

# The New York Times

## Dance in Review

By JENNIFER DUNNING

April 19, 1993

'Gravity Stretches Sound' Thea Nerissa Barnes and Julie Ludwick Thompson Hall Columbia University

Thea Nerissa Barnes and Julie Ludwick are both compelling performers, and the six dances they presented on Saturday night were nicely complementary. Ms. Barnes, who has danced with Martha Graham and Alvin Ailey, is earthbound in the best sense. Ms. Ludwick, a ballet dancer turned trapezist, is a creature of the air. And both are thoughtful, intelligent choreographers.

There is a simple but striking central image to Ms. Barnes's new "Dream Up," danced to a score created by an informal onstage ensemble of 11 musicians and singers. After the musicians have wandered into place, Ms. Barnes slithers onto the stage in a gleaming black body stocking, approaching a long rectangle of similar material laid on the floor. Wrapped in it and emerging from it, limbs crooking out of its enveloping folds, Ms. Barnes becomes a billowing, slightly foreboding combination of insect and ghost. The effect is heightened by the black suits and dresses of the musicians and by their livid skin tones, a chorus of shapes made discrete by A. C. Hickox's warm and cool white lighting.

Ms. Barnes designed the costume. Randall Everett Allsup, her collaborator throughout the evening, served as music coordinator.

The fascination of Ms. Ludwick's sprawling new "What Goes Up," set to a Bach piano score, was the skill with which she integrated the performers swinging, dangling and spinning from three trapezes and those moving below. Ms. Ludwick was the most persuasive dancer in the group. But her choreography gave the others simple, responsive things to do, such as running circuitous paths through the thicket of shifting trapezes, punctuated by charming trapeze duets and other pairings, with the trapeze bars sometimes serving as ballet barres.

Ms. Ludwick performed with the Fly-by-Night Dancers: Janet Aisawa, John Chanik, Suzanne Jordan, Robert Yahner and Chikako Yamauchi.