
Dance

Jan Murray

Triple jumps

"THERE'S nothing so old fashioned as the avant-garde," muttered my companion during the new programme by **Extemporary Dance Theatre**, which runs until March 21 at **The Place**. Of course it's not as simple as that, for this triple bill entitled **American Suite** (being choreographed by two Americans) is not so much dated as neo-classical in its stress on complex movement.

David Gordon started out as something of an iconoclast in the New-York experimental circuit of the 1960s. Of late, aside from work for his own **Pick Up Company**, Gordon has been commissioned to choreograph for prestigious groups like the **Dance Theatre of Harlem**.

Accompanied by Ingrid Perrin playing Bach's Cello Suite No.1, the eight EDT dancers wear informal tops and trousers in subtle shades of grey for the first section of the work (the entire programme is designed by Craig Givens). The interactions of the cast range from almost conversational to courtly, with the separate movements of the suite linked by circular runs and sideways walks by a line-up of dancers holding hands. During the latter part of the work, to Offenbach's Suite for Two Cellos the company changes into scarlet and continues to devour the performing space in travelling turns and leaps. Throughout, the choreography flows seamlessly, and with sensitive attention paid to the music. A lovely, exhilarating work.

After the interval we were confronted by two Viola Farber works which required great concentration on the part of the audience. **Winter Rumours**, Russian folk songs from a trio of on-stage musicians, is a "white" ballet which begins very quietly and continues through a series of tableaux.

Farber's short, satirical **Take-Away** brought the evening to a lively end, sending up dance stereotypes - an Isadora figure, a sweet young thing in a bouffant frock etc.