Pas de Deux

Learning to dance

June 1, 1994 By Richard Perez-Feria

The first time I saw Bill T. Jones dance was several years ago as part of Miami Light Project's contemporary perfornace series at the Colony Theater in South Beach. What a night that was. I remember thinking that in Bill T. Jones I was watching someone as fluid as Baryshnikov, as powerful as Villella, as theatrical as Nureyev. Bill T. Jones' sheer physicality and that of his incredibly talented dancers made the evening one I'll never forget.

It is without irony, then that we feature both Bill T. Jones and Rudolph Nureyev in this issue of POZ. In two vastly different but equally revealing stories, these two gifted artists -- one who has lost his battle with AIDS, one who fights on with all he has -- are dissected and interpreted as only a magazine about life with AIDS can do.

Other examples of courage abound in this magazine: Phill Wilson, Sam and Howard Josepher, Tonya Hall, Nita Pippins, Eileen Mitzman, Patrick O'Connell, Florent Morellet, Teddy Kalidas, David Fisch, Tim McCarthy and Gilles Mesrobian provoke, challenge and enlighten us while shepherding us through a confusing haze of misinformation and ignorance. They -- and thousands of people like them -- are the heroes in this war.

Next time you're fortunate enough to see Bill T. Jones perform his angry brilliance or watch an old clip of a sexually defiant Nureyev in Balanchine's Apollo, remember that what drives these men should inspire and lead us out of our own moment of hesitation, complacency and fear.

The beauty and grace so courageously shown by Jones and Nureyev makes for compelling reading, yes. More telling, though, their lives remind all of us to live as if today is all we really have. And isn't that what artists are supposed to do?

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