The term modern dance is obviously an inadequate one. It is not synonymous with contemporary dance, for it is by no means that inclusive. It is only of temporary accuracy in so far as it is accurate at all, for tomorrow, when a more advanced type of dance shall have arisen, it will be impossible to refer to the dancing of today as modern.

—John Martin, *The Modern Dance*, 1933

The term “postmodern” has been drifting in and out of critical discourse for well over a decade now, but it is only during the past three years that this cumbersome, unfelicitous phrase has made a big journalistic splash. The reasons for this have, I suspect, more to do with journalistic convenience than with aesthetic or linguistic necessity. For with the arrival of 1980, it was again time to play that familiar game of cultural prognostication called pin the label on the decade; and for better or for worse, the 1980s are rapidly becoming known as the decade of postmodernism.

Be that as it may, there are only two arts—dance and architecture—in which the term can be said to serve an unambiguously necessary function. That’s because both of these arts possess a clearly defined tradition of “the modern” (in this case, modern dance and modern architecture) as well as a comparably coherent and easily identified body of work which defines
itself in opposition to “the modern.” By suggesting this, I don’t mean to imply that the phrase “postmodern” has no meaning outside the realms of dance and architecture. Hardly. Its current omnipresence testifies to the pervasive conviction that an entire epoch—that of “modernism,” broadly defined—has run its course. But in the other arts, the reaction against modernism hasn’t manifested itself in so decisive and cohesive a manner. More importantly, the terms “postmodern dance” and “postmodern architecture” arose independently in the early 1970s, long before the phrase itself became journalistically fashionable.

Unfortunately, problems arise the moment one attempts to find some common ground between postmodern dance and postmodern architecture. To an architect, the term postmodern connotes a rejection of the very sort of austerity and reductivism that characterized so many early postmodern dances. In fact, Yvonne Rainer’s manifesto of renunciation (“No to spectacle no to virtuosity no to . . . magic and make-believe,” etc.) sounds very much like the holier-than-thou puritanism of the orthodox modern architects (against whom the postmodern architects rebelled).

As long as both terms serve a useful function in their respective art forms, why insist on—or even look for—some sort of ideological uniformity? That’s a reasonable enough question, but there are a number of compelling reasons for seeking out similarities between the two movements. To begin with the architectural meaning of the term, postmodern is rapidly becoming accepted as the model for postmodernism generally. This means that the dance community is likely to find itself—as it so often does—a minority of one in matters of terminology.

Furthermore, comparisons between postmodern dance and postmodern architecture are not as arbitrary as they might at first appear; for postmodern architecture, by its very nature, virtually invites a discussion of dance. Indeed, one of the distinguishing characteristics of postmodern architecture is its determination to make the human body feel “at home” in its structures, to reestablish the traditional premodern analogies between bodies and buildings. Orthodox modernism is rejected in large part for alienating the body, and because it lacks a set of symbolic or kinetic equivalents for bodily parts and functions. (How appropriate that upon catching his first glimpse of an austere, modernist building by Adolf Loos, the Emperor Franz Joseph is said to have exclaimed, “That house is like a face without eyebrows.”)

In their book, *Body, Memory, and Architecture*, the postmodern architects Kent Bloomer, Charles Moore, and Robert Yudell, establish—perhaps a bit too literally—a set of analogies between the private home and the bodies of its inhabitants. (Front door corresponds to mouth, windows to eyes, roof to forehead, fireplace to heart. The back door—complete with anal implications—is where we take out the trash; and the attic is an objectification of memory—the place where we store memorabilia.) The potential parallels
HOUSE OF SEAGRAM
Architects: Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson

THE PORTLAND BUILDING
Architect: Michael Graves
between architecture and dance are explored by Yudell in a chapter called "Body Movement": “Our bodies and our movements,” he writes, “are in constant dialogue with our buildings.” But this is precisely what the modernist architects tended to forget! “Images in Mies van der Rohe's own renderings,” he notes, “often convey a sense of the ungluing of the body from the building. In his 1942 drawing for a small museum, the Maillol figure stands free and solitary in the neutral, gridded, Cartesian space. It is indeed an image of lonely coexistence.”

