieces and excerpts on Friday's overgenerous program was attributed to collaboration between the dancers. Most of all, though, the six dancers had the look of individuals who know their input is valued.

Snappy, which has clearly been influenced by Pilobolus, blends a variety of dance and theater styles as well as gymnastics and circus arts, but the result has none of the blandness of some fusion dance. "Revolutionary Small Talk," created and per-

Snappy Dance Theater

Winter Garden

formed by Kyle Deschamps and Roger Fernandes, is a dancer's take on an encounter between a punk kid and an uptight businessman waiting for a subway. The medium is gymnastics, but the imagination is dancery.

Another highlight was "Tea Cups," an excerpt from "The Temperamental Wobble," a piece inspired by Edward Gorey's illustrations and sensibility. Its kick line for four formally dressed men (Mr. Deschamps, Mr. Fernandes, Tim Gallagher and Sean Kilbridge), each bearing a demitasse cup from which he sips occasionally, was a sly and stylish delight.

"Tango Tangle," performed by Mr. Deschamps and Bess Whitesel, manages to depart from that familiar dance form in a new and funny way that incorporates tango dancing, acrobatics and light slapstick humor. The company dancers also included Ms. Mason and Bonnie Duncan.