

School of Dance is superb

On a sunny afternoon some time ago, I found myself on the great dance studio of The Halton Hills School of Dancing on Mill Street in Georgetown.

This is a magnificent, high-ceilinged space with a floor of blonde wood and one whole wall, the one opposite the windows, lined with mirrors. The sun streamed through the glass panes, illuminating the turns and arabesques performed by many millions of fine dust particles that danced in the air. A tape played a measured tune.

In front of the mirrored-wall, a young woman in a black practice suit went through all the exercises she had learned in her course.

From the most basic to the more complicated steps, the young dancer and her double in the mirror moved in perfect reflected unison. Arms rose, legs bent, proud heads turned on long, slender necks. The dancer's body had become, through training, an instrument of rigorously disciplined expression.

The normal movements of arms and legs, shoulders and hips, hands and feet, had been refined and pared down and become pure essence, balance, grace, nobility.

It was a superb illustration of how dance training takes the human body and its natural movements as raw material, to shape from it a sublime and highly kinetic art - the art of the classical ballet.

Later that same afternoon, a lady with a motherly smile arrived. She was the school pianist and

no sooner had she made herself comfortable in front of the piano, when a flurry of little girls in pink dresses burst into the practice hall - prettily holding their skirts from their waists, just like the great ballerinas they all imagined themselves to be.

Order was quickly established by the mistress of the school.

Ms. Yvonne Oldaker, a slim, agile lady with copper-colored hair, dressed all in white, with the stringy step of the trained dancer.

She guided her young charges through the lesson by walking between them and calling to them in a melodious, slightly breathless voice that sailed along atop the piano music like a swift boat on a blue summer sea.

Ms. Oldaker was trained at The Hammond School of Dancing in England as a dancer and dance teacher.

After teaching in England she came to Canada in 1959 to teach in Montreal. Later she went to Winnipeg as a teacher for The Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

Eventually she started her own school in Manitoba and operated it for 15 years. She returned to England and taught at her original school there and took additional needed training to become an examiner for The Royal Academy of Dancing in London, England.

She became an examiner for dancing teachers and dance students. She is also a children's examiner for The Royal Academy of Dancing now and travels all over the world in pursuit of that task.

In 1981 she started The Halton Hills School of Dancing as a private school, first in the basement of St. George's Church on Guelph Street and since 1988 in her own building on Mill Street.

The school has courses in classical dance, modern dance, national dances, jazz dance and tap dance for children and adults. The teaching staff consists of Ms. Yvonne Oldaker, Ms. Jill Evans, Ms. Lois Pastor, Ms. Kim Hodgkiss and Ms. Tammy Oliver. The official accompanist and music teacher of the school is Ms. Margaret Bailey.

Since this is May, I want to quote a love poem by the 17th century poet Thomas Randolph (1605-1635), that my male readers can read to their wives or girlfriends.

I have a mistress, for perfections rare
In every eye, but in my thoughts most fair.

Like tapers on the altar shine her eyes;

Her breath is the perfume of sacrifice;

And whoso'er my fancy would begin,

Still her perfection lets religion in.

We sit and talk, and kiss away the hours

As chastely as the morning dews kiss flowers;

I touch her, like my beads, with devout care,

And come unto my courtship as my prayer.

GLT season ends

Saturday, June 2 will mark the official end of the 1989-90 season for the Georgetown Little Theatre. This is the date of their Annual Dinner held at their premises at Stewarttown.

The evening takes the form of a full roast beef dinner, followed by entertainment, which includes skits and musical numbers - quite a departure for the group which normally presents comedic or dramatic plays. It is generally a 'let down your hair' evening, with lots of fun and laughter for all concerned.

Georgetown Little Theatre thank their patrons and subscribers for their support and hope to see everyone back again next year. In the meantime, you are cordially invited to attend the Annual Dinner, which is being convened by Dorothy Hunt. Please call Dorothy at 877-2321 for details and reservations.

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