New American Ballets

N.Y."Sun" Oct.28,1944

Dance Scores for the Library of Congress and the International Theater.

By OSCAR THOMPSON.

If America is to become the hub of the ballet world, as some seem to feel the present activities of our ballet companies indicate, some new American ballet music of significance must be written and performed. We must create ballets as well as pay to see them in the theater.

A fairly promising groundwork has been laid. Next week and perhaps in the weeks immediately beyond there will be some extension of that groundwork. The Library of Congress Festival in Washington and the new Ballet International's season in New York are producing American works.

There are three new dances on the Library of Congress program for Monday night. All were composed for Martha Graham and her group. One, "Appalachian Spring" has a score by George Copland, whose "Rodeo" and "Billy the Kid" have justified belief and faith in the American ballet. "Appalachian Spring" is described as the "spring" of a young America, looking toward new frontiers with an ecstasy of high hopes. The dance combines with the pioneering spirit of a man and his bride the religious beliefs that cluster about a "promised land." A revivalist episode comes as its climax—a composite of all the religious cults that seem to center in the gateway to the West.

"Appalachian Spring" will have as its companions "Imagined Wing," with music by Darius Milhaud, and "Mirror Before Me," to the score of Paul Hindemith—composers who were born abroad and have written distinguished scores for ballets in their European pasts.