

John Jasperse Company

Thin Man Dance, Inc.

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Excessories (1995)

(60 minutes)

Choreography: John Jasperse

Original Cast: John Heginbotham, Rebecca Hermos, Roberto Martocci, Jo McKendry and John Jasperse

Current Performers: Miguel Gutierrez, Larry Keigwin, Parker Lutz, Juliette Mapp and John Jasperse

Original Music: James Lo

Additional Music: Michel Vaucaire & Charles Dumont, Tito Puente and Värttinä

Costumes: John Jasperse & Katrin Schnabl

Lighting Design: Phil Sandström

Refinement and violence ... classicism and vulgarity ... functional action and sensuality. These and other unlikely pairs are partnered in John Jasperse's, *Excessories*. This is a piece about styles of dressing, bodies and movement and how we define our actions and ourselves in relation to perceived scales of the beautiful and the ugly; the appropriate and the outrageous. Mixing contrasting movement styles and costuming in this stylistic parade of shifting identities, the work challenges both the presumptions made about these identities and the idea of natural self.

At the center of the work is the body: the body's surface as a "canvas" on which we paint our identities through how we dress it and move it, as well as the body as vehicle of the senses, allied to the aspect of the self that is ultimately a stylistic. While both "bodies" are distinct, they constantly inform one another and remain inseparably interconnected.

While *Excessories* marks a new direction in Jasperse's work in its use of more stylized theatrical imagery, the foundation of the work continues to lie in the investigation of movement and kinesthetic experience. Having attempted in previous works to revitalize concert dance as a contemporary form by rooting the dance in physical experiences not exclusive to dancers, *Excessories* turns about face and examines ideas of correctness both within dance and in our culture at large.

Excessories, a work for five dancers, is the second project created by John Jasperse in collaboration with composer James Lo. Mr. Lo was awarded a 1993 New York Dance and Performance (BESSIE) Award for their first collaboration, *furnished/unfurnished*. The music for *Excessories* was built on the collaborative approach, which they began in making *furnished/unfurnished*. The flux of style and identity which is the focus of *Excessories* is reinforced through a multiplicity of sonic stylistic palates, including both readily identifiable found sounds and varied styles of more traditional music. The elements of the musical palate evoke constantly shifting cultural situations and locales, functioning in combination with one another, and in the setting of dance accompaniment, to alternately ground and de-stabilize the viewer in their perceptions of these shifting styles and identities.

Excessories premiered at Dance Theater Workshop, New York City on March 2, 1995; and was originally commissioned by Dance Theater Workshop's First Light Program through funds from Jerome Foundation of St. Paul, MN.

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