



PHOTO/GARY SLOAN

Elizabeth Scherban Shinzawa and Parren Ballard (here, during dress rehearsal) are exceptionally precise and buoyant carrying out Jose Mateo's premiere of "Suspect of Passion."

In 'Undercurrents,' a premiere and two other dances hit the mark

MATEO
continued from Page C15

st notably in the beginning and when the women coalesce a long frieze that suggests an impenetrable fence.

Never one to shy away from music, Mateo picked Schubert's Quintet for Piano and strings in E-flat major for the program's premiere, "Suspect of Passion." While Mateo's choreography is more horizontal than classical, here he incorporates more lifts and leaping than usual, starting from the moment when the dancers burst onstage in airborne

Undercurrents

Performed by

Jose Mateo's Ballet Theatre
At: the Sanctuary Theatre,
400 Harvard St., Harvard Square,
Cambridge, through Oct. 26.

grands jetés. The leading couple, Elizabeth Scherban Shinzawa and Parren Ballard, are exceptionally precise and buoyant.

In all three of these works, Mateo hints at a narrative that is never spelled out. You can try to decode it or just enjoy the dancing for its own sake. It's your choice.

That flexibility is part of the program's appeal and edge. Another part of the appeal is that while the dancers come from radically different backgrounds, geographically and in their training, they all "get" what Mateo's after. He has a reputation as a great teacher, and it shows.

A couple of suggestions. On the technical front, the dancers need to improve their footwork. And Mateo's use of great music makes you wish that it wasn't recorded great music. It would be terrific to have live accompaniment for one of his shows.

Dance fever
Jose Mateo's ballet
leaps into fall
Review, Weekend C1



Dancers are Boston Globe

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PHOTO/GARY SLOAN

Jose Mateo's "Courtly Lovers" (seen here in dress rehearsal), is a lighthearted look at manners and a sly view of relationships.

Mateo's fluid style fills 'Undercurrents'

By Christine Temin
GLOBE STAFF

CAMBRIDGE — "Undercurrents" is the name of Jose Mateo's fall program. The currents have, however, bubbled to the surface. Mateo's choreography, along with his company's ability to dance it according to his take on classicism, have reached a maturity that's gratifying to witness at the start of the troupe's 18th season.

It's also gratifying that although the works date from different eras — "The Last Circus" is from 1990, "Courtly Lovers" from 2003, and "Suspect of Passion" is new — they're all worth watching. Mateo's style has evolved — but even in "The Last Circus" it's clear that it's his. Set to Stravinsky's Concerto for Piano & Wind Instruments, "Circus" is fractured and episodic, the deliberate disjunctions reinforced by wildly varying costumes, some

suggesting Harlequin, or a Venetian carnival. The Balanchine influence is there — the many Balanchine/Stravinsky collaborations make it hard for other choreographers to do something entirely different — but it's not disturbing. The 16 dancers are all kept busy rushing through the fluid patterns: The corps is never just decor. Sybil Watkins, in the female lead, joined Mateo just last year, but she is superbly articulate in his style, which could be summarized as "Just keep going! No posing!" "Circus" is as entertaining as a circus should be.

Mateo used Haydn's "Surprise Symphony" for "Courtly Lovers," a lighthearted look at manners *a la* Emily Post and also a sly view of relationships — and contests — between men and women. The women win. How could they not, with Meg Flaherty, a tiny powerhouse, in the lead? The formality of the subject is echoed in the choreography,

MATEO, Page C20