

Dancer has Midas touch

BY SUSAN WALKER
DANCE WRITER

The program she performs through Saturday at the Premiere Dance Theatre illustrates the paradox of Peggy Baker's achievement as a solo dancer. It's not what Baker does alone on stage that defines her art; it's her daring collaborations with other artists.

Baker has a Midas touch. Whatever discipline she enters she enriches. So unique is her movement that Baker's stamp is on everything she does, including the performance of other people's choreography. *Sanctum*, a 1991 piece Baker created and formerly performed with composer and musician Ahmed Hassan, has been slightly refashioned for Indian percussionist Debashis Sinha. Two islands of music, one danced one played, are like separate solos communicating as if by telepathy.

Review

Baker's dance has subtle echoes of Sinha's music. In a sudden explosion of red light they are momentarily fused, bridging two disparate cultures, two separate art forms.

Chan Ka Nin's *I Think That I Shall Never See* . . . is a lament for the planet commissioned by the Amici chamber trio. With the addition of Baker's dancing the piece has become *Sylvan Quartet*, challenging cellist David Hetherington, pianist Patricia Parr and clarinetist Joaquin Valdepeñas to move in new ways and in a relationship to the dancer. Whereas those two dances occupy a spiritual or intellectual plane, *In Thine Eyes* drives through emotional terrain. A duet by Doug Varone to operatic music by Michael Nyman becomes an achingly accurate portrayal of a passionate desire to connect.



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