At another point in the essay, he asks rhetorically,

Why are we not moved by our neighborhood shopping mall or city center office tower? Take, for example, a typical curtain-wall skyscraper. Its potential for pulling us into the realm (of movement) is almost nil. We can neither measure ourselves against it nor imagine a bodily participation. Our bodily response is reduced to little more than a craned head, wide eyes, and perhaps an open jaw in appreciation of some magnificent height or of some elegantly prescribed mullion detailing.

“We can look to the dancer,” Yudell suggests, “for some fresh sense of these realms. Dancers speak of ‘feeling’ space.” But logically enough, the dancers to whom he turns for this “haptic experience of space” are Martha Graham, Mary Wigman, and Rudolf van Laban. The choreographers that we normally think of as postmodern don’t figure in his vision of postmodern architecture. Indeed, when he asks, more in sorrow than in anger, “why are we not moved by our neighborhood shopping mall?,” we may be tempted to think of Yvonne Rainer’s postmodern moratorium on such emotional and kinetic transactions: “no to moving or being moved.” It would appear then that the task of reconciling postmodern dance and postmodern architecture is all but hopeless.

II

But before we rule out the possibility of a rapprochement, we’ll need to get a firmer fix on what postmodern dance actually consists of. The time has come to take a long, hard look at the term “postmodern dance” with a view toward answering the following questions: How broad a spectrum of contemporary dance activity does it cover? (Everyone would agree that the term applies to work created under the auspices of the Judson Dance Theatre.) But whether the term applies with equal accuracy to work that comes after Judson and whether the postmodern umbrella can be opened wide enough to cover work being created today is more problematic—as is the decision of whether or not to claim that the postmodern era in dance officially begins with the first Judson-sponsored concert in July of ’62. Then there are the choreographers whose work in the mid 1960s was closely related to that of Judson—people like Kenneth King and Twyla Tharp—but who weren’t officially affiliated with the original group.
And if the term postmodern is to constitute a third major genre of Western, theatrical dancing (along with ballet and modern), what subgenres will be needed to distinguish between those activities that are similar enough to be labeled postmodern, but dissimilar enough to require a further refinement of our terminology? (In the genre of ballet, after all, we routinely differentiate classical ballet from post-Fokine “modern” ballet; similarly, in discussions of modern dance, it is now customary to speak of Duncan and Fuller as “forerunners,” and to date the beginnings of modern dance proper from the earliest public performances of Graham in this country and Wigman in Europe.)

Such subcategories would be necessary even if we were to limit our attention to the early years of Judson. But most people would, I think, agree that it is unduly arbitrary and restricting to reserve the postmodern label for dances stamped “property of Judson.” Surely, the more enlightened approach is to arrive at some tentative generalizations about the characteristics these Judson dances share, then to decide which of these characteristics differ most decisively from what we’ve come to think of as modern dance, and finally to use this codifiable criteria as a means of identifying postmodern dance generally (regardless of whether or not the choreographer in question was affiliated with Judson).

A list of this sort would include (but not necessarily be limited to) works that utilize pedestrian, unstylized, or found movement; works that can be suc-
cessfully performed by people who possess no formal dance training; works that conceive of choreography as the execution of a “task” assigned to the performer, works that are rigorously anti-illusionistic; and works that unfold in objective or clock-time rather than a theatrically-condensed or musically-abstract time.

Note that I've limited my list to those characteristics that distinguish Judson work from all previous varieties of theatrical dance. One could cite other common concerns—the fact that many of the dances were performed in silence, that the quality of the movement was often literal, antisymbolic and nonexpressive, that the performer's feet were often neither pointed nor flexed, that phrasing sometimes avoided any sense of build or climax, that inanimate objects were sometimes employed as “partners,” allowing the choreographer to emphasize the “object-like” nature of the dancer’s body, that many of the choreographic decisions were dictated by chance or indeterminate procedures. But these characteristics can also be observed in works by Cunningham and others choreographed years earlier.

