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Martha Graham Seen In Two New Works

Martha Graham and her dance group returned with first performance of two new works for their first local engagement of the season last evening, at the Mansfield. The evening's highlight was "Letter to the World," an imaginative biography of Emily Dickenson, based on excerpts from the works of the New England poet.

"Letter to the World" attempts to portray the real Emily Dickenson, rather than the poet as she appeared to her Amherst neighbors, and the various facets of her personality were interpreted by several members of the company.

Solo honors went to Miss Graham, who interpreted the inner Dickenson as revealed in her poems. Jean Erdman spoke the verses with good diction and intonation, and Jane Dudley, with the impersonally tragic look of a St. Gaudens figure, was excellent as the Ancestress, typifying Miss Dickenson's Puritan background and ever-present fear of death. Erick Hawk-

ins danced rather stiffly the part of the Lover, although possibly this lends verisimilitude to a New England suitor.

The evening opened with "El Penitente," which was rather like an old-time morality play seen through the eyes of the Mexican flagellants.

"Every Soul Is a Circus," the satire seen here last season, concluded the evening. Paul Nordoff wrote the music for the latter; Hunter Johnson set "Letter to the World," and Louis Horst, "El Penitente."