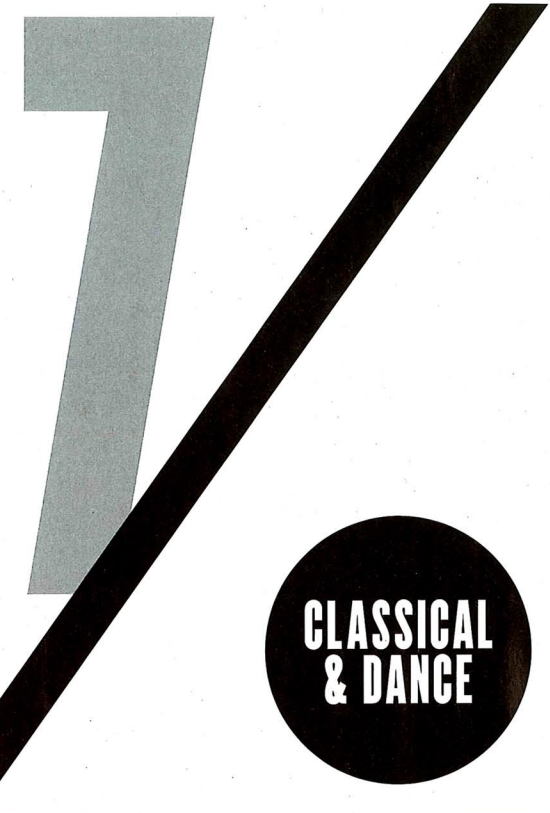


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# FALL 2011 PREVIEW

NO.



CLASSICAL & DANCE



## Balletomorph

*Lourdes Lopez on running Morphoses after Christopher Wheeldon.*

BY REBECCA MILZOFF

FOUR YEARS AGO, Christopher Wheeldon—the buzziest choreographer on two feet—and former Balanchine dancer Lourdes Lopez launched Morphoses to squeals of anticipation. Wheeldon's sexy, abstract dances were the best new thing going at New York City Ballet, went the thinking—and now we'd see whole seasons of them.

Then, three seasons in, Wheeldon quit. He was said to be frustrated by the inconsistent roster; Lopez reportedly felt he couldn't give Morphoses enough of his time. The company many thought could challenge NYCB and American Ballet Theatre looked all but dead. Yet somehow, this October, a new Morphoses will debut at

the Joyce, run by Lopez on her own. "When Chris stepped down, the question was, Do I do something else with it?" Lopez says. "I felt that the work was not done."

So Lopez picked up the pieces. "I asked the board, just give me a year to figure something out—I don't know what." (They did, and the Joyce is providing two years of subsidized studio space.) She read Jennifer Homans's *Apollo's Angels*, about ballet's

past, present, and future; she spoke to presenters like BAM's Joe Melillo. Gradually, she built a Morphoses that, like a theater troupe, could provide a variety of directors a chance to create "interesting, relevant modern classics" that could tour in perpetuity. It'll open with a dance-theater interpretation of *The Bacchae* by her first new artistic director, Luca Veggetti. The Joyce plans to live-stream one of Morphoses' performances—though, in keeping with the company's new smaller-scale vibe, it'll be seen not on a screen in Times Square but at Zaitzeff, "a chic, wonderful little hamburger place on Avenue B."

Morphoses SEASON STARTS AT THE JOYCE THEATER ON OCTOBER 25.