Certainly, these laundry lists do not tell the whole story of Judson, but they do tell the best known story, the one that springs most readily to mind when the phrase “postmodern dance” is mentioned. And yet, a number of difficulties arise almost immediately if we define postmodern dance in this essentially empirical manner. For if we apply the postmodern label to any dance that possesses the above mentioned characteristics, we find ourselves lumping together choreographers whose work differs from one another's almost as much as it differs from that of, say, Martha Graham, the ne plus ultra of modern dance. Consider, for example, the irreconcilable differences between the cool, analytical movement studies of Yvonne Rainer (the various versions of “Trio A: The Mind is a Muscle,” for instance) and the egalitarian, participatory, therapeutically inclined dances (attempted rituals, really) devised by Anna Halprin (“A Ceremony of Us,” ’69) or Deborah Hay (the “Circle Dances,” ’73-’75).

The fact that all of these dances place a high premium on pedestrian movement comes to seem a rather trivial similarity when viewed in light of the uses to which this pedestrian movement is put. By limiting their choreographic vocabulary to “natural” movement that can be executed by untrained performers, Halprin and Hay set out (in their nontheatrical, participatory works) to democratize the art of dance—an impulse which is reminiscent of, if not identical to, Isadora Duncan’s desire to create a nonballetic form of dance better suited to the needs of a Whitmanesque democracy. (In her “Moscow Impressions,” Duncan argues that “one should work toward a theatre in which the public would take part more and more in the performance.”)

Rainer, on the other hand (along with Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, and David Gordon), usually treated pedestrian movement as the direct, choreographic equivalent of the Duchampian found object. The found
movement, like the found object, is estranged from its “natural” context, and the ultimate effect of this displacement is to increase, rather than decrease, the distance between spectator and performer. Rainer admits this forthrightly when she states, “I do not wish the audience to participate... If I make them mobile, it is only to avoid their being ‘captive,’ not to narrow the separation—either physical or psychic—between audience and performer.” My motive for establishing these distinctions is not to banish the later work of Halprin and Hay to some aesthetic Siberia, but merely to acknowledge the real differences between what might be called “the analytic” and “the therapeutic” camps of postmodern dance.

III

Thus far, we've been proceeding on the (commonly held) assumption that the postmodern era in dance begins with Judson. But if logic and common sense are to play a role in this matter, then the era of postmodern dance should begin when the single most decisive break with the principles of modern dance occurs. And this points persuasively toward Cunningham, whose repudiation of the Graham aesthetic is considerably more decisive than the differences that distinguish Cunningham from the Judsonites. Of course, no one denies that Cunningham was the seminal influence on the Judson generation (comprised heavily of ex-Cunningham dancers). And yet, conventional wisdom maintains that Cunningham's continuing dependence on technically trained dancers should effectively bar his admission to the postmodern club.

The problem with this argument is twofold: It leaves Cunningham (who, along with Balanchine and Graham, is one of the three seminal choreographers of this century) in a no-man's land of generic unclassifiability (too cool and objective for modern dance, too virtuosic and technically accomplished for postmodern). Secondly, it places undue emphasis on the concept of pedestrian movement. I, for one, don't believe that the issue of “technique” is really so decisive as to be divisive. First of all, the actual number of Judson works that were performed by genuinely untrained dancers or that consisted exclusively—or even predominately—of pedestrian movements is miniscule (as opposed to the considerable number of works that felt free to incorporate pedestrian movement). Ironically, many of the choreographers with the strongest commitment to pedestrian movement were actually among the most technically accomplished dancers associated with Judson. (Deborah Hay, for example, had previously performed with both Limon and Cunningham; and Steve Paxton was a member of the Cunningham company between the years of 1961 and 1964, the last three of which were probably the most significant for Judson pedestrianism.)

Of course, it might be argued that Judson provided an exercise in “unlearning” their theatrical training, but Cunningham's willingness to subject his choreographic process to the impersonal dictates of chance serves a
similar, if not identical, function. Conversely, a number of Cunningham works—the “intermission” section of “Walkaround Time,” for example—incorporate found and pedestrian movements (and do this without “enhancing” them in the manner of Paul Taylor’s “Esplanade” or “Lost, Found, and Lost”).⁴ There are, then, a number of compelling justifications for backdating the origins of postmodern dance to the mid 1950s when Cunningham began to consolidate an approach to choreography that persists to this day.

