

*Ice
Theatre
of
New York,
inc.*

The Cutting Edge

FEATURES

ROCKEFELLER CENTER SERIES . WORKSHOP REPORT
PERFORMANCE REVIEWS . PROFILES

ICE THEATRE CONCERTS AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER SHOWCASE NEW REPERTORY

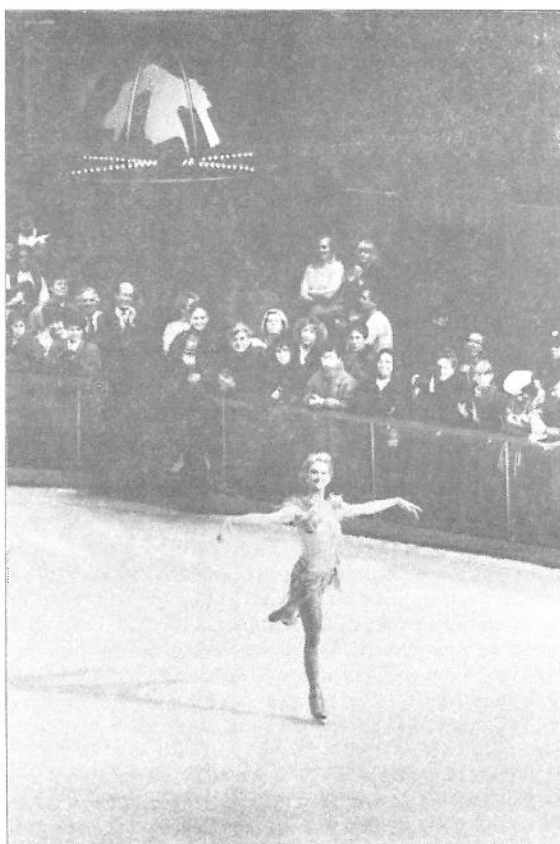
Ice Theatre of New York will celebrate its fourth year of performances at the Rink at Rockefeller Center by conducting a series of three ice concerts to be held on:

January 24

February 21

March 28

All performances will begin at 1:00 p.m. In the event of rain, the concerts will be scheduled for the following day.



Enthusiastic crowds gather to enjoy Ice Theatre's free performances at the Rink at Rockefeller Center. Gliding onto the ice: JoJo Starbuck.

Since their premiere in 1986, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Rink, Ice Theatre's annual series of free performances have showcased some of the most exciting talent in professional skating today, in some of the most unusual and innovative artistic skating ever seen at Rockefeller Center, and indeed, anywhere in the world. These performances have featured pieces from the company's repertory of ensemble, trio, duet, and solo works, often debuting performances of works later presented at other local and international venues and professional competitions. Ice Theatre has also featured New York debuts of other artistic ensembles: the Canada Ice Dance Theatre in 1988 and the Baltimore-based The Next Ice Age in 1989. This year, Ice Theatre hosts a guest appearance by members of the internationally-acclaimed Moscow All-Stars.

In addition to former Olympic and World competitors, Ice Theatre members include many talented but lesser-known skaters whose styles range from the lyrical and balletic to the avant-garde. The Rockefeller Center shows provide a unique glimpse of skating performance unencumbered by rules or convention. Combined with the rink's worldwide fame and distinctive atmosphere blending openness and intimacy, these shows constitute a view of performance unequalled anywhere.

This year's series will feature some of the most exciting performances ever by Rink favorites. The January concert presents Nina Newby and Bill Aquilino, second place finishers at December's U.S. Open Professional Championships in Orlando, in a lyrical piece co-choreographed with John Curry; Gary Beacom, winner of the Moscow News Prize for Excellence Award, debuting a completely new program, "Malevolent Landscape;" Gia Guddat, soon to be seen on HBO, performing an excerpt from the electrifying "El Amor Brujo;" and JoJo Starbuck skating her interpretation of "My Man," a song from the movie "Funny Girl." The February concert features John Curry, A Demonstration of the highly-acclaimed Plie Power Workshop choreographed and directed by Rob McBrien, and David Liu of Taiwan. Other professional skaters at the top of their form will lend highlights to the widely-attended events.

So why not break the drab winter lunchtime routine of picking over forlorn winter sales at financially insolvent department stores? Fire up your afternoon on these three Wednesdays, and be Ice Theatre of New York's guest at our free ice concerts.

