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DANCE REVIEW

Imagination Captured by Movement, Sound and Imagery

By JENNIFER DUNNING

Cathy Weis combines movement, sound and video imagery to create dances that are unmistakably her own. The wonderfully crotchety imagination that sews it all together was in unrestricted play in the program that Ms. Weis presented on Saturday night at Dance Theater Workshop.

Her new "Electric Haiku," a suite of seven short pieces performed by a dream quartet of dancer-actors with

strong but nonintrusive presences, turns dots of light into buzzing bees and a toy into an attack plane. A dancing animated chimpanzee loses body parts as a live woman (Ksenia Vidyaykina) discards parts of her costumes.

It is all a great deal of fun, but there are also moments of extraordinary beauty. A live dancer (Scott Heron) in effect becomes his heel and feet, videotaped close up by a camera posed at the level of the wooden table that he moves across and projected huge on a screen behind him. Mr. Heron bounces noisily

on coils of bedsprings high up on steel scaffolding. Filmed from below and projected on a giant hanging scroll, it becomes a stylish video dance. The highlight of the piece is a simple but ravishing solo in which Ms. Vidyaykina is seen in white light, liquid colors momentarily and subtly spreading on parts of her shifting body. As important as the performers, who also included Zane Frazer and Parnell Klug, are Ms. Weis's collaborators. The sounds created live by Steve Hamilton have the spontaneity and unself-conscious surprise of the visual elements. The

lighting was by Jay Ryan. The costumes, nuttily outlandish and beautifully simple, were designed by Jonathan Berger and Mr. Heron.

The program was completed by a preshow romp for Ms. Weis and Mr. Berger and by "An Abondanza in the Air," created and performed by Ms. Weis and Lisa Nelson, known for the understated acuity of her movement style over the last 12 years. The duet, which also features mysteriously mobile monitors and screen images, is a stylized, immensely touching exploration of a long and important friendship.