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MARY LLOYD ESTRIN

Immortal: Misha in 'Murder'



ROBERT R. McELROY—NEWSWEEK

Glasnost in the Martha Graham company: 'Appalachian Spring'

## NEWSMAKERS

### Misha in Motion

**H**e's getting ready to retire from dancing, he claims—but to the delight of his fans, Mikhail Baryshnikov, 39, is still very much front and center. What's more, he can't seem to stop making history. Last week, for instance, he helped the dance community raise \$1.4 million to fight AIDS, appearing in a benefit performance that put 13 major companies onstage at New York's Lincoln Center. Misha was host, featured artist and chief drawing card for a bejeweled

audience not often lured to dance performances. The next night he was back onstage, this time with Rudolf Nureyev, bringing a touch of *glasnost* to the Martha Graham Dance Company. The two danced with Graham company members Terese Capucilli and Maxine Sherman in "Appalachian Spring," a celebration of American pioneer life—and a challenge for dancers not trained in Graham's style. The Russians participated with zest and managed to look right at home. A few days later came the opening of "Dancers," a new film featuring Misha as the lonely, often lovesick Russian-born star of an American ballet company (where *do* they dream up these plots?). Next, he'll show television audiences just what a great dancer can do with an open mind and a blond wig. In a PBS "Dance in America" special, Misha juggles numerous roles from master spy to mad scientist in David Gordon's fantasy ballet, "Murder." They're all mini-masterpieces, but it's his Camille vignette that deserves immortality. Wafting, consumptive, and every inch a ballerina, Misha never camps it up here; instead, he deftly captures the high art of melodrama. Maybe for his next project, he'll try another great Garbo role: Ninotchka.