

Martha Graham Introduces New Scores By Copland and Hindemith to New York

**"Appalachian Spring"
and "Herodiade" In-
cluded in Week of Reper-
toire**

NEW YORK had its first taste of the new scores by Aaron Copland and Paul Hindemith written for Martha Graham at the commission of the Coolidge Foundation when Miss Graham and her company gave a memorable week of performances at the National Theatre from May 14 through May 20. "Appalachian Spring", the study of pioneer Americans for which Mr. Copland has composed one of his finest works, had its New York premiere on May 14. The Hindemith score, which is as dark and feverish in its psychological intensity as Miss Graham's dance, was first given on May 15.

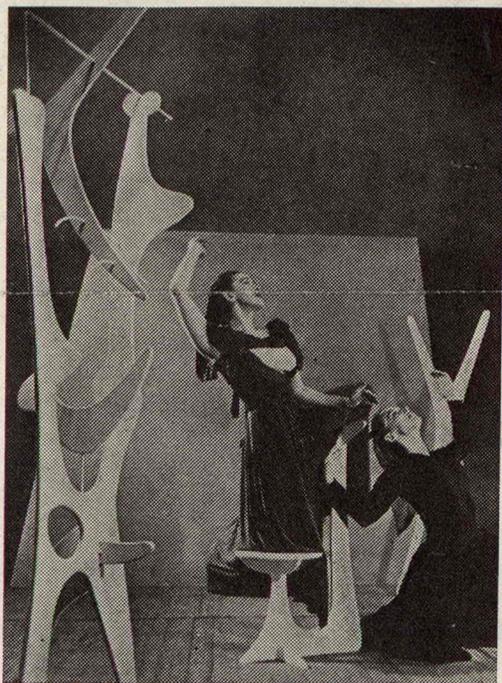
For this series of concerts Miss Graham had a chamber orchestra of 17 players, conducted by Louis Horst. Capacity houses at every performance gave ample evidence that both works were "hits", as they had been in Washington, D. C., last October, at the Coolidge Festival. Miss Graham and her entire company danced superbly in a repertoire which made staggering demands both upon physical virtuosity and dramatic power.

Both "Appalachian Spring" and "Herodiade" were discussed at length in these columns at the time of their premieres in Washington, D. C. In the former work Miss Graham was again the Bride; May O'Donnell, the Pioneering Woman; Erick Hawkins, the Husbandman; Merce Cunningham, the Revivalist; and Nina Fonaroff, Marjorie Mazia, Ethel Winter and Yuriko, the Followers. "Herodiade" (which was called "Mirror Before Me" in Washington) had Miss Graham as the chief protagonist and Miss O'Donnell as the Attendant. Both

works have been tightened and improved.

The week also brought Erick Hawkins's "John Brown" in its first New York performance on May 16; and Merce Cunningham's "Mysterious Adventure" in its first Broadway showing, on May 17. Mr. Hawkins's dance-play, which has an Interlocutor, enacted by Will Hare, uses dramatic dialogue liberally and Mr. Hawkins actually speaks more than he dances in his portrayal of the heroic reformer who hated slavery so consumingly. This is the weakness of his composition, which is sincere and stirring despite its unsatisfactory form. Noguchi had designed telling décor for the work, and the rather noisy, aimless music is by Charles Mills.

"Mysterious Adventure", a delicate



Martha Graham and May O'Donnell
in "Herodiade". The Setting Is by
Isamu Noguchi

study in eroticism, with music for the "prepared" piano by John Cage and costume and "object" by David Hare, has some splendid movement in it. But it is too subtle and too personal for any but an audience of dancers. Mr. Cunningham performed it with breathtaking lightness.

Several of Miss Graham's greatest works of recent years made up the rest of the week's repertoire. Only

one solo, "Salem Shore," was included. "Deaths and Entrances", "Letter to the World" and "Every Soul Is a Circus" were also seen.

Jane Dudley returned to her role as the Ancestress in "Letter" and Jean Erdman recited the Emily Dickinson poetry exquisitely. Altogether, this week made theatrical history, besides giving the music public something to get excited about. ROBERT SABIN