

## REVIEWS • Dance

### Amy Marshall Dance Company

Reviewed by Lisa Jo Sagolla

*Presented by and at the Puffin Room  
435 Broome St., NYC, May 20-22.*

Choreographer **Amy Marshall** creates serious concert dance pieces that are nonetheless accessible and entertaining to all audiences. She uses a movement vocabulary that feels fresh and humanistic. Though some might categorize it as mainstream, modern dance-based language, it's perhaps better described simply as "dancing"—in its most pure and basic form.

In Marshall's lively choreography, performers move all of their body parts every which way, and act upon seemingly natural, expressive impulses, which lends a forthright authenti-



Wendell Maruyama

*Amy Marshall and Chad Levy*

ity to the work. The dancing always feels plausible, logical, and never phony, yet never uninteresting or predictable. Untouched by the cerebral influences of the postmodern era, Marshall creates dances that are imaginatively athletic and downright fun.

The highlight of the evening of Marshall's work presented at the Puffin Room was an intriguing trio mysteriously titled "The Crofts." Who are these "Crofts"?, one wondered continuously throughout the piece. Costumed in futuristic-looking jumpsuits with three stripes on each side—reminiscent of academic doctoral gowns—the threesome move through carefully patterned choreography that starts gently, but grows heated, sexy, and militaristic. Are these odd birds, aliens, dolls in an antique-shop window, or the Stepford wives? They begin walking with halted steps—their heels abruptly hitting the floor and sending a jolt of energy through their bodies—but later they glide through the space with elegance and grace, then move like go-go dancers, and, finally, soldiers. The ambiguity of their identity proves captivating.

The evening also featured the premiere of "Vortex," an alluring Middle Eastern-flavored ensemble work marred only by a central solo that, though full of classy acrobatics, went on much too long and was performed by a skilled yet uncharismatic dancer, **Amanda Schiller**. Despite the inclusion of belly-dance hip moves, yoga postures, and Indian head actions, the work retained its wonderful sense of natural, "everyman" dancing so characteristic of Marshall's choreography.

Completing the program were an exquisitely simple solo titled "Metamorphosis," the powerful group piece "Askew" (previously reviewed by this critic), and "Parasite," a perky dance about bugs—not one of Marshall's strongest works.