

The Ancient Cycles Mark Out New Territory in BACA Performances

BY MAURINE TOTH

Circle symbolism has been used over and over again in many art forms, to represent life cycles, natural forms of the sun and the moon, seasonal cycles, the movement of the earth and planets. Composer Mary Jane Leach's minimalist piece "4BC," presented at BACA Downtown May 29, contained a rich quality catering to the idea of circle symbolism. One was drawn into the piece by the droning notes on Leach's clarinet, and entranced by the layered, circular images and music struck a meditative chord that touched the human psyche, causing one to ponder the eclectic energies that fuel the life cycle.

"Green Mountain Madrigal" and "Mountain Echoes," two other minimalist pieces by Leach, effectively echoed tones and overtones that popped back and forth, around and around, rotating in a cylindrical pattern of sound. Conducted and directed by Virginia Davidson, The Treble Singers performed articulately. Leach's music is like a retreat. Each piece gives one a sense of being; a sense of the universal.

BACA Downtown's month-long New Territory Series closed with the soundscore and choreography of Janice Bourdage. Bourdage presented three dance pieces. "I Look Down" was a short, comical view of rivalry and violence in the American '30s. A small slice of history, executed beautifully.

"The Great American National Pastime" was Bourdage's study exploring athletic risk taking. A rhythmic piece, the dancers go through the motions of running, some prostrate, some in place, one jogging around the others. There is a feeling of tedium, as the bodies work individually and independently towards the same athletic goal. The body tension is contained and well controlled.

Comparatively, Bourdage's "Dance of the Urges" paralleled Leach's concert by visually exercising the idea of circle symbolism. Set in 10 parts, this dance deals with the continual quest of modern man to return to a more primal core of understanding. The style of this piece was reminiscent of ancient Egyptian dancing, the primitive movements sharp portrayals of sun worship. The dance focused on the cir-



Dancer Janice Bourdage transforms her environment into a work of art

cular movement of life, circular forms found in nature representing the sun, ritual, fire, and time.

The symbolic circle will continue to be used by artists. Bourdage and Leach have shared their interpretation of their findings, and it is with great pleasure that the BACA Downtown audience experienced their works.

BACA ENSEMBLES: Mixed Bag and Company Youth Ensemble performs "Moving With the Times," June 6, 7:30pm; June 7, 3:30pm. BACA Workshop Ensemble performs "Moving Right Along," June 12 and 13, 7:30pm. BACA Downtown is at 111 Willoughby Street. Tickets are \$7 or \$2 with TDF. For information, call 596-2222.