

Top 10 dance shows

2010 was another good year in dance, but we can't help noticing that the companies on this list, with one exception, all hail from North America. A sign of Canadian and U.S. dominance? Or that it's no longer feasible to import foreign dance shows?

1 BUSK/BLUE SOUP

Aszure Barton & Artists,
April 17 and 18

Appearing suddenly and with little advance publicity (a spot opened up between tour gigs), Barton and her nimble New York-based company presented a brilliant double bill full of playful, dramatic and always fresh movement, including a couple of post-modern winks at the performing life. The Alberta-born artist demonstrated why she's one of the world's most sought-after choreographers.

2 FULL BLOOM

Young Centre, January 12 to 16
Kevin O'Day, **Luches Huddleston Jr.** and **Robert Glumbek** proved male dancers can still get their groove on after 40. Alas, Glumbek's opening-night injury prevented him from performing (**Roberto Campanella** ably stepped in), but a remount at the end of the year saw him join the testosterone-fuelled trio as he'd planned.

3 CONFLUENCE

Peggy Baker Dance Projects,
February 24 to 28

In her most ambitious program to date, Baker danced a solo, paired with **Larry Hahn** for a moving duet by **Doug Varone**, and choreographed a trio for younger dancers **Kate Holden**, **Sean Ling** and **Sahara Morimoto**. Music and movement motifs linked them all into a hypnotic meditation on science, art and mortality.

4 RED BRICK

Chartier Danse/Arraymusic,
September 17 to 19

Nearly a decade to the day after com-

poser **Michael J. Baker's** death, his widow, **Marie-Josée Chartier**, mounted a series of revivals and new works to his music. A who's who of the contemporary dance and music scene (including Chartier, reuniting with her Dancemakers pals) took part, ensuring the ahead-of-his-time composer's legacy lives on.

5 GISELLE

Fabulous Beast/World Stage,
May 4 to 8

Ireland's **Michael Keegan-Dolan** turned traditional ballet on its feathered headpiece in this raunchy, sexy and subversive take on the tragic story. If you're going to remake a classic ballet, this is how you do it.

6 ONEGIN

National Ballet of Canada,
June 19 to 25

Fresh from the Stuttgart Ballet, new principal dancer **Jiri Jelinek** showed us why his interpretation of the brooding Eugene Onegin is internationally loved. He had a poignant Tatyana in **Xiao Nan Yu**, and the production glowed dramatically with **Santo Loquasto's** new sets and costumes.

7 LOAN SHARKING

RUBBERBANDance Group/
DanceWorks, November 26 to 27

Victor Quijada uses his eclectic background – urban dance competitions as a kid, work with Twyla Tharp and Eliot Feld as a young adult – to create something utterly new. As this mini-retrospective proved, he and his fearless

dancers have the potential to change what we think of as concert dance.

8 MUSEUM DANCES

CanAsian Dance Festival, May
7 to 16

This series of works inspired by the ROM's treasures and performed in various sections of the evocative building redefined the term "museum piece" and introduced dance to a whole new audience. A win-win.

9 COCK-PIT

Wen Wei Dance/DanceWorks,
April 9 and 10

Wen Wei Wang's preadolescent experiences in a Chinese dance boarding school helped inspire this provocative work about burgeoning sexuality. The competitive one-upmanship was enhanced by the playful use of pheasant feathers in unexpected places.

10 THE FUTURE MEMORY HEART- BREAK JUNCTION, DIPTYCH

blackandblue dance projects,
November 4 to 6

Sasha Ivanochko reprised an earlier solo about a woman's heartbreak and offered up a new duet with **Brendan Wyatt** that showed the roots of the star-crossed relationship, the performers' bodies responding to every twitch and twang of **Catherine Thompson's** evocative score and delivering a wild, tempestuous ride.