

DANCE REVIEW

# Wide range of Paul Taylor

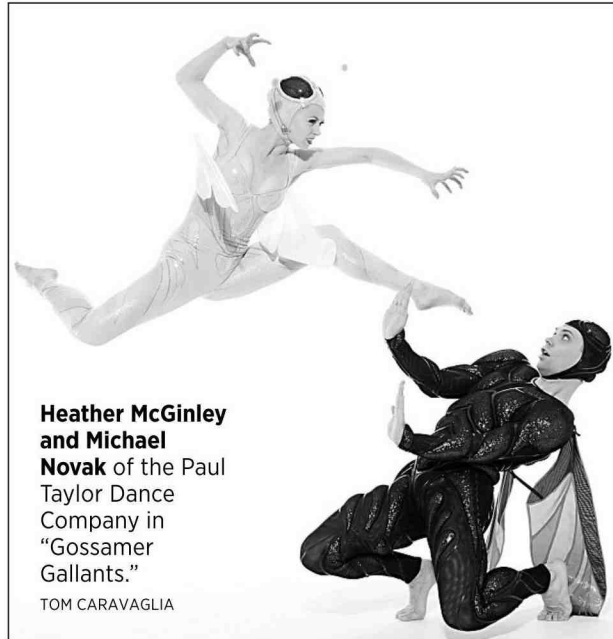
Program displays many aspects of the choreographer's half-century career.

By Nancy G. Heller  
FOR THE INQUIRER

**T**he dances Paul Taylor has created over the last half-century evoke everything from lyrical romance to savage satire, frank eroticism, and slapstick humor. All were on display Thursday night as the Paul Taylor Dance Company opened its run at the Annenberg Center with a four-part program.

Choreographed in 1979, *Profiles* is still a revelation, featuring complex, unexpected lifts and leans. Four dancers pose like ancient Egyptian statues, then leap at each other to form highly improbable two-person shapes. Jan Radzyski's music is intense, and although all the dancers are superb, it is impossible not to focus on the extraordinary Michael Trusnovic.

The two men in *Fibers* are unrecognizable, with masks covering their heads; their torsos, arms, and legs are crisscrossed by thin straps. With a pair of female dancers in white-face, they move about Rouben Ter-Arutunian's set (he also designed the costumes): a tall structure of multicolored strands that seem to float upward, as though underwater. Tay-



**Heather McGinley and Michael Novak** of the Paul Taylor Dance Company in "Gossamer Gallants."

TOM CARAVAGLIA

lor's odd creatures combine classic modern-dance jumps with occasional ballet steps.

Taylor's newest composition, *American Dreamer*, is set to a medley of Stephen Foster tunes. The piece clearly refers to earlier choreography about the Old West, with a mournful fiddle, an upbeat banjo, and a stage mainly bare. The dancers embody the songs' lyrics and — in the funniest segment — Sean Mahoney hits all the right notes as a frustrated suit-or pursuing three somnambulists.

*Dreamer* was certainly charming, but — on a first viewing, at least — it lacked Taylor's signature punch.

The evening ends with *Gossamer Gallants*, a tour de force of silliness, in which the dancers (thanks to costume designer Santo Loquasto) dress up as insects. It's impossible not to laugh as the men, in the guise of hapless houseflies with shiny black wings, succumb to the seductive female dancers, costumed as fireflies in sexy, Day-Glo-green bodysuits with perky antennae. The women vamp; the men sport lust-crazed, maniacal grins. It's great fun.

**Additional Performances:** 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday at the Annenberg Center, 3680 Walnut St. Tickets: \$20-\$60. Information: 215-898-3900 or [www.annenbergcenter.org](http://www.annenbergcenter.org)

