

DANCE REVIEW

Sets of Hips With Minds Of Their Own

By ANNA KISSELGOFF

Energy is a synonym for Grupo Corpo, the indefatigable and admirable Brazilian company of virtuoso dancers that is performing through tonight in the Next Wave Festival of the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The first piece on the program, "21," shows the company choreographer, Rodrigo Pederneiras, triumphing in his usual combination of the visceral and the cerebral. At one time his work suggested a Brazilian brand of minimalism, focused on modular repetitive structures. Yet it differed from the American variety in the way the dancers moved within these repetitive blocs.

"O Corpo," the second piece, suggests that Mr. Pederneiras has moved beyond this formula, although the risk here is that sophistication can turn his patterns decorative rather than deep.

The audience at the opening on Tuesday at the academy's Gilman Opera House was understandably turned on by jumping, jiggling and jiving dancers with an unsurpassed knack for isolating parts of their bodies. It is obviously a Brazilian body that can fuse hip-swiveling sambalike exuberance with ballet pirouettes and jetés.

Typically, "21" has a highly conceptualized structure. It may help to know that its



Richard Termine for The New York Times

Brazilian composer, Marco Antonio Guimaraes, used the number 21 as the springboard for his score, and that the choreography playfully mirrors permutations of the same number in its patterns and in the multiples of dancers seen onstage. The company nonetheless moves too swiftly here in shardlike fragmentation for the viewer to follow any organizing principle consistently. The best advice is to enjoy what one can. Sheer energy dazzles against the colorful patchwork backdrop of squares and roses by Fernando Velloso, lighted by Paulo Pederneiras, the company's artistic director. Yes, he is Rodrigo's brother, as is Pedro, the company's technical director.

Much is usually made of the dancers' loose upper torsos. (The company was last in New York in 1990 at the Joyce Theater, but it tours the United States and appears regularly at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, Mass.) Footwork is nonethe-

less essential to the fluidity and lightness of Rodrigo Pederneiras's style, with its constant shifts of weight.

His woven design is ever changing, and Freusa Zechmeister's costumes become more colorful as "21" progresses. The arm-rotating speeds up; the spaced-out lines advance to the front; the asymmetrical pliés recur as the dancers drop in and out of unison. Angles and curves do battle within the body, and the dance is run backward like a film. The music has a heartbeat sound amid its percussion, and the joyful dancers resemble pinwheels at the end. Whether a metaphor of any sort can be extracted from such choreography is debatable. Its value is on the formal level.

The other piece, "Corpo," is not the kind of thing to sit through twice. The vocabulary is limited, although the flashing red lights on the backdrop and Arnaldo Antunes's multi-layered score promise a spectacle.

Grupo Corpo, from Brazil, performing "O Corpo," a 2000 work by its director, Rodrigo Pederneiras.