

ADF 2006 *at a glance*

COMPANY	RECENT RECORD	CHILDREN?	ADULTS?	DANCE SNOBS?	THE REST OF US?
PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY	Mostly good news from New York season, particularly about the new work. So why the lingering doubts? Because New York critics have been regularly letting Taylor get away with murder in recent years. Still, those notices speak to something more than this group's painful mediocrity last summer.	Small ones might well be spooked by <i>Banquet of Vultures</i> .	Of course.	Ditto.	The opening piece promises to be a dark—but possibly over-simplified—social commentary, leavened later by some of Taylor's most lyrical work.
DAVID DORFMAN DANCE	Company's on the ascent, with mostly good responses to their first season at the Joyce Theater in seven years. Dorfman's on true home turf, haunted by the past, looking at the human dimension of politics.	...will have to be briefed on the Weather Underground and other '60s prehistory.	Look back in anger, consternation—and, hopefully, compassion.	...should be in the room; this could be big.	The prospect of a humane Dorfman analysis of the radical '60s? Worth checking out by the original cast—and those pondering the difference between activism and terrorism in the present.
RHYTHM SUITES: KATHAK & TAP DANCE	The pair are getting good notices on the road, but the most discerning critics note that Das and Smith's alternating takes on Kathak and tap still haven't achieved a meaningful fusion.	...will probably be fascinated by the on-stage pyrotechnics and music.	The same.	If they caught 2002's Festival of the Feet, is anything added here?	An entertaining evening in which worlds briefly touch—but otherwise may keep too respectful a distance.
PRIVATE PARTS: SARA JULI & MIGUEL GUTIERREZ	Juli had the nerve to trust total strangers with \$5,000 of her life's savings in each night of February's audacious <i>Money Conversation</i> in New York. After larger company works with The Powerful People, Gutierrez has been steadily gaining a reputation—but not uniform approval—for something that probably should be called "solo guerrilla choreography."	Nope: male nudity, transgressive self-sadomasochistic acts in one; social commentary over their heads in the other.	Those into the extreme in particular. Perhaps only those into the extreme.	...will almost certainly complain, "But that's not dance."	Both artists are playing fairly major mind games with the audience in attempts to get at major social issues of our time—with varying degrees of success. Juli can make you feel like you're having a conversation with the closest of strangers on the stuff we never talk about but need to. Comparatively, Gutierrez' openly confrontational work could feel like an assault to some.
PILOBOLUS	This 35-year-old crowd-pleaser still packs 'em in with colorful costumes, improbable human architecture, slapstick—and the occasional pithy human observation.	<i>Day Two</i> , in both programs, contains male and female nudity, but is clearly non-exploitative. Catch their children's matinee if this is an issue.	Particularly modern dance first-timers. If any still exist.	...will have seen the oldies, but should see <i>Gnomes</i> if they haven't yet.	A well-developed sense of wonder at curiously unfolding worlds may be as great a gift to the world as the company's by now patented weight-sharing techniques. Bottom line: They still know how to tell a good story.
PROVINCIAL DANCES THEATRE	Later showings by this group didn't always work out, but <i>Wings at Tea</i> is one of the best works ADF has seen in recent years. We only hope the subsequent changes have improved it.	...may be amused by the fractured fairy tale about poor behavior between the sexes.	Will enjoy it—before or after recognizing dates we've been on ourselves.	...must catch it if they missed <i>Wings</i> the first time.	The original was an accessible, funny, knowing work about disastrous courtship rituals—one for us all. Our fingers are crossed about the new material added on.
EMANUEL GAT DANCE	Next to no word since last summer's problematic <i>Rite of Spring</i> .	Insufficient information.	Yes.	Those not completely alienated by last summer will wonder what he's up to this time.	This remains a question mark at best, given the present lack of info—and the company's spotty showing last summer.
SHEN WEI DANCE ARTS	Though last summer's reviews in New York were mixed at best, international audiences have raved—as we did—about his version of <i>Rite of Spring</i> .	The new work may be beyond the youngest viewers.	Yes.	...will have to see the new work—and see if the naysayers were reading the right <i>Map</i> .	We'll see—and hear—what Mr. Shen learned during his recent trips to Tibet, along with what all the fuss was about with his choreography to Steve Reich's <i>The Desert Music</i> .
DOUG VARONE AND DANCERS	The company's 20-anniversary victory lap has been generously received. His return to stage after a hip replacement has added even more to the mix.	Yes.	Yes, particularly readers and filmgoers.	...should be in the room to welcome Varone back—and see <i>Rise</i> 's first showing ever at ADF.	His improbably lyrical, finely detailed characters seem more written—in very fine detail—than choreographed. His shrewd eye for human nature is complemented by his lyrical, operatic economy.
KEIGWIN + COMPANY	During his February visit to Boston, audiences saw the laughs—and limitations—we found during his 2004 show at ADF. He subsequently cancelled the major new work from that show for Durham. Not sure what's in store.	Depends. His camp sexual situation comedies would likely challenge most parents.	Yes.	...are wondering what he's added to the jokebook.	If you're really into sex- or gender-based comedy, probably a safe bet. But this occasionally soulful choreographer could surprise us with more.
RONALD K. BROWN/ EVIDENCE	Strong notices that single out the spiritual—and lively—quality of his latest work.	Yes.	Truly.	...will be seeing his new work here.	Brown preaches without ever preaching—to Afropop greats like Fela, Ade, Marley and others—in words that urge us upward as a community. Worth seeing.
INTERNATIONAL CHOREOGRAPHERS COMMISSIONING PROGRAM	Next to nonexistent—par for the course for foreign choreographers, traditionally under-recognized at home and abroad.	Uncertain.	Yes.	...will gamble on the outcome.	Baganova is brilliant but keeps working that combination lock of theater, music and dance. Muramatsu mentored with Butoh godfather Akaji Maro of Dai Rakuda Kan, a company that performed Muramatsu's work here in 2003. Garay's a stranger. Place your bets.
SOLEDAD BARRIO & NOCHE FLAMENCA	Persuasive evidence that Ms. Barrio is a force of nature, not a dancer.	May be intense for youngest children.	Yes.	...know the name and will yell "Alé!"	The passion pours off the stage. No translator needed this time.