

**Peggy Baker's** got it all: the svelte, limber physique of an athlete and the exacting, concentrated stage presence of an artist. She also has range: the chameleon ability to reproduce idioms as quirky as Doug Varone's, as simple and essential as Annabelle Gamson's, or as sheerly virtuosic as Molissa Fenley's. The possibilities have always seemed endless.

Perhaps Baker's most recent concert (The Kitchen, February 16–19, 1995) was intended to narrow the focus. Accompanied live by impassioned pianist Andrew Burashko, she presented the U.S. premieres of two 1994 solos of her own making, *Black Border with Moving Figures* and *Brute*. These dances reveal an interest in the sculpting of geometric shapes, often torqued, skewed, or knotted. Given

Baker's innate physical fluency, the contrary impulse to limit, bind, and define takes on a metaphoric dimension, particularly apparent in *Brute*. Hemmed in by a bright rectangle of light, the dancer engages in a valiant, impossible struggle—to free herself from herself.

Anne Tobias

**Ballet-Théâtre de Bordeaux** ended a two-month U.S. tour at Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College (March 12, 1995) with a matinee of classical, elegant dancing. Sparks of humor, theatricality, and modern gesture periodically enlivened the stage, but overall the dancers seemed restrained by music and choreography that had too little variation.

The featured works were choreographed by the company's former artistic director Paolo Bortoluzzi. *The Four Seasons*, to a score by Vivaldi, highlighted a sweetness in this company of young dancers. And an "Autumn" pas de trois, danced by Paola Battistino, Silvie Daverat, and Christelle Lara, stood out for its simplicity and technical polish. But, with a few exceptions, the seasons seemed to blend together. *Strauss*, set to six waltzes by Johann Strauss Jr., was more playful. Female dancers lifted their befuddled male partners or insisted on leading. However, the overall effect of this ballet was lulling. Purple skirts billowed across the stage, evoking an elegance and high style that the dancing never quite caught up with.

Alice Naude