IV

If Cunningham tends to fall between the cracks at one end of the genre spectrum, then Tharp proves equally slippery at the other. Tharp was never officially affiliated with Judson, but no one would deny that the works she choreographed in the first few years after leaving Paul Taylor’s company in 1965 (“Tank Dive,” “Unprocessed,” “Re-Moves”) meet the most severe criterion for postmodern austerity and reductivism. The problem, then, lies with the work she created in the 1970s, beginning with “Eight Jelly Rolls.” Clearly, Tharp led the way back toward all-out, knock-'em-dead virtuosity; and the problem of how to categorize the later Tharp is part and parcel of the larger problem of how to categorize so much of the best new work being created today: dances that have in one way or another absorbed (or passed through) the Judson-related innovations of the ’60s without being limited to them or imprisoned by them.
Tharp refuses to break with her past: she still retains “The Fugue”—one of her most icy and strident dances—in her current repertory. Even in her most theatrically elaborate, overproduced, and commercial-looking works, Tharp’s roots are always visible, if only barely. For example, her big, Broadway extravaganza “The Catherine Wheel” (1981) contained a “task-like” section in which the stage is swept of accumulated debris by performers wielding long push brooms. The movement is theatrically unembellished and the time required to complete the task is determined by objective conditions that lie beyond the performer’s or the choreographer’s control. A trivial instance, no doubt, but one that serves to remind us of the many ways in which a choreographer can “outgrow” the Judson years without fully repudiating them.

Senta Driver’s “Sudden Death” or her “Risk” pieces, various installments of Kei Takei’s ongoing “Light” series, Kathy Duncan’s “Running Out of Breath,” Elizabeth Streb’s “Pole Vaults,” perhaps even Molissa Fenley’s elegant endurance marathons (“Gentle Desire,” “Energizer #2”—all make fresh use of task-oriented movement, and all belong, I would like to suggest, to a second phase of postmodern dance that is unmistakably post-Judson.5

Aside from Tharp, the most prominent member of this second stage is surely Laura Dean. Dean’s use of basic, geometric floor patterns, her vocabulary of simple, repeatable modular units (walking steps, turns, low kicks) is superficially similar to the cool, mathematically precise and mathematically generated formalism of someone like Lucinda Childs, but with an important difference: Dean’s mathematics, her concept of “number,” is mystical and Pythagorian, whereas Childs sees shape and number in wholly secular terms.

Perhaps the simplest way to distinguish Dean from the original Judsonites is to contrast her interest in repetition and duration with that of someone like Rainer. “Repetition,” wrote Rainer, “can serve to enforce the discreteness of a movement, objectify it, make it more objectlike... literally making the material easier to see.” But in Dean’s case, the function of relentless repetition is not to clarify, but to hypnotize. Indeed, repetition in Dean’s work leads inexorably to the act of spinning, with its tendency to evoke, if not literal trance, then at least a sensation that the distance between spectator and spectacle is in a state of continual fluctuation. Both literally and figuratively, Dean brings postmodern dance full circle.

And, of course, the original Judsonites are hardly standing still and marking time. Logically enough, if we’re looking for historical continuity (growth rather than outright repudiation), it’s in the current work of the original Judsonites that we’re most likely to find it. Trisha Brown’s “Accumulation (1971) With Talking (1973) Plus Water Motor” (1978) is a beautiful melding of Judson and post-Judson choreography. Here, the steady accumulation of impersonal, mathematically precise movements (rotations of the fist with
thumb extended) is periodically interrupted by willfully eccentric, highly personal spasms of movement suggesting someone who has just stepped out of a shower and is attempting to shake herself dry. It is as if the two phases of postmodern dance have been juxtaposed side by side, not really blending into a seamless whole, but not warring with one another either.

