

Choreographer gives audiences their money's worth



Setting the pace: Judith Marcuse's *Traces* was danced last night at Premiere Dance Theatre, where the choreographer's Vancouver-based company is performing this week.

By Paula Citron
Special to The Star

Judith Marcuse is a generous choreographer.

During its week's stint at Premiere Dance Theatre, Marcuse's Vancouver-based company is presenting five substantial works and one short duet; in other words, the lady believes in giving people their money's worth.

There are several "givens" in a Marcuse evening — strong, disciplined dancers, solid dancing and diverse contemporary choreography in the traditional mode. Her dancers like being on stage and enjoy performing; the company has tremendous commitment to the total presentation of a work, as well as a highly-developed sense of dramatic expression.

When Marcuse is hot, her works sizzle with inventive imagery. The choreographer's trademark of lank, loose and laid-back steps paradoxically combined with strong ballet technique can often create clever stage pictures and produce wonderful ensemble work.

Time Out (1986) is as fresh and delightful as ever. Any survivor of a Canadian winter knows the joy of the first heady hints of warmth. When the heavily clad dancers become infected by the seductive rhythms of African musician Toure Kunda, we intuitively understand their light-hearted rite of spring.

Equally effective are *The Waltz* (1981), a bitter duet about adult game-playing, and *Traces* (1985), an atmospheric abstract reflecting musical mood patterns.

Unfortunately, Marcuse can also be tedious and derivative. *Moving Past Neutral* (1988), created for the Olympic Arts Festival, has nothing new to say on the subject of the "me" generation, the herd instinct, urban angst and other tired issues.

The two guest choreographers are American Mark Morris and Israeli Ohad Naharin.

Morris has given the company a wonderful satire on the world of ballet, Naharin the pain of a country at war.

One of the young turks of the

New York dance scene, Morris has produced in *Canonic ¾ Variations* (1984) a brilliant send-up of Harald Lander's revered *Etudes*, which traces ballet from the barre exercises into increasing patterns of technical difficulty.

Morris, using the same composer, takes the Carl Czerny piano music and creates the heaviest, most lumpish dancers to ungrace any stage, much to the delight of the audience.

Naharin's *Innostress* (1983) is about the mind-numbing horror of war, both for those at home and at the front, and more importantly, the violent ways the men bring home when violence has become a way of life. It is stark, dramatic and thought-provoking.

Nixon to make rare TV appearance

WASHINGTON (Special) — Former U.S. president Richard Nixon will make a rare TV appearance on a one-hour special edition of NBC's *Meet The Press* April 10.

Meet The Press moderator Chris Wallace will be joined by Tom Brokaw and John Chancellor as panelists.

Nixon, who resigned in disgrace in 1974 over the Watergate tapes scandal, is expected to discuss the forthcoming Reagan-Gorbachev summit, the Middle East crisis, Latin America and the 1988 elections.

Nixon will also tape an interview with Bryant Gumbel for NBC's *Today* show, which will air during the week of April 11.

According to spokesman John Taylor, Simon & Schuster will publish Nixon's latest book, *1999*, within the next couple of weeks. Taylor said the book "is basically a strategy on how to use the last 12 years of the century to make the world a freer and more prosperous place in the 21st century."