EVENTS Calendar

- 1989**
- AUGUST**
21-29 Plie Power Workshops at the National Junior Elite Training Camp in Calgary, Ontario. Conducted under the auspices of the Canadian Figure Skating Assoc.
- SEPTEMBER**
26 Company performance rehearsals begin. Regular schedule: 3:00-5:00 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Skyrink. Rehearsal period continued through season. Plie Power Workshops begin series. Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:15-11:00 AM at Skyrink. Series continues through season.
- OCTOBER**
28 Halloween Skating Party at Skyrink.
- NOVEMBER**
16 Plie Power Workshop at Mennen Sports Arena, a facility of the Morris County Park Commission, Morristown, NJ. Coordinated in association with Debbie Wychulis.
20 Performance for "Doing Art Together" at Wollman Rink.
21 & 26 Plie Power Workshop, Mennen Sports Arena, Morristown, NJ.
- DECEMBER**
6 Performance at the American Cancer Society Benefit. The Rink at Rockefeller Center.
28 Plie Power Workshop at the Hamden Figure Skating Club, Hamden, CT. Coordinated by Debbie Hickey.
29-30 Nadal '89, Palau de Gel, Canillo, Andorra.
- 1990**
- JANUARY**
20 Performance at the Winterskol Festival, Aspen, CO.
23 Company rehearsals resume and continue through season. New schedule: 10:00-11:00 a.m., Tuesdays & Thursdays at Skyrink. Open to the public.
24 1st in a series of Repertory Concerts at the Rink at Rockefeller Center. 1:00 p.m. Free.
30 Performance for New Jersey Special Olympics at Mennen Sports Arena, Morristown, NJ.
- FEBRUARY**
5 Plie Power Workshop at the Greenwich Skating Club in Greenwich, CT. Organized by Gloria Sprigg.
14 Performance for Valentine's Eve Skating Benefit of Dancing in the Streets. 8:15 p.m. The Rink at Rockefeller Center.
21 2nd in a series of Repertory Concerts at the Rink at Rockefeller Center. 1:00 p.m. Free.
- MARCH**
28 3rd in a series of Repertory Concerts at the Rink at Rockefeller Center. 1:00 p.m. Free.
- MAY**
19 Annual Spring Production. Details to be announced.

*Calendar of Events reflects scheduled activities as of press time.
Notice of additional activities will be forthcoming.*

MESSAGE from the ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

"...comprehensive changes in skating competitions and the attendant evolution in training structures will encourage all skaters to re-evaluate the essentials of this glorious sport/art..."

The start of a new decade seems necessarily to inspire thoughts of a generalized nature: grand summations of the past, analyses of current conditions, projections or hopes for the future. Well, I've got my own personal soapbox here: you're reading it. I'm going to step on it for a bit and take my turn to wax analytical.

As I look at artistic figure skating I see something changing so quickly that my first hope for the 90's is that things calm down a bit. For twenty years, but especially during the last five, the marketing of the sport for television has radically altered basic concepts of skating and has created completely new standards for excellence on ice.

The school figures and compulsory dances have long been the structures through which aspiring amateur skaters studied body control, concentration and the physical laws of ice, usually for about ten years before achieving the USFSA Gold Medal. This training of future skaters will be significantly different from hereon, however, due to the devaluation of school figures and compulsory dances in competition—which is, after all, skating's training "system"—conducted now under the watchful eye and with increasingly vocal participation of a huge television and media audience. The very distinction between amateur and professional—a distinction strictly maintained by most international skating unions until recently—will be altered in the near future.

What kind of skater these comprehensive changes will produce is, of course, a matter for conjecture only. Any change has positive and negative aspects. A negative vision of a future attendant on these changes is one peopled by skaters who would have become crude gymnasts with blades mounted on stiff shoes, automated Rambos of rotational excellence who would have left far behind them all that is lyrical, melting and fiery in skating. One has heard this cry for years about amateur skating; yet, one can likewise argue that the system continues to produce skaters of miraculous technical and artistic excellence.

On the positive side I feel these comprehensive changes in competitions and the attendant evolution in training structures will encourage all skaters to re-evaluate the essentials of this glorious sport/art. This re-evaluation could be a very good "plie" for skating, a re-grounding in understanding the dynamics of fluency, facility and greatness on ice.