V

Having established some tentative ground rules for the use of the term “postmodern dance,” let us now turn our attention to the way in which the term postmodern is employed by critics of architecture and the other arts. Here, postmodernism can be thought of as an aesthetics of impurity. This first became evident in the world of architecture. Robert Venturi, in his epoch-making manifesto of 1966, Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, announced his opposition to the cool, austere impersonality—the glass and steel formalism—of the “International Style,” the architectural wing of high modernism. “Architects,” he wrote,

can no longer afford to be intimidated by the puritanically moral language of orthodox modern architecture. I like elements which are hybrid rather than ‘pure,’ compromising rather than ‘clean,’ . . . perverse as well as impersonal, boring as well as ‘interesting,’ . . . accommodating rather than excluding, redundant rather than simple, vestigial as well as innovating . . . I am for messy vitality over obvious unity. I include the non-sequitor and proclaim the duality.

In response to Mies van der Rohe’s famous proclamation of modernist austerity and self-purification (“Less is more”), Venturi replied, “Less is a bore.” Above all, Venturi pits himself against the modernists’ obsession with purity. Clement Greenberg, on a number of occasions, has argued that the self-appointed task of modernist art was to distinguish itself as rigorously as possible from popular culture, thereby resisting the forces of democratization which threatened to erode the highest artistic standards. (Note how literally Ad Reinhardt interprets this modernist mandate when he writes, “The frame should isolate and protect the painting from its surroundings.”)

It is, of course, one thing to isolate a painting from its surroundings, and quite another to isolate a building from its historical and geographical context (which is one of the sins that the “International Style” is accused of having committed). It thus makes perfect sense that this postmodern movement away from purity was led by architects, because of all the arts, architecture is the one least free to pursue a purely independent vision, the art most inextricably connected to the world beyond its immediate boundaries. And, of course, today we routinely refer to the work of architects such as Venturi, Charles Moore, Robert A. M. Stern, and Michael Graves as “postmodern.”

The other arts, as I’ve already suggested, lack this sort of clear-cut repudia-
tion of modernism, and yet, the rallying cry "Beyond Formalism" can be heard today in almost all of the arts. The current vogue for various forms of neorealist painting, the unprecedented level of interest in photography (not to mention the revival of serious interest in nineteenth century salon painting, the original bête noire of modernism)—all attest to a widespread reversal (or at least shift) in sensibility. As does the new tolerance (indeed enthusiasm) for ornament, mannerism, and personal expression in art forms that ten or fifteen years ago were dominated by the ideologies of minimalism, austerity, and impersonality. Venturi speaks of an attitude which is "accommodating rather than excluding," and indeed, postmodernism has come to imply a more flexible attitude toward popular culture, and indeed toward the very notion of popularity, or at least accessibility.6

Furthermore, the theoretical underpinnings of this postmodern sensibility derive from the steadily increasing prestige of semiology over the past two decades. In fact, it can be argued that the privileged place of semiology in current intellectual life results from the perceived failure of one of the most ambitious projects in the history of modernism: the utopian efforts of Alain Robbe-Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute, Michel Butor and other creators of the nouveau roman to achieve what Roland Barthes once called "zero degree" of writing—a neutral, transparent, purely descriptive language purged of culturally imposed associations (what Barthes called "a style of absence which is almost an ideal absence of style"). In his essay "Literature and Signification" and in his introduction to Elements of Semiology, Barthes
DANCE
Choreography: Lucinda Childs

PRIMARY ACCUMULATION
Choreography: Trisha Brown
reluctantly concedes the impossibility of ever totally suspending the process of cultural signification. Indeed, for the semiologist, the eye is never “innocent,” all perceptual transactions are culturally mediated (and thus, in a sense, “impure”), all meanings are socially and historically determined.

It's no coincidence, therefore, that the iconographic and representational elements in postmodern architecture are often explicitly conceived by their creators as semiotic sign systems, and as historical allusions, emblematic references to specific periods of architectural history. Indeed, what the postmodern architects object to most strenuously in the “International Style” is its arrogant disregard for history, its attempt to break decisively with the indigenous past by relying on formal geometry to create a look of “timelessness” and “universalism.” Postmodernism proceeds on the assumption that the historical slate can never be wiped clean, that absolute “originality” is a late romantic myth. As Venturi puts it in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, “Architects today are too educated to be either primitive or totally spontaneous, and architecture is too complex to be approached with carefully maintained ignorance.”

