

Letters to

Mar. 23, 1946

The Editor

Because the reactions to the performance of the Martha Graham dancers are so many and varied, I am moved to express a couple of thoughts on the subject.

First of all, I think it is definitely a credit to the Civic Music association and to the community to have had this number on the year's program. This troupe is without doubt the outstanding dance group in the country. The capacity crowd is testimony to this — everyone wanted to see them because they are famous. But—and here is my only criticism—there was no preparation for what people were going to see. In the minds of most, dancing on the stage is one of two things: either classic ballet or tap. This program was neither and people were startled and annoyed because it didn't fall into a category they understood. So I think a series of articles should have been run in the newspapers explaining Martha Graham's type of entertainment. Many still might not have entirely liked it but they would have gone knowing it would be unusual and different and would have been in a

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more receptive state of mind. Our community is made up of intelligent people and I feel certain a build-up through publicity would have done much toward the attitude of the audience.

My second point is this: Many of us didn't "understand" what we were seeing. But do we **have** to understand everything in this life? Aren't there some things worthy of our appreciation and respect anyway? I think there are. The grace, the agility, the fluid motion, the costumes—all of these are understandable, and if, in this case, when they are put together they make a pattern beyond the complete comprehension of some of us, we should still be able to admit that it was an exhibition of talent and is deserving of our respect for that reason if for no other.

After all, the entire nation has proclaimed Martha Graham as "tops" in her field and it is a privilege to have had her here. So I say congratulations to the Civic Music association!

A Citizen