

Los Angeles (Cal.)
"Pacific Coast Musician."
Mar. 16, 1940.

Martha Graham and Group

Martha Graham and her dance group displayed their very brilliant but angular technique in a recital at the Philharmonic Auditorium. The feature, "American Document," resorted to an interlocutor in the manner of minstrel shows, and if it hadn't been for this happy addition, the dance would have been so much more of the undigestible abstract. The satire, "Every Soul Is a Circus," showed woman in her predilections and frustrations which all added up resulted in addled confusion. Much of the choreography left the audience in the same sad predicament.

When the dance fails to be tangible, the purpose of the interpreter is lost. If our axiomatic structures of thought were based on sheer abstract rather than sheer logic, Miss Graham might possibly succeed. However, it is difficult to grasp the form of an idea in the maelstrom of jutting limbs that the Graham technique projects. The identical postures are used in every piece. One might be substituted for another and the audience would never know it. Her dancing wearies the mind with the prodigious task of solving the puzzle of her movements.

The music was an endless trail of dissonance and key hammering. It plainly jarred the nerves.—Richard Harvey.