



International Presentations of Music & Dance

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Martha Graham Dance Company

MARTHA GRAHAM, *Artistic Director*

RON PROTAS, *General Director and Associate Artistic Director*
LINDA HODES, *Associate Artistic Director*

Set Designer: ISAMU NOGUCHI

Lighting: JEAN ROSENTHAL, GILBERT V. HEMSLEY, JR.

Costumes: MARTHA GRAHAM, HALSTON

Regisseurs: LINDA HODES, CAROL FRIED, DIANE GRAY, BERT TERBORGH

The Dancers:

TAKAKO ASAKAWA	CHRISTINE DAKIN	DONLIN FOREMAN
DAVID HATCH WALKER	YURIKO KIMURA	PEGGY LYMAN
SUSAN McLAIN	ELISA MONTE	BERT TERBORGH
TIM WENGERD	GEORGE WHITE, JR.	

Thea Nerissa Barnes
Charles Brown
David Brown
Jacqulyn Buglisi
Terese Capucilli
Judith Garay
Sophie Giovanola
Joyce Herring

David Hochoy
Kevin Keenan
Jean-Louis Morin
Steve Rooks
Jeanne Ruddy
Philip Salvatori
Andrea Smith
Larry White

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 1, 1981, AT 3:00
POWER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

This performance is one of three in Ann Arbor by the Martha Graham Dance Company comprising a dance residency with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Michigan Council for the Arts.

The Board of Trustees of the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance wishes to express gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lila Acheson Wallace Fund, Phelps Dodge, Mrs. Evelyn Sharp, and Halston for their support which has made possible these performances by the Martha Graham Dance Company.

SERAPHIC DIALOGUE

*Music by NORMAN DELLO JOIO**
Set by ISAMU NOGUCHI

Lighting by JEAN ROSENTHAL
Choreography and Costumes
by MARTHA GRAHAM

Première: May 8, 1955

Seraphic Dialogue is the drama of Joan of Arc at the moment of her exaltation. In a dialogue with Saint Michael, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret, whose voices had guided her toward her destiny, she looks back on herself as a maiden, a warrior, and a martyr, and the transfigured Joan is taken up to her place of honor beside the saints.

<i>Joan</i>	PEGGY LYMAN
<i>Maid</i>	THEA NERISSA BARNES
<i>Warrior</i>	JACQULYN BUGLISI
<i>Martyr</i>	SUSAN McLAIN
<i>Saint Michael</i>	GEORGE WHITE, JR.
<i>Saint Catherine</i>	JEANNE RUDDY
<i>Saint Margaret</i>	SOPHIE GIOVANOLA

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INTERMISSION

NIGHT JOURNEY

*Music by WILLIAM SCHUMAN**
Set by ISAMU NOGUCHI

Original Lighting by JEAN ROSENTHAL
Choreography and Costumes
by MARTHA GRAHAM

Première: May 3, 1947

"And loudly o'er the bed she walked where she
In twofold wedlock, hapless, had brought forth
Husband from a husband, children from a child.
We could not know the moment of her death
Which followed soon."

Oedipus was the son of King Laius of Thebes and Queen Jocasta. At his birth, an oracle prophesied that he would murder his father and so he was abandoned on a desolate mountainside. He was found there and protected by a Corinthian shepherd, and grew to manhood as the adopted son of the King of Corinth. Once again, an oracle predicted that Oedipus would slay his father and marry his mother. Thinking the King of Corinth his true father, he fled the city, and in his wanderings met, quarreled with and finally killed a stranger who was King Laius of Thebes. Oedipus traveled on to Thebes, solving the riddle of the Sphinx and finally became King and married the Queen, Jocasta. He reigned nobly until a plague ravaged Thebes and the oracle declared that only banishment of the murderer of Laius would save the city. Finally, the terrible truth of Oedipus' fate was brought to light by the seer Tiresias. Jocasta took her own life; Oedipus blinded himself and wandered the earth in misery.

In *Night Journey*, Martha Graham's dramatization of this myth, it is not Oedipus by Jocasta who is the protagonist. The action turns upon that instant of Jocasta's death when she relives her destiny, sees with double insight the triumphal entry of Oedipus, their meeting, courtship, marriage, their years of intimacy which were darkly crossed by the blind seer, Tiresias, until at last the truth burst from him. The chorus of women who know the truth before the seer speaks it, vainly try to divert the prophecy from its cruel conclusion.

