

DANCE

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Pat Catterson Theatre at St. Clement's

I like the way Pat Catterson's solos come across; as though they've been made with choreographic ease. The movement strokes in the dances are broad and bold, as if only the essential phrase lines were sketched, leaving the rest to be filled in by the viewer's eye.

I don't mean to imply that because of this seemingly casual approach that her dances are superficial. On the contrary, they're emotionally and conceptually complex. Which is another of Catterson's talents; her ability to work with feelings and/or ideas.

Keepsake (premiere) is one of the more emotional and conceptually provocative pieces on the program; in it, Catterson outlines her dancer's past and present. It opens with black and white slides of her parents, who were professional social dancers, in fox trot and/or waltz poses. The taped sound is a cock crowing in the day. Next, there's a color film taken of her parents doing the fox trot, tango, lindy, mambo and waltz on their terrace. The taped sounds include not only barnyard noises but cars zooming on a highway. The last shot in the film is taken on the same terrace but now there are three children of different ages seated in chairs while their parents stand behind them. The tape switches to Bach, and Catterson is on stage. She moves squarely, simply, at times emphasizing the breadth of her arms. There's also a film of Catterson do-

ing the same dance as the one she does on stage. She and the film sometimes move in canon, sometimes move together, and at another time they have a dialogue — the live Catterson lunges while the film Catterson stops or the film soloist turns upstage while the live dancer waits. The piece ends when the on-film Catterson walks around, as if wondering what to choreograph next.

Not all of Catterson's pieces are as coherent as *Keepsake. Serial II* (updated 1977 version) ". . . is composed of . . . one phrase or fragment, in chronological order, from all the dances I choreographed from 1966 to 1977." While it's a clever idea to string movement phrases together from past dances and while the piece has interesting, quixotic mood shifts, *Serial II* is overly long and its cleverness wears thin.

Please, Just Take It One Life At A Time (premiere) is another solidly constructed Catterson solo. In it she delineates five characters who seem to have passed their adolescence in the Sixties. There's floppy, sensuous James, followed by Helen, who waltzes around in clown face and a black taffeta dress. Presented on slides is Ester Jane, who wears funky clothes, poses a lot by a window and seems to commit suicide. Miss X is cool, down and out; she knocks a hard rock beat through her body. And Beatrice is an erratic, innocent-looking flower child. ●