

DANCE ARTISTS IN PROGRAM OF VARIED APPEAL

Martha Graham of Eastman School and Assistants Warmly Applauded.

Miss Martha Graham, of the Eastman School of the Dance and Dramatic Action, and a premier dancer who has won most of the honors that the field of dance-interpretation has to give, provided an evening of rich artistic beauty last evening in Kilbourn Hall, assisted by a group of young dancers who have received their training at this school. Rochester has seen less of Miss Graham since she came here to teach than her eminent record should justify, but she atoned for the neglect last night in a program that touched so many points of interest and beauty that it was like a book of many brightly colored pictures.

Like Ruth St. Denis, whom she suggests in many of her postures and interpretations, Miss Graham is a dancer of creative bent, who moulds music to her own concepts and fancies. Whatever mood she feels in a piece of music she attempts to capture in the dance. Some of her numbers might pass as pantomime rather than dancing to a spectator who failed to catch the constant and inevitable rhythm that permeates them and who failed to appreciate the innate grace and flexibility of body that makes dancing of this sort one of the most plastic of all arts.

Framed in the intimate Kilbourn Hall stage, Miss Graham and her assistants presented a shifting, constantly contrasting series of sharply outlined images, dainty as vignettes. Some were quite obvious, as the "Maid with the Flaxen Hair" of Debussy; others were subtle, in dark emotional mood, as the Cesar Franck Choral that opened the program, and the strikingly poignant "Desir opus 57, No. 1" of Scriabine, a thing made eloquent by Miss Graham's ability to make every muscle, every movement of arm and hand, count for emotional meaning. Vibrant motion, the joy of the dance, was in the two valises of Ravel, and the dignity of spiritual feeling, of sacred symbolic meaning, in

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the "Florentine Madonna," in its way the most remarkable thing on the program because so different from one's idea of what dancing can be made to express.

Much of the effect of last night's program would have been missed without the sympathetic aid of the assisting group, especially of the three young women, who flitted in and out, an inseparable trio of coryphees, to complement the various pictures. Of these Miss Thelma Biracreeis firmly established as one of Rochester's gifted representatives in the dance art. The other two, Evelyn Sabin and Betty MacDonald, have been insistently gaining notice by important appearances in recent weeks. The three revealed last night the imagination and instinct for graceful pose that must be added to technical skill in this difficult art. Dancing is not merely a matter of formula, there must be the readiness to meet any exigency gracefully and naturally, for new conditions may come each time the dance is performed.

This is the quality that these young dancers have gained. They have been taught the essentials of bodily grace and muscular control, they have been taught that even a motionless pose, or even a prostrate figure may have beauty and meaning. In addition they have learned to express ideas for themselves and to avoid always the unpardonable sin of clumsiness. Their work in its way was quite as significant as that of their teachers. As much must be said for the young men dancers, Harold Kolb, Harold Conkling and Henry Riebeselle, who contributed to the elaborate "Alceste" ensemble and to the barbaric and bizarre "Scene Javanaise," the composition of Louis Horst, who was at the piano throughout the evening and whose effective accompaniments were highly valuable.

A dance program seems inevitably a matter of delays, and there were plenty last night. But a look at the costumes designed by Norman Edwards and an understanding of the importance of the lighting effects made these delays understandable. An audience that filled the hall was effusive in its reception of the program.