

THE TORONTO STAR

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Impressive dance and music skills combined

BY MICHAEL CRABB
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"Two for the price of one" is a common enough slogan but even in today's bargain-conscious market "Three for the price of one" might raise a few eyebrows.

Yet this is exactly what Peggy Baker and Andrew Burashko are offering through Saturday at the Betty Oliphant Theatre (Jarvis below Maitland) in a program called Music For Piano and Solo Dancer.

Not only do you get two long, mesmerizing self-choreographed solos from Canada's finest modern dancer. You get an equally impressive virtuoso recital from Russian-born Toronto pianist Andrew Burashko, and perhaps more important, the magic theatrical moments when their separate expressive skills blend into something more than the sum of the parts.

Black Border With Moving Figures offers the contrast of Baker in one of her most rigorously modulated performances complementing the fire of Burashko's interpretations of Liszt and Chopin with almost analytically cool movement utilizing the full dynamic possibilities of her long-limbed, agile body. Her particular attention to structure and repetitions interestingly draws attention to the music's own structure, which can so often get lost under the sheer sweep of its emotional power.

After a very committed performance by Burashko of John Cage's *Music For Piano No. 2*, Baker returns to draw fuel from Prokofiev's *Sonata No. 6 In A Major* for an impassioned solo, *Brute*, inspired by Picasso's famous painting, *Guernica*. Baker wisely avoids appropriating the historic grief of Spanish Civil War victims. Instead she offers respectful images of defiance and endurance that have a universal resonance.

The whole show is sensitively enhanced by Marc Parent's lighting designs.

Michael Crabb is host/producer of CBC Radio's *The Arts Report*.