<i>Jocasta</i>	YURIKO KIMURA
<i>Tiresias, the Seer</i>	BERT TERBOROUGH
<i>Oedipus</i>	DAVID BROWN
<i>Leader of the Chorus</i>	JEANNE RUDDY
<i>Daughters of the Night</i>	Jacqulyn Buglisi, Terese Capucilli, Judith Garay, Sophie Giovanola, Joyce Herring, Andrea Smith

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I N T E R M I S S I O N

A C T S O F L I G H T

*Music by CARL NIELSEN**

*Choreography by MARTHA GRAHAM
Costumes by HALSTON*

Première: February 26, 1981

Conversation of Lovers

TAKAKO ASAKAWA DAVID HATCH WALKER

Lament

CHRISTINE DAKIN

David Hochoy, Jean-Louis Morin, Philip Salvatori
Bert Terborgh, Larry White

Ritual to the Sun

Chief Celebrants:

TAKAKO ASAKAWA DAVID HATCH WALKER

Thea Nerissa Barnes, David Brown, Jacqulyn Buglisi, Terese Capucilli,
Judith Garay, Sophie Giovanola, Joyce Herring/Andrea Smith, David
Hochoy, Kevin Keenan, Jean-Louis Morin, Steve Rooks, Jeanne Ruddy,
Philip Salvatori, Bert Terborgh, Larry White

Acts of Light is taken from a letter written by Emily Dickinson (No. 951) to Mrs. J. Howard Sweetser, Late Autumn 1884.

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Anna Kisselgoff, Principal Dance Critic of the New York *Times*, wrote the following article for the Graham Company's February 1981 performances in Washington's Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts:

As the great image-maker of the dance, Martha Graham has passed into a new phase of creativity. She is, of course, actively supervising performances of the classics in her repertory and more recently, reviving even older classics that once seemed hopelessly if grandly stored away as legend.

But the theater of Martha Graham is also undergoing change and this is simply because her independent spirit, by definition, has never been content to remain in place. The new Graham dances testify to the same pioneering thrust that made her name synonymous with American modern dance in the first place. It is not the kind of pioneering congenial to fervent followers who live on their memories. Those comfortable with the stark and spare ritualism of the Graham of the 1930s and the tough-minded psychological excursions of the 1950s might find any change in her choreography disturbing. Like Picasso and Stravinsky, Martha Graham has nonetheless confounded her admirers by daring to move into an unpredictable, even neoclassical phase.

The crucial difference between the new pieces and older ones is, frankly, that she herself is not dancing. The focus has shifted from the towering figure in crisis, painstakingly examined in closeup. There is no new Jocasta reliving a terrible truth, no Medea personifying jealousy and hatred, no Joan of Arc meditating upon multiple aspects of herself on the road to sainthood, no Bronte going mad before our eyes. The themes are more general, the statement more universal, the structure more direct. And yet these new works are repeatedly replete with the most startling images just as in typical Graham manner, the surface tale continues to be subsumed with layers of meaning.

Martha Graham is no longer evolving first principles in her art. "The interest lies not so much in the experiments as in the beginning," she says today, "but in the use of material. I have always said, if the contemporary dance failed to live, it would be from within. The danger lies in those people in contemporary dance who become complacent, they tend to get into one area and stay in it. These are people so involved in their own work, they are not influenced so much by life itself. If you don't go along with the conditions of life, you are static. The absolute thing is now."

The change in dancers' bodies is an immediate reflection of the life around them and Martha Graham is quick to point out, too, how "ballet has changed" over the decades, its techniques adapted accordingly. Her own technically proficient dancers bear little resemblance to the Graham dancers of thirty years ago with their special raw power. Yet a dancer who keeps the perfect form of the Graham technique still makes the earlier masterworks speak eloquently through a new voice. This is not to say that Martha Graham would sanction a decorative approach or a pure-dance piece that, deep down, did not express inner emotion. That is not her style. Or as she says so rightly, "I am not a style."

At the same time she is convinced the revivals must not be staged as period pieces—performed as they would have been at the time of their creation. When the call goes out to the extended Graham family of former company members and rehearsal directors to aid on a revival, there is no assumption that today's dancers will perform it the way the veterans once did.

It is for this current group that the new dances have been created and it would be a mistake to equate the technical facility of the performers with a corresponding decorativeness in the choreography. Even the most straightforward Graham work is never superficial. Many of the newest pieces, in fact, are concerned with charting the difficult course of male-female relations. *Ecuadorian*, inspired by Mayan fertility prayers set to music by Edgard Varese, opposes "celebrants" of the sun and moon. In this duel between light and dark, the male-female relationship is extended into an eternal verity, as timeless as the sun-moon cycle itself.

Frescoes, to excerpts from Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*, is an ode to undying love. Ingeniously, Antony and Cleopatra are lifted out of their historical period, the Roman era, and linked by Miss Graham to Isis and Osiris, the Egyptian gods associated with love, death, fertility and rebirth. Mortal and immortal love are defined in these alternating duets. The entire work is enriched by a series of wonderful images—Cleopatra mourning Antony in a red cape which then flies up as a canopy for the lovers to relive their idyll.

"There can be no present without the past. I don't believe in throwing away the past but in using it," Martha Graham observes. The archaic style in *Frescoes* appears related to her "Greek" masterpieces. Yet it is also different, typical of her increasing interest in breaking down her own idiom into the basic units of technique.

What remains is the underlying heroic cast of her art. Brought up on fairytales, she never wanted to dance a damsel in distress. "I have always been drawn to fighting the dragon," Martha Graham declares. "He is part of the stimulus of the world."

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

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