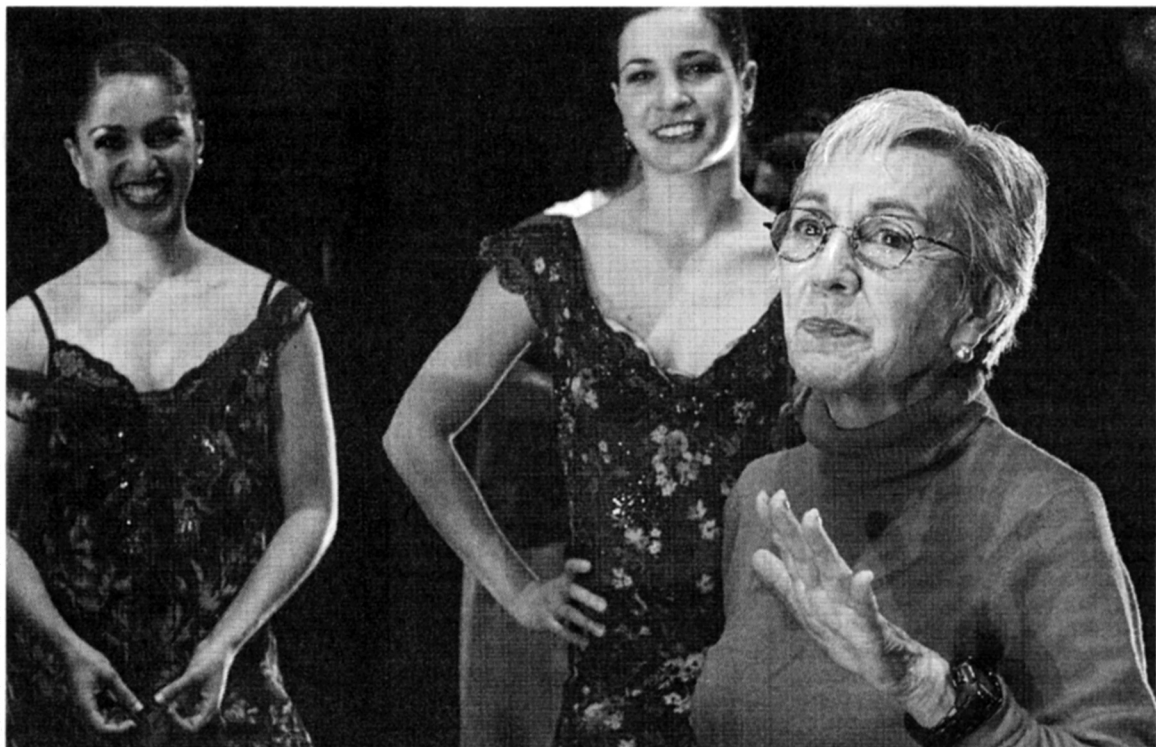


WEEKEND Arts

The New York Times

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THE LISTINGS



Andrea Mohin/The New York Times

TINA RAMIREZ Tiny and chic, Tina Ramirez looks like anything but the apparently inexhaustible institution-builder that she has proved to be as the founder and director of the 34-year-old Ballet Hispanico, which performs this weekend at the Joyce Theater. But underneath that bright smile and gentle manner there lies a resolve of steel. Her strength may have come from her Mexican bullfighting father or from her wide experiencing of American dance once she left her native Venezuela. Her determination has kept the company and its school going through some very tough times for American dance. The company went from earthy modern dance to a streamlined and increasingly slick ballet look. Now, the company is both earthy and classically elegant. It has also managed to do for transplanted Latin culture what others have done for black American lives in dance. One of the most moving performances of this year's Fall for Dance Festival at City Center was Ballet Hispanico's presentation of "Desame Soñar," a bittersweet dance by Alexandre Magno, which the company will perform tonight, tomorrow and Sunday night in a trilogy called "Night Club." The choreography and performing made a familiar story live, as testimony to the vibrant contribution, largely neglected in dance, of Latinos to American culture. (Tonight and tomorrow night at 8, Sunday night at 7:30, Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Avenue, at 19th Street, Chelsea, (212) 242-0800. Tickets: \$42.)

JENNIFER DUNNING