

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

# NY ARTS

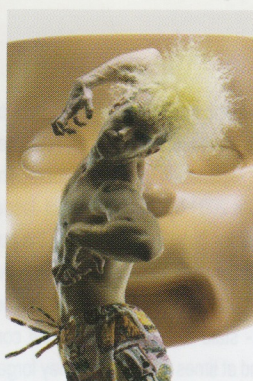
Great Britain £ 8  
Japan ¥ 1,500  
Canada \$ 13.90  
U.S.A. \$ 10.00

Vol.9 n° 5/6

[www.nyartsmagazine.com](http://www.nyartsmagazine.com)

## BERLINER KUNST





## Dance in 2004: A New Populism Born out of Collaboration

L.P. Streitfeld

There is a new innocence in New York performance this season that is exploding with innovations stretching from the experimental downtown scene to the classical dance world. A return to the ancient idea of the feminine duality of creation/destruction that equates seduction with healing is igniting performance right now into a new populism we haven't experienced since the 1960's, before the rise of sexual politics. A key component of this movement is compelling collaboration aimed at seducing audiences out of lethargy into participation. Here we find the exhilaration of risk taking culminating in triumph for participants who have labored long and hard to integrate originality with authenticity and process. From the bold new leaps in dance this season, we now have perspective regarding the body armor that was postmodern ironic detachment. In tossing off the protection of urban cynicism, we find a new vulnerability unmasking a desire for human connection.

### Inventions in Narrative: Stephen Petronio Company

The most celebrated collaborator in the dance world continues to be Stephen Petronio, who ended his national tour at the Joyce Theater on March 28. In his 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, Petronio continues to risk collaborations that build groundbreaking narrative into his forceful signature movement. The program illuminated a dark urban view of disintegrating social structures in which men are more vulnerable than ever to the duality of the dark feminine.

At the root of the Petronio dance language is sexual equality, reinforced this season by his collaborations with the downtown couple Laurie Anderson and Lou Reed. Fashion provocateur Tara Subkoff, of Imitation of Christ fame, is now key to the Petronio process of integrating the gender opposites. Her dualistic, individualistic approach to costuming facilitates choreography that builds dualism in character feeding the narrative build of a performance, thereby freeing dance as a medium from the constriction of patriarchal archetypes.

A gothic nursery rhyme set to a combination of music and text by Lou Reed, *The Island of Misfit Toys* was imbedded with dualism born out of collaborations with artists intent on exploring the dark side of human nature. Cindy Sherman's grotesquely contorted sculpted dolls and totem set the stage for the sinister edge of pedophilia underlying the work, which opened with a re-imagining of Edgar Allen Poe's *The Raven* read by Willem Defoe. Female dancers costumed by Subkoff in deconstructed baby doll dresses that showed their underwear provided a visual metaphor for the theme — the rape of innocence born out of personal entanglements and sexual confusions. (...)