VI

If, then, we understand the essential characteristics of postmodern architecture to be a retreat from the doctrines of purity and unity, a learned and eclectic historicism, and perhaps a new determination to heal the century-old rift between the modernist avant-garde and the middle class mainstream, then the task of reconciling it with at least some varieties of postmodern dance appears considerably less forbidding. In fact, when the matter is approached in this way, a number of striking parallels begin to emerge between postmodern architecture and what I've chosen to call the second phase of postmodern dance, most notably the work of Tharp and Dean. Tharp's “The Bix Pieces” (1971), in its fond recollection of popular forms such as baton twirling, tap dancing, and Rockette-style show dancing, in its eagerness to explore the “syntactical” similarities between these popular forms and classical ballet, in its easy mix of Haydn and Bix Beiderbecke, probably comes as close to creating a choreographic equivalent for Robert Venturi's architecture as any dance conceivably could.

By contrast, modern dance—like modern architecture—routinely con-descended to popular forms. Ted Shawn, for example, declared in 1937 that “The scourge of the dance world today is tap dancing. It is an invention of the devil, bequeathed to us by St. Vitus.” (Similarly, the modernist architect Adolf Loos, in his notorious essay of 1908, equated architectural ornament with crime.) An even more compelling connection between Tharp and postmodern architecture is her unabashed celebration of “memory” and her determined attack on the very notion of complete “originality.” The spoken text for “The Bix Pieces” concludes with the following question, “Can anything be new, original, private? October 9. Today I thought I'd write
ARCHITECT MICHAEL GRAVES’ SET FOR LAURA DEAN BALLET “FIRE”

a dance to ‘The Goldberg Variations,’ just because it’s already been done.”

Significantly, it was his enthusiasm for “The Bix Pieces” that led Robert Joffrey to invite Tharp to choreograph for his company; and this unprecedented marriage between an erstwhile minimalist and a major ballet company exemplifies the spirit that architecture and the other arts now describe as postmodern. It is equally significant that Joffrey has also invited Dean to create dances for his company, and that her most recent work for the Joffrey, “Fire,” is a collaboration with the most celebrated postmodern architect in America, Michael Graves.

Tharp and Dean may be the most prominent contemporary choreographers whose work can be profitably compared with postmodern architecture, but they are hardly isolated phenomena. Charles Moulton’s “precision ball passing,” Gall Conrad’s “Tap Melodramas,” The Jazz Tap Percussion Ensemble—perhaps we should also mention Tharp’s choreography for the ice skater, John Curry—all share an uncondescending passion for popular forms filtered through a formalist sensibility. Then, too, one thinks of the enthusiastic reception the dance community has accorded the clown Bill Irwin, the jugglers Michael Moschen, Fred Garbo Garbo Carver, and The Flying Karamazov Brothers (all of whom have recently performed in New York under the auspices—or co-sponsorship—of Dance Theater Workshop). So ironically, the sort of current choreography that many dance critics are tempted to call postmodern would make the postmodern architect feel right at home. I hesitate to push these parallels any further, for words are so
much more malleable than either buildings or bodies, and the danger exists that we will invent connections rather than discover them.8

FOOTNOTES

1Whatever other virtues it may possess, dance writing has never been a model of terminological rigor. Terms with precise and time-honored definitions in other modes of intellectual discourse—phrases as familiar as classicism, romanticism, and modernism—are bandied about with a willful disregard for their generally agreed-upon meanings. One particularly egregious example: dance historians routinely tell us that classical ballets such as “The Sleeping Beauty” (1890) are preceded chronologically by romantic ballets such as “La Sylphide” (1832). Indeed, Balanchine in his New Complete Stories of the Great Ballets argues that “unlike literature, music, and the other arts, ballet’s great period of classicism came after the development of romanticism”—a chronology that plays havoc with the generally-accepted meanings of these terms.

