



DANCE REVIEW

Steady Stream of Poses, Leaps and Everyday Chaos



Richard Termine for The New York Times

Keigwin + Company, joined by amateur performers, in "Bolero NYC" at SummerStage in Central Park on Saturday night.

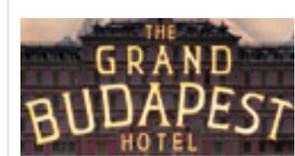
By GIA KOURLAS
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In terms of watching dance in a park, the only circumstance more unappealing than SummerStage on its own — seeing dances with little or no nuance gets dull — is SummerStage during a heat wave. (Although it does help to imagine the life of a baseball catcher in August.) On a steamy Saturday night the festival offered a somewhat thematically random program, showcasing Jamel Gaines and his Creative Outlet Dance Theater of Brooklyn (the warm-up act) and Keigwin + Company (the headliner).

On an outdoor stage, the headliner has an advantage: darkness. (Mr. Gaines, whose company performed at sunset, lacked an effective lighting design.) And Larry Keigwin possesses another trick: accessibility. He makes the kind of commercially bent work that gets a crowd going.

In Mr. Keigwin's "Megalopolis," originally commissioned by the dance division at the Juilliard School, the stage came alive with a steady stream of haughty poses, Fritz Masten's lively sequined costumes and some heart-pumping music (Steve Reich and M.I.A.). "Megalopolis" is a repetitive work that borders on vapid, but at least it shook you out of the stupor generated by Creative Outlet. Mr. Gaines's

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ponderous dances take the notion of positive thinking too far.

But the SummerStage program actually began with an appearance by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Performing Arts, a winner of the [Dancin' Downtown at the Joyce](#) competition. "[Angelica](#)," a sweetly lyrical work choreographed by Maeghan McHale for five women, was on the earnest side. The chiffon flowed.

Mr. Gaines followed with three dances of his own, beginning with "Prize," a work in progress set to speeches by President Obama and mixed by Calvin Booker. Here and elsewhere, Mr. Gaines gave into clichés, punctuating words with too-obvious gestures. The premiere of "4forfour" featured four bare-chested men moving with primal attack. Mr. Gaines's dancers are forceful: with every leap or pirouette, it seems as if they're going for gold. After a while, the monotony becomes exhausting.

"Forces" is dedicated to those, as noted in the program, "who endured Hurricane Katrina." It turned out to be an endurance test too, particularly the spoken-word contribution by Gia McGlone, who also sang a mashup of songs with the word "rain." To make matters worse, the score included the sounds of rain and thunder.

Mr. Keigwin, who also presented "Love Songs," closed the evening with "Bolero NYC," choreographed in 2007 with Nicole Wolcott. He engaged 75 local performers — mainly amateurs — for the piece, which uses Ravel's familiar music and red-and-black costumes to stage a dance that takes the everyday chaos of New York City and wittily transforms it into scenes involving umbrellas, balloons and pedestrian movement.

At this point in his career, Mr. Keigwin has made several versions outside of New York: along with "Bolero Colorado," there's "Bolero Santa Barbara" and "[Bolero Akron](#)." The appeal is obvious, but it's still a feat: he has made a dance about a community add up to more than a community dance.

Central Park SummerStage continues through Aug. 8 at Rumsey Playfield, midpark at 70th Street, (212)360-2777, [summerstage.org](#). The next dance event, featuring Forces of Nature Dance Theater and Cecilia Marta Dance Company, is Saturday.

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