Many very interesting questions are put fresh before us. What is a skater's technical training? How do technical and artistic skills relate to each other? How do teaching methods and standards of the past relate to the skating in our time? And perhaps, finally, what makes skating pleasurable to watch? Heady questions and, due to the influence of television, they are ones that will be addressed by live skaters in front of live audiences, rather than by committees of experts sitting in jealous protection of figure skating.

As a coach of skaters myself, I am anxious that we retain the excellence of the past, that we do not lose touch with the richness of skating before the triples. This is my mission with the Plie Power workshops. It is certain that skating will keep evolving and we will see ever increasing technical and artistic development. I suspect that this evaluation will lead to a greater awareness of the essential magic of ice: the edges. Speed, lean, fluidity, power, spring, flow: all that is skating is edges.

To the '90s on ice. Enjoy!

Rob McBrien

Workshop Report

*"...the foundation upon which
a real art of skating can be built..."*

- Anita Finkel
on the Plie Power Workshops,
New Dance Quarterly

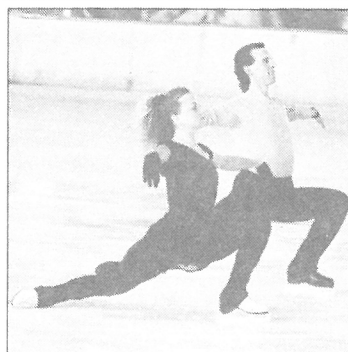
Ice Theatre of New York's Plie Power Workshops are off to an extremely successful Winter season. From December 1989 through the first months of 1990, workshops abound in the mid-Atlantic/New England area, and media coverage of this unique and effective training method is increasing as word spreads within the skating community.

Workshops were held at the Mennen Arena in Morristown, New Jersey in November. These classes were coordinated for the second year by Debbie Wychulis of the Professional Skaters Guild of America and were, as usual, well attended and received. On December 28, Plie Power traveled to Hamden, Connecticut, where classes for young and advanced skaters were held at the Hamden Figure Skating Club, organized by Debbie Hickey and Mrs. Vanessa Ditta. Greenwich, Connecticut followed suit on February 5 by sponsoring a Plie Power Workshop organized by Gloria Sprigg of the Greenwich Skating Club. Upcoming workshop locations include the Skating Club of Boston Dance Weekend later this spring.

The Plie Power workshops are designed to enable skaters to develop the skills required for accomplishing the athletic elements of skating, as well as the proper use of the body to create each skater's unique artistry and performance style. The workshop consists of both on- and off-ice lecture and exercises, as well as a special conditioning class.

The Plie Power technique has generated a great deal of enthusiasm in both the skating and dance communities. In *New Dance Quarterly*, Anita Finkel states that the workshops represent "the foundation upon which a real art of skating can be built." In the New York area, Plie Power has also been mentioned in articles on Ice Theatre published recently in *City News*, *Westsider*, and a January 22nd *New Yorker* feature on Ice Theatre in which the Workshop concept is described as "...a concern with making the skater sensitive to the edges of the skate blades as instruments for the projection of expression. Many award-winning skaters can benefit from this kind of analysis."

If your skating club or rink is interested in sponsoring a Plie Power workshop, please call 212/349-6232 for more information.



THE
PLIE POWER
TEACHER
CERTIFICATION
PROGRAM

Rob McBrien with
Gia Guddat

PHOTO: Lois Elfman

Beginning in the Spring of 1989, a coach-training/teacher-certification program was established to support, sustain, and promote the quality of skating associated with the conduct of the Plie Power Workshop.

Gia Guddat, shown above training with Rob McBrien, is the first accredited teacher of this program. She started teaching Plie Power Workshops in Sun Valley, Idaho last year and will be teaching them each week this year as part of the Sun Valley School's Skating Program. Reports Gia, "These classes were met with much enthusiasm and were enjoyed by all levels of skaters from Katarina Witt to adult recreational skaters." (see page 6)

Other certified teachers of the Plie Power Workshop include Moira North, Nina Newby and Kenny Moir. (see page 7)

*"...a concern with making the skater
sensitive to the edges of the skate blades
as instruments for the projection of expression.
Many award-winning skaters can benefit
from this kind of analysis."*

New Yorker,
January 22, 1990

Performance Review

The Winter Season was marked by a series of Benefit performances . . . beginning with a Halloween Skating Party for Ice Theatre . . . and followed by highly-acclaimed performances for Doing Art Together, American Cancer Society, NJ Special Olympics and Dancing in the Streets.

*Ice
Theatre
of
New York
Inc.*

A HALLOWEEN SKATING PARTY An Evening of Ice Skating and Dancing for the Benefit of Ice Theatre of New York

Saturday, October 28, 1989
6:00-8:00 p.m.

Skyrink
450 West 33rd Street
(between 9th and 10th Avenues)
16th Floor
New York City

Ticket Price: \$35. This ticket admits one.
Please present at entrance.

Prices include free skating, courtesy of Skyrink.
Rental skates are available on premises.

On October 28, 1989, New York City's SkyRink was transformed into "The Enchanted Forest", as Ice Theatre of New York celebrated the opening of our sixth winter season with our first Halloween Skating Party. Statuesque showgirls, pint-size pirates, Phantoms of the Opera, and many plainclothes revelers were greeted by ghoulishly carved pumpkins, silver ghosts of skaters from performances past, and sinister shadows, as phantom branches seemed to reach out to grab the unsuspecting and unwary.

This gala evening began with costumed and uncostumed skaters of all ages and levels of expertise circling the rink, pausing to partake of a delicious buffet. At 7:00 p.m., the ice was cleared, and 16 black-clad company members took to the ice for a demonstration of the Plie Power Workshop concept, choreographed and directed by Rob McBrien, providing the audience with a glimpse of the powerful visual effect of not only ensemble skating, but also of the artistry of masterful edge skating—the trademark of Plie Power. This display was followed by dazzling performances by John Curry, skating a new jazz-influenced program, JoJo Starbuck's interpretation of an Ella Fitzgerald song "With A Song In My Heart" and Gia Guddat, in an excerpt from "El Amor Brujo," a full-length dramatic piece currently under development. As a special surprise, the evening also featured an appearance by Judy Blumberg, who, partnered by John Curry, presented a sneak preview of a duet later performed at DIFFA's Skating for Life benefit performance on November 6. The performances delighted and inspired the partygoers, who took to the ice again, warmed by hot cider and wine, for a relaxing evening of skating accompanied by music programmed by Eric Tolley.

Ice Theatre's Halloween Skating Party in the Enchanted Forest signaled a dazzling start to what we anticipate will be our most exciting season yet.

Ice Theatre wishes to thank the following ensemble of skaters who have volunteered their time and effort to rehearsing and performing for

A Demonstration of the Plie Power Workshop:
Bill Aquilino, Jennifer Chant, Wade Corbett, Patrick Dean, Neil Girodi, Debbie Hickey, Sharon Laduc, Ken Moir, Nina Newby, Moira North, Iris Savernik, Dana Sheill.

With special thanks to:

John Curry, Judy Blumberg, JoJo Starbuck & Gia Guddat

♦ ♦ ♦ Program of Special Exhibitions ♦ ♦ ♦

Performance runs from 7:00-7:30 p.m.

John Curry
Untitled New Work
Choreography: John Curry
Music from the film "La Dolce Vita" by Nino Rota

JoJo Starbuck
WITH A SONG IN MY HEART
Choreography: JoJo Starbuck
Music by Rodgers & Hart. Sung by Ella Fitzgerald

Gia Guddat
EL AMOR BRUJO (Excerpt): "Cancion del Amor Dolido"
Choreography: Rob McBrien
Music: Manuel de Falla

♦ ♦ ♦
A Demonstration of the Plie Power Workshop
with
Company Members
choreographed and directed by
Rob McBrien

*DOING ART
TOGETHER*

"THANKSGIVING FOR ART"

A girls ice skating party at the Wolfman Park in Central Park
Ice has benefit of the outreach programs of
Doing Art Together, Inc.
Monday, November 20th, 1989
from 8:00 - 9:30 pm
Includes a performance by
ICE THEATRE OF NEW YORK, INC.
with Special Guest Star JOHN CURRY



Dancing in the Streets



Danny Melita and Kristy Santmyer
and the Friends of Dancing in the Streets
cordially invite you to a

VALENTINE'S EVE SKATING PARTY

Wednesday, February 14, 1990
7:00 - 10:00 p.m.

The Ice Rink at Rockefeller Center

Performance by Ice Theatre of New York at 8:15 p.m.
Directed by Rob McBrien and Moira North
Kinkadee party at The Bar Carvery at American Festival Cafe
Proceeds to benefit Dancing in the Streets

RSVP by February 9

Information: (212) 989-6630
Enter at 20 West 59th Street, Glass Elevator to Ground Floor

Repertory Insights

Ice Theatre has a range of solo, duet and ensemble pieces that continually meet with critical acclaim and merit introduction to wider audiences. With every issue, we invite you to focus on the thoughts that inspire the development and performance of some of these works.

MALEVOLENT LANDSCAPE

Choreography: Gary Beacom

Skater: Gary Beacom

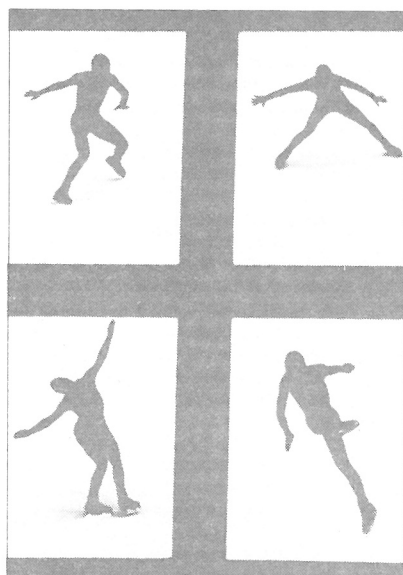
Music: Patrick O'Hearn

Performances with Ice Theatre to date:

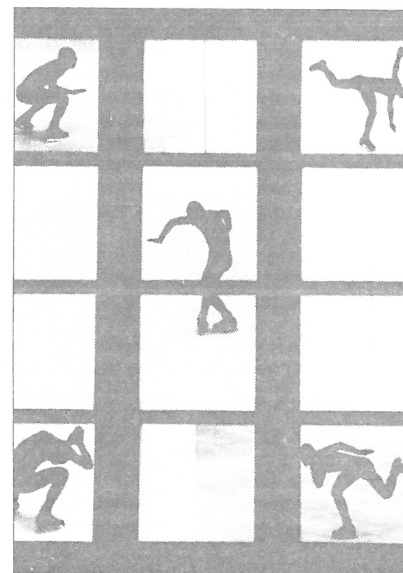
1st Concert of Rockefeller Center Series (1989-90 Season),
January 24, 1990, The Rink at Rockefeller Plaza, New York City
(NY Premiere)

"...any phrasing seems to effect a mood rather than to provide melody or lyricism..."

Gary Beacom



Much of my work of the past has involved a repetition of motions in harmony with melodic phrasing. Yet MALEVOLENT LANDSCAPE, in which any phrasing seems to effect a mood rather than to provide melody or lyricism, somehow challenged me to set to the mesmerizingly clocklike percussion a series of non-repeating movement units. Though these were to be related only by their linkings in space and time, the quality or sensibility of the movement tended to become characteristic of the musical mood. This being an existential piece about movement, the costume could only be simple. What could be simpler than covering your whole body with black spandex? And what a happy coincidence that the look contributes to the look of malevolence.



Profiles COMPANY MEMBERS

Featured in this issue...

Gary Beacom and Gia Guddat have been spending the past three summers in Sun Valley, Idaho, where they are the Directors of the summer's hottest ice show. This year's show will include everyone from Katarina Witt and Brian Boitano to the skating legends Ludmila and Oleg Protopopov.

With the "star quality" associated with the event, the shows are always sold out and the audience is always satisfied as they are presented with a well-rounded variety of skating and not just name skaters. Gary and Gia perform weekly and they hold auditions for interested performers.

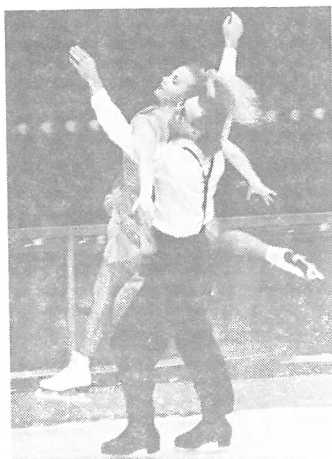
Sun Valley has the largest outdoor rink in North America and is open year round. As both Gary and Gia enthuse, "Skating under the open sky, outside in the mountains, in the fresh air and in the warmth of the sun is so inspirational. It beats any ice rink in the world."

The Ice Shows have been a growing tradition in Sun Valley since the days of Sonja Henie, when she made Sun Valley famous with the movie "Sun Valley Serenade." Gia has restaged the movie with her rendition of Sonja Henie with Sun Valley's adult dancers. This is a regular part of the Sun Valley Show. The shows are held every weekend from mid-June until the end of September and, as Gia describes them, "haven't been rained out in twenty years."

Besides performing and directing Gary and Gia are also on the teaching staff in Sun Valley, specializing in choreography and seminars. Gary teaches a stroking class in which the skaters experiment with a wide range of movements. Gia teaches Plie Power Workshops (see Workshop Report, page 3) and likewise conducts "Theatre on Ice" classes whereby she encourages skaters to take a more active role in creating their programs for the ice. "They learn to go beyond the technique of jumping and to start thinking in more abstract ways..." Gia explains. "I try to encourage them to develop themes to their routines either through an idea, the use of space, character or even just a movement."

Plase Clarify

Choreography: Frank Nowosad & Gary Beacom
Music: Kenny Davern & Bob Wilbur



GARY BEACOM

Winner, 1990 Moscow News Prize for Excellence

Gary Beacom, Canada's unique figure skating maverick, was awarded the "Moscow News Prize for Excellence" at the NutraSweet Challenge of Champions held in Moscow on December 14. The competition was the first of its kind ever held in the Soviet Union.

Beacom, known for his clever use of edges and unique style on the ice, was awarded the prize based on his innovative skating and willingness to take the sport to new levels of creativity. Beacom's costumes are often as daring and unique as his skating style, ranging from knickers and sunglasses to a black body stocking. His magnetism and artful maneuvers on the ice have earned him popularity with audiences worldwide.

NUTCRACKER ON ICE

During the month of December, Gary and Gia performed in Dorothy Hamill's Nutcracker on Ice. The show was put together in Palm Springs a month earlier and was performed and televised at the Orpheum Theatre in Minneapolis over the Holiday Season.

Gary had the starring role of the Nutcracker, performing in character on a small surface with technical brilliancy. Gia had eight costume changes and played everything from a mouse to an arabian dancer. Of their experiences, Gia relates, "Working on a stage rather than a skating rink makes it tricky to fit in a lot of jumps, but it also forces one to develop other aspects of the performance such as character development, projection and relating to others on stage. One has to use their edges effectively as there is little or no room for adjustment."

Both agree that the production of Nutcracker on Ice is well suited to the stage and is enhanced by the intimate atmosphere of the theatre. "The transformational quality of ice into the magic of the theatre," Gia observed, "created more hope in my mind that the future home of Ice Theatre could be such a place."

Gia Guddat

Production Assistant, "Crazy Legs"

During the month of October, I found myself in Los Angeles training actresses to skate for a screen test for an up-and-coming feature "Crazy Legs." Most of the actresses had never really skated before and they expected miracles from me. A lot of dancers have this idea that they just lace up their skates and do what they do on the floor. They realized rather quickly that it wasn't so easy. They got new skates, I gave them basic Plie Power instructions and, by the end of two weeks, they had routines to music.

The original idea of the producer was to intercut the more difficult skating sections with "double" skaters. The hardest part about this was to find the best actress for the part who could also look graceful enough on the ice, and to find a professional "double" skater to match the body type.

I was asked to train the actresses and to choreograph routines for them similar to the style of skating that was described in the script. During the screen test, I was instructed to perform beside the actresses so that the camera could pick us both up to review cutting possibilities.

I also did some improvising under the direction of the producer. He described the scenes and I tried to create the mood of it through my skating. It was a long and tiring process but by the time the screen test started, the production company was really excited as it was the first glimpse of the film really coming together in a concrete way.



GARY BEACOM & GIA GUDDAT

Profiles

COMPANY MEMBERS

NINA and BILL NEWBY AQUILINO

In an amazing four months, the ice dancing team of Nina Newby and Bill Aquilino have been dazzling audiences from Aspen to Andorra with their innovative and stylish performances. They recently achieved new prominence among the ranks of professional ice dance pairs by capturing the silver medal at the 1990 U.S. Open Professional Championships in Orlando, Florida, and as a result, are poised to play an important role in exploring the limitless possibilities of ice dance.

