

Los Angeles Times

Collaboration Creates Dramatic Tension

MUSIC REVIEW

Canadian dancer-choreographer Peggy Baker makes bold sculptural statements linked by utilitarian motion. Even when her dance-sculptures have mobile parts—such as a hand or foot swinging back and forth—it's the graphic pose that matters.

In contrast, Russian-born pianist Andrew Burashko savors the development of musical statements as much as the statements themselves. Everything connects, everything matters and, as a result, his collaborations with Baker gen-

erate an interesting, unresolved tension.

Throughout their program of solo dance and piano at Cal State L.A. on Sunday, Burashko's playing remained deeply thoughtful and meticulous in its control of mood. Indeed, by the end of John Cage's Piano Music #2 (in which Burashko alternately struck the keys and plucked the strings), he had drawn us into the delicate textures and colors of the work so completely that the descent of the motorized stage-curtain sounded deafening.

Known in the United States for her association with the Lubovitch and White Oak companies, Baker is a superb dancer, as definitive in the

violent actions and twisted plasticity of her Cubist-inspired "Brute" (to Prokofiev's Sonata No. 6 in A) as in the more lyrical, spatially contained "In a Landscape" (to Cage's work of that title).

In her "Why the Book Wept" (to Cage's "Ophelia"), Baker's white, bell-shaped sleeves emphasized the playful arm swings, genteel reaching motions and other gestural motifs dominating the work until happiness suddenly ended and she collapsed next to the piano bench—as if bludgeoned by the final chords. A memorable performance and a potent demonstration of finding drama within music.

—LEWIS SEGAL

February 27, 1996