

DANCE

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pride, making 2005 a year of grand sophistication. Here are some of the highlights:

1. Feb. 10 Expressive yet restrained, Jersey-based choreographer Carolyn Dorfman's new "Odisea" compresses and sculpts the drama of a group of storm-tossed Jews who hope to leave persecution behind when they immigrate to America in the 17th century.

2. March 13 American Repertory Ballet of New Brunswick gives youngsters and their parents a rich theatrical experience with the premiere of Graham Lustig's "Beauty and the Beast: A Gothic Romance." This thought-provoking adaptation of the classic fairy tale is passionately danced and features scary masks by John Dods.

3. May 3 Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater visits the State Theatre in New Brunswick with David Parsons' recent "Shining Star," a nostalgic tribute to the disco scene of the 1970s, featuring music by Earth, Wind and Fire and a cast of gallant lovers. The spectacularly danced program also includes Ailey's sizzling "Night Creatures" and the acro-

erotic duet "Treading" by Elisa Monte.

4. May 28 A woman's soul and eventually her body are torn apart in Boris Eifman's new "Anna Karenina," a dance of physical and emotional extremes. Eifman displays a modern understanding of Tolstoy's heroine, sympathizing with her need for freedom.

5. July 28 Amazons prance and even poisonous cobras dance in "The Pharaoh's Daughter," Lacotte's delightfully arch, historic re-creation of Marius Petipa's ballet spectacle. The setting is ancient Egypt, but what's truly grand about this Bolshoi Ballet production is its vast panorama of classical dancing.

6. Sept. 21 Armed with the values of the 18th-century Enlightenment, upon which our liberty is based, choreographer Bill T. Jones tackles the so-called moral values at work in contemporary American politics. Yet "Blind Date," his critical, mixed-media premiere at the Kasser Theater in Montclair, also extends the hope of social integration.

7. Sept. 22 Three of Trisha Brown's wondrous dances appear to great effect in the intimately focused setting of Rutgers University's New Theater in New Brunswick. The Trisha Brown Dance Company's rare engagement here allows local audiences

to savor the living architecture of "Present Tense," the jazzy "Groove and Countermove" and weighty "Astral Convertible."

8. Sept 28 The old-fashioned raked stage, tilted at an extreme, 23-degree angle, becomes a new-fangled invention radically altering the performance space in Eliot Feld's playful and athletic "Sir Isaac's Apples," a premiere commissioned to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Juilliard School. Sliding down the ramp in patterned formations, the dancers resemble flat graphic designs.

9. Oct 21 American Ballet Theatre revives "The Green Table," Kurt Jooss' Expressionist melodrama in which the shadows of war engulf a cast of archetypal innocents. Merry diplomats dance the tango to a tinkling piano score, their pistol shots unleashing the figure of Death, who stalks his prey on the march. A tragic masterpiece, heartbreaking in its timeliness.

10. Nov. 10 Garth Fagan Dance is in its glory performing to live music by the Wynton Marsalis Septet. Both "Griot New York" and the new "Life: Dark/Light" offer bustling views of modern society, which for all its problems — poverty or the shattering memories of war — finds strength in images of erect balance, love and joy.