

N.Y. "Campus."  
Oct. 14, 1938.

## Martha Graham's Own Americana

*American Document*, presented by Martha Graham last Sunday eve at Carnegie Hall for the benefit of *New Masses*, was new in that it represented a radical change in her method.

For the first time she brings to the concert stage a theatrical dance—a dance drama in the form of an American minstrel show. The significant change is the use of a speaker—the Interlocutor. He speaks of America, its history, people, and primarily of its ideal of democracy. The dancers go on to define and expand his words in terms of movement.

The controversial problem of speech in the dance is too complex to discuss adequately in our limited space. However, granting the use of this technique; and it was powerful and effective, there is the annoying presence of a long scene, a Puritan Episode. Here the Interlocutor clashes the hell-fire words of Jonathan Edwards, the Puritan preacher with the sensuous lyrics of the *Song of Songs*. Simultaneously there is a love dance performed by Miss Graham and Erick Hawkins, the first male dancer she has used for years.

It is undoubtedly a deeply moving scene but it simply does not fit into a dance whose theme is as broad as the question, "What is America?"

The supporting group gave its usual performance of high technical excellence.

NAGRIN.