2Furthermore, I don’t mean to suggest that the two camps never overlapped with or cross-fertilized one another. Significantly, Anna Halprin’s performance workshop in the summer of 1959, attended by Simone Forti, Trisha Brown, and Yvonne Rainer, was instrumental in stimulating the Judsonites’ interest in task-oriented movement.
And it was Deborah Hay's "Group One" in 1967 that led Michael Kirby to coin the phrase "objective dance" which he defined as movement with which it is impossible to "empathize" either kinetically or emotionally (let alone actively participate in). In addition, many works by Steve Paxton and Simone Forti combine strategies borrowed from both camps. Paxton's "Physical Things" and "Satisfying Lover" both took a thoroughly egalitarian view of untrained performers and pedestrian movement, but they remained theatrical spectacles in which found movement was displayed in an "art context." And "contact improvisation," which Paxton pioneered in the early 1970s, is another balancing act between these two extremes; it can be wonderfully satisfying to watch, but it is primarily concerned with the tactile experience of shared weight and flow that it provides for the performers. Finally, Forti was one of the few Judsonites for whom "natural" movement often meant movement derived from nature and the animal kingdom—a sensibility wholly at odds with the unsentimental urbanism of someone like Rainer. This organic, therapeutically-inclined sensibility is especially evident in Forti's attitude toward Cunningham: "I started going to the Merce Cunningham school. I remember watching my teachers, and feeling that I couldn't even perceive what they were doing, let alone do it... An important element of the movement seemed to be the arbitrary isolation of the different parts of the body. I recall a statement I made in exasperation one day in the studio. I said that Merce Cunningham was a master of adult, isolated articulation. And that the thing I had to offer was still very close to the holistic and generalized response of infants."

3David Vaughan, for example, has written: "... the Judson group, in the true tradition of the modern dance, consciously repudiated the aesthetic of the preceding generation—that is, of Cunningham himself."

4Paul Taylor, too, in early works such as "Epic" (1957) utilized many of the strategies that would later become hallmarks of Judson, but he soon moved in more conventionally virtuosic directions. Taylor is too isolated a phenomenon to be considered an influence on the Judsonites, but his transition from pedestrianism to technical virtuosity strongly anticipates the evolution of Twyla Tharp (who danced with his company before striking out on her own as a choreographer).

5In Terpsichore in Sneakers, Sally Banes writes that "By 1965, Meredith Monk, Kenneth King, and Phoebe Neville were emerging as the leaders of a "second Judson generation." And last year's exhibition at the Grey Gallery organized by Bennington College's Judson Project (in conjunction with the Judson revivals) was titled "Judson Dance Theater: 1962-1966"—presumably because '66 was the year that Monk, King, and Neville gave their first concerts at Judson. But this sort of first generation/second generation distinction is essentially chronological, not aesthetic or qualitative.

6The novelist John Barth, in his recent essay "The Literature of Replenishment," argues that Italo Calvino and Gabriel Garcia Marquez are exemplary postmodernists because they "aspire to a fiction more democratic in its appeal than such late modern marvels as Beckett's Stories and Texts for Nothing or Nabokov's Pale Fire."

7Here we encounter a direct parallel between the postmodern architect's attitude toward history and Harold Bloom's enormously influential ideas about "belatedness" and the inevitability of influence. In Bloom's theory of poetry, the burden of historical knowledge, the overpowering and anxiety-producing influence of past masters is inescapable (even if younger writers rebel, in proper Freudian fashion, against their poetic fathers). Similarly, Senta Driver, a post-Judson postmodernist insists: "I can't start naive. Some people can... Martha Graham in the beginning worked just out of what she believed was necessary. But I can't go back to 1930. I know too much about what happened after. I am an inheritor."
Still, one might (and I emphasize “might”) argue that Rainer’s criticism of the “heroic, more than human” conception of the body in Graham is similar to Robert Yudell’s and Charles Moore’s complaint that the monumentality of much modern architecture tends to overwhelm the actual bodies of those who inhabit it. Furthermore, Cunningham’s insistence that music, dance, and decor need not be unified in an “organic” way might be analogized to Venturi’s preference for “messy vitality over obvious unity.”