

THE FELICE LESSER DANCE THEATER

May 19, 2010

The Felice Lesser Dance Theater presented the multi-media "Funding the Arts," a "living cartoon" as artistic director, Lesser, calls it at the Baryshnikov Arts Center. The work is built schematically with ballet choreography and with narrative dialogue and numerous, interactive electronic media visuals played on software - Final Cut Studio's time line.

Lesser's creation of animation, stick-figure dancers gives new meaning to the plumb line. When they morph into duplicates, pirouette perfectly in place or float through space in the steps' motion, it is every dancer's dream realized, to be so centered, albeit sans spine flexion or épaulement.

This entertaining and lighthearted drama cleverly comments on a very harsh reality, that being, funding for the arts, in the USA, "the most inhospitable place in the world to host dance," as one of the characters says.

Veteran dancers, Debra Zalkind on stage as Natasha, ex-KGB agent who hunts moose and squirrel and concocts poisonous potions, and Gus Solomons Jr on camera as the foppish mayor with a fat wallet held tightly, are fabulous in their comedic roles. The entire cast was at its best. C.A. Dobush