

DANCE MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1987

PRESSTIME NEWS

News Editor: Gary Parks

TO FIGHT AIDS, AMERICAN TROUPES WILL DANCE FOR LIFE

Laura Dean



NEW YORK CITY—An unprecedented gathering of thirteen American dance companies will occur October 5 when Dancing for Life, a benefit performance to raise money for AIDS-related education, patient care, and research, takes place at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center. As Robert Yesselman, executive director of Paul Taylor Dance Company and president of the benefit's board of directors, commented upon announcing the event, "Virtually the entire history of American dance will be on stage in one evening."

Jerome Robbins, ballet master in chief of New York City Ballet, is coordinating the gala performance, with Anne Bass and Nan Kempner serving as chairpersons. Several new works, most of which were in the planning stages at presstime, will be created for the evening by choreographers yet to be named.

The program will include a new ballet to music by Mozart, performed by dancers of New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, as well as one to Bach featuring members of the Dance

Mikhail Baryshnikov



Gerald Arpino



Merce Cunningham



Paul Taylor



Robert Joffrey



Eliot Feld



Jerome Robbins



Lar Lubovitch



Arthur Mitchell



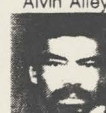
Mark Morris



Twyla Tharp



Alvin Ailey



Peter Martins



Martha Graham



Theatre of Harlem and the companies of Mark Morris and Paul Taylor. Mikhail Baryshnikov will perform a "surprise," noted Robbins at the announcement, adding with a laugh, "In the great spirit of cooperation, none of my works are being shown."

In addition, members of NYCB, ABT, DTH, and the Joffrey Ballet will perform the final movement of Balanchine's *Symphony in C*. Other companies appearing in Dancing for Life are the troupes directed by Alvin Ailey, Merce Cunningham, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, Martha Graham, and Twyla Tharp.

The idea for the benefit originated with choreographer Lar Lubovitch, who began dis-

cussions with a variety of company representatives about the dance community's response to the AIDS epidemic. AIDS, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, is a fatal disorder that destroys the body's ability to fight infection, leaving victims exposed to a number of opportunistic diseases. Federal public health officials estimate the annual cost of treatment in the U.S. will rise to between \$10 and \$15 billion by 1991.

The corporate sponsors of the benefit at presstime include AT&T, Philip Morris Companies, Inc., and the New York Marriott Marquis hotel. In addition, professionals in the fields of law, accounting, and media relations, among many

others, are contributing their services in the hope of being able to donate the entire anticipated income of \$1.4 million to AIDS-related organizations. "Dancers are poor," commented Peter Martins of New York City Ballet. "We can't give money, so we have to dance."

The primary beneficiaries of Dancing for Life are the American Foundation for AIDS Research, the Gay Men's Health Crisis, and the National AIDS Network, each of which will receive twenty-five percent of the money raised. The remaining one quarter of the proceeds will be divided among various groups that provide hospice care and direct services.

Ticket prices range from \$50 to \$5,000, with \$500 tickets including a pre-performance cocktail party and \$1,000, \$2,500, and \$5,000 tickets including a post-performance dinner dance. As this issue went to press, it was announced that all tickets priced at \$150 and below were sold out. To charge tickets, call (212) 307-7171. For further information about Dancing for Life, call (212) 477-2166. □