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HOFFNUNGSTRÄGER –
TÄNZER, CHOREOGRAFEN, MACHER,
KOMPANIEN, KOLLEKTIVE –
LEUTE, DIE AUCH IN ZUKUNFT DEN TANZ BEWEGEN

ballet-tanz international Yearbook 2005: "Hope and Glory"

"Artists to watch—
dancers, choreographers, doers, companies, collectives—
people who will really shake up dance in the future"

CHRISTOPHER CAINES

This choreographer isn't a newcomer; however, in the decade or so that I've been following his work, he and his dancers have performed in small venues in New York, and his name will be new to most readers of *ballet-tanz*. Caines makes dances to music. His choreography offers discernible phrases in which accents and dynamics, rather than virtuosity for its own sake, are the origins of eloquence; in which the formal structures are mysteriously expressive; and in which the dance vocabulary, primarily steps and gestures, is a kind of drawing in space. Like Azure Barton, the other young choreographer I know of whose work reflects a personal vision of dancing as a language, Caines seeks out performers who are highly trained in a particular technique, although which technique isn't an issue: he has choreographed for members of the José Limón and Martha Graham companies, for ballet dancers of various schoolings, and for many other dancers who are, themselves, choreographers, such as Rika Burnham and Sally Hess. His dancers are always responsive to music – a necessity in dancing Caines's choreography, as music (invariably live) is the guiding impulse for it. His dances are poems about their music.

Born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Caines was educated in comparative literature at Harvard. While in college, he discovered the modern dance classes of Claire Mallard, and he also began to study ballet (Cecchetti). After college, he went to New York, where, for a time, he was a scholarship student at the Merce Cunningham studio. He, himself, has also studied acting, singing (Indian classical and bel canto), and tabla drumming. He has directed actors, composed scores, and designed lighting and costumes. A true Renaissance man. *Mindy Aloff*



Christopher Caines Dance Company in
"Tenebrae," center: Caines
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