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GRAHAM DANCERS PRESENT 'CIRCUS'

Final Performance at Concert
Theatre Is Provided With the
Music of Paul Nordoff

OFFERING GAINS IN POISE

Erick Hawkins Appears in the
'Ringmaster' Role—Merce
Cunningham 'Acrobat'

By JOHN MARTIN

For her second and final performance at the Concert Theatre last night, Martha Graham restored to the program her "Every Soul Is a Circus," with music by Paul Nordoff, putting it in the place of the new "Punch and the Judy," which had its première the night before. Though both works are satirical in intent and both deal with aspects of frustration, it is remarkable how different they are. The Judy is a shrew and a vixen, but the "Empress of the Arena" is a self-deceived romantic who becomes increasingly tragic as she is increasingly ludicrous. The Judy is more fun, perhaps, but the "Circus" has

more substance and more bite. Trust Miss Graham to achieve every nuance, both laughable and pitiful, of this "silly woman," in characteristically evocative movement.

Quite apart from its context, the work remains extraordinarily brilliant of surface even after many reseeings, and its performance as a whole has gained notably in freedom and poise. This is particularly true of Erick Hawkins, who becomes a better dancer every time he appears. His "Ring Master" is now an easy and effective piece of comedy. Merce Cunningham is delightful as the "Acrobat," and the two of them provide an excellent team for Miss Graham to play against.

The program again contained "El Penitente" and "Letter to the World," both of which received glowing performances. The latter in particular touched a very high level, indeed, with not only Miss Graham in top form but Jane Dudley and Jean Erdman surpassing themselves in their all-important supporting roles.

That this pair of performances managed to attain such admirable results is somewhat to be wondered at in view of the obstacles raised by the shabby and dirty theatre in which they were housed. WGN Concerts, Miss Graham's new management, still has several things to learn about presenting a major dance artist.