Elizabethan Phrasing is cultural hodgepodge

THE ELIZABETHAN PHRASING OF THE LATE ALBERT AYLER

By MICHEL BOIS

EYER SINCERE Seraph Davidov organized the legendary Russian Ballets in Paris approximately 70 years ago, their performances have been standards against which to measure success in the integration of the arts. In retrospect they stand not only as landmarks in the development of 20th century art, but also as the century's first great artistic synthesis — not to mention their role in communicating many of the new idioms in art to the public.

At the present day there are no more Diaspores around, it seems — nor Stravinsky, for that matter, or Picasso. But the idea of fusing music, dance and visual art in a single achievement of spectacle has not lost its attractiveness. Clear, common statements from the various branches of creative endeavor seem especially called for in the wake of the widely-declared death of Modernism. Put in this perspective, the present collaboration of Karole Armitage, an up-and-coming dancer and choreographer, with David Salle, a highly visible and controversial representative of the new painting, carries no mean promise.

A first fruit of this artistic collaboration, "The Minotaur Room," was staged by the American Ballet Theater last year, with Mikhail Baryshnikov dancing the lead. The second had its American premiere in Boston last weekend in the plush setting of the Opera House.

The title of this second work, "The Elizabethan Phrasing of the Late Albert Aylar," sounds rather puzzling. What common ground could exist between the Aylar and the Elizabethans? What relevance to modern dance for Aylar's death or past rhetoric? The performance opened with a generic answer to these and similar questions. Watched by a gigantic eye projected on a screen behind her, Armitage danced to the words of the moon-

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Karole Armitage in The Elizabethan Phrasing of the Late Albert Aylar

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The Link among the arts - a cultural hodgepodge

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