

Extemporary Dance at the  
Sherman Theatre

# An uneven evening of ballet

By IFAN PAYNE

## REVIEW

I MUST admit that the grey on grey, playing catch with variations on classical steps, which opened Extemporary's *American Suite* at the Sherman Theatre last night petered into tedium as it overworked ideas of rather limited imagination and pacing.

Thankfully, though, the slow movement of the following *Offenbach Suite*, most movingly danced by Liz Lauren and Yaakov Slivkin, brought the work on to an altogether higher level where movement, music, costume and lighting all enhanced each other to considerable effect.

*American Suite*, so called presumably since it was choreographed by Americans Viloa Farber and David Gordon, consisted of three works.

Following the spark kindled during the last two movements of the *Offenbach*, the evening

caught fire and burned brightly during *Winter Rumours* which contained some moments of extraordinary beauty.

*Gradus ad Parnassum* has never been the same since Boris Blacher had a go at it.

But *Take Away*, choreographed as was *Rumours*, by Viloa Farber to Clementi's music, was a playful work of broad comedy, though to judge by the audience reaction a number of the jokes passed by unnoticed.

Those who have read their Charles Jenas will find in Extemporary's *American Suite*, and redolent with the references to classicism, the essence of post-modernist dance.

Those seeking an evening of balletic entertainment may find it, as I did, to be a programme of uneven pleasures.

But all will surely have marvelled at Viloa Farber's imaginative theatre making.