

## DANCE

Double  
Trouble

BY BURT SUPREE

**SARA PEARSON & PATRIK WIDRIG.** *Heimueh* (Homesick). At P.S. 122, December 15 through 17.

**I**n their 1988 duet, *Partners Who Touch, Partners Who Don't Touch*, Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig dumped eggs, many colored globs of Jello, spaghetti, and sugar on the floor and sprayed the whole gaudy mess with Reddi Wip. There's nothing so exhilaratingly messy in their new piece, *Heimueh* (Homesick), directed by Widrig, which has a similar episodic and erratic form. It's more consistent and somber in tone and has none of the earlier work's archness. Pearson has previously worked with the idea of dance as diary, using daily incidentals to give a canny perspective on relationships. But these two pieces are more troubled than clever, more abstract than anecdotal.

Part of *Heimueh*'s gravity has to do with the way echoes of the past adhere to it. The report card pluses that Widrig draws on a blackboard suggest a field of cemetery crosses. Pearson smugly erases the middle crosses and writes MILCHE-BUEP, translates that underneath as *sisst* and, her eyes gleaming, underlines it two, three, four times. Widrig spreads out a

long green cloth, then sets out rows of stubby plastic crosses. When he's got over half arranged, Pearson—dancing with stormy, forceful swings—carelessly or maliciously slides into the cloth, only knocking over a few pieces and rumpling the fabric at first, subsequently creating greater and greater havoc.

As a performer, Pearson is humorous, harsh, earthy, resilient; there's no nonsense about her and she surely wouldn't stand for much. Widrig, capable of equal boldness physically, seems a gentler soul. Dissatisfied, disrespectful, Pearson's instinctive reaction is to wreck something; Widrig exercises power by withdrawing. The piece's events mostly illustrate how whatever draws them together also drives them to furiously assert their separateness, to pointlessly compete, and how much they—and we, too—relish the immediacy of any destructiveness we can wreak short of the fatal. So much more bitingly savory and decisive than the give-and-take of getting along!

They can be funny together, and cautiously tender, but often they're barely amicable. Each makes aggressive, teasing demands that the other cannot satisfy. And they are lost to each other in their solos: tumultuous, punchy, convulsive episodes of flings, dives, slides, rolls, that are defiant and determined in their obliviousness. But Pearson and Widrig also press, bump and shove against, slither over, and lie on each other, expressing an almost impersonal need for companionship, a desire as basic as wanting to sleep under a heavy blanket for the simple comfort of its weight. ■