

# Live music fires Peggy Baker's solos

By DARYL JUNG

**C**anadian dance light Peggy Baker is intensifying her search for ultimate expression in movement with a new obsession — live music.

Since making her mark as a contributor to Toronto Dance Theatre, Lars Lubovitch Dance Company and Mikhail Baryshnikov's White

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**PEGGY BAKER**, Premiere Dance Theatre (207 Queen's Quay West), November 24-28 at 8 pm, November 28 at 3 pm. \$18-\$30. 973-4000.

Oak Dance Project, she's gone almost exclusively solo. In that time, she's found herself incorporating

composers more and more into her choreographic process, to the point where she can now barely conceive of creating any other way.

"I started out, with solo work, basically wanting to live out more of my own dancing," says Baker, who brings a program of pieces to the Harbourfront Centre dance series this weekend that demonstrates her

growing dependence on musical immediacy.

"Then I found that having live music adds to that desire. It blows everything apart, making it so much more spontaneous. Every aspect of expression is heightened. That, for me, is the most exciting part of it all.

"We don't get enough opportunity to hear live music with dance," she says. "And it makes such a huge difference, especially for a solo performer. If the music's recorded and you're dancing by yourself there's not a lot of room for imagination. Everything is known. You know exactly what the music sounds like, so there's very little to react to in the moment.

## Musical moves

"Now I take the actual presence of the musicians into consideration in the developmental process of a work. That's very exciting, because it's so beautiful to watch people make music. It's absolutely genuine movement, for one thing. It's got all the components we want to have as dancers — the rhythmic, emotional progression. It's practical and necessary movement, and I use it as a framework for myself."

For her Premiere Dance Theatre shows, she promises an evening of pure Baker, with four premieres, augmented by the magic of works by Michael J. Baker and Ahmed Hassan.

The fulfillment Baker has found in the directness of solo movement language lies in the freedom, power, and increased sense of self it offers. Live music only helps it take on a whole other layer of meaning and significance.

"There's 100-year-old music, and brand new music. There's a really theatrical piece, a very funny piece and a complex, weirdo kind of piece. It's meant to cover the broadest range of styles possible." ●

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