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## Bodies Upended in Moments Optimistic and Dark

*Ohio Theater*

Randy James, who performed with Dan Wagoner, has a curiously mixed dance vision. There was a buoyant optimism to much of what he presented in a program of three new and recent pieces on Thursday night, even in the dances' quieter, darker moments. At the same time, Mr. James has a fondness for draped, drooping and upended bodies. Both qualities worked well together, however, in "Estuary."

Danced to a violin sonata by Giuseppe Tartini, this 1993 group work conveys the feeling of peacefully changing tides and eddying waters, though not at all literally. And two of the central duets were notable for the invention of their lifts, particularly in a building, billowing dance for Mr. James and Patricia Plascak. In the other duet, Melissa Pfohl was a dreaming walker over Stephen Nunley's body before the two ended curled drowsily about each other.

The cast was completed by Elizabeth Frankel and Elizabeth Spatz. Allen Lieb was the violin soloist. John Lasiter created the softly dappled lighting.

"With Alligators in the Bayou (You Water Ski Real Good)," a high-energy hoe-down danced to music by Buckwheat Zydeco, gave seven dancers a mostly happy, exhausting workout that was fun to watch, though a melancholy solo depended too much on the song it was set to. There was standout dancing from David Maurice Sharp, one of those wonderful movers who seem not to need the ground below him. The program was completed by the inconclusive new "Power," danced to a ghostly score by Scott Buch. The company also included Kim Reis.

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