

discrepancy between the way they are written and the way they are pronounced. Anderson specializes in sharp, succinct, and often comic dances that have the impact of pop songs, and her troupes have performed in cabarets as well as in theatres.

Kim Brandstrup, a Danish dancer and choreographer who was trained at the London School of Contemporary Dance, now directs Arc Dance Company. He is known for his works on literary and dramatic themes, among them idiosyncratic freestyle treatments of *Peer Gynt* and *Hamlet* (in a piece called *Antic*) and *Crime Fictions*, which evokes both Hollywood *film noir* thrillers and the mystery novels of Raymond Chandler. Matthew Bourne's company, Adventures in Motion Pictures, has attracted attention with Bourne's unconventional treatments of ballet classics, including a *Nutcracker* in which the traditionally festive family party is set in a dreary Dickensian orphanage and an all-male *Swan Lake* in which the swans are fierce bare-chested men. Bourne's purpose in such revisions is not simply satirical but an attempt to uncover unfamiliar layers of meanings and emotions in familiar tales.

The range of British modern dance and its relationships to modern dance elsewhere in the world have been emphasized by a number of festivals, perhaps the most important of them being London's annual Dance Umbrella, which was founded in 1978 in an attempt to bring together a significant cross-section of British and foreign choreography. Like most such ventures, it is controversial: conservative balletomanes find it bewildering, young rebels pronounce it hidebound, and xenophobic dancegoers have occasionally resented the importation of companies from abroad (especially from America). Also, given the multiplicity of its attractions, it is inevitable that its productions will include failures as well as triumphs. Nevertheless, Dance Umbrella simultaneously affirms the validity of British modern dance and provides international standards against which local efforts can be measured.

In a curious way, the success of modern dance in Great Britain is indicated by the kinds of difficulties that began to plague its established companies in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Both Rambert and London Contemporary were faced with the task of renewing their creative vitality. Robert Cohan retired as director of London Contemporary in 1989; neither Dan Wagoner, who succeeded him, nor Nancy Duncan, Wagoner's successor, found ways to blaze new trails for it, and the company disbanded. Christopher Bruce, who followed

Richard Alston as director of Rambert in 1992, also had to find ways of preserving that company's tradition of innovation.

The problems of these British troupes are similar to those with which the Graham, Limón, and Ailey companies have had to deal in America. How should a company continue? *Why* should a company even attempt to do so? American groups did not have to answer such questions for several decades. But contemporary British dance was only slightly more than twenty years old in 1989.

British modern dance not only grew, it grew quickly, producing an important body of achievements. No one would be worrying about its renewal if there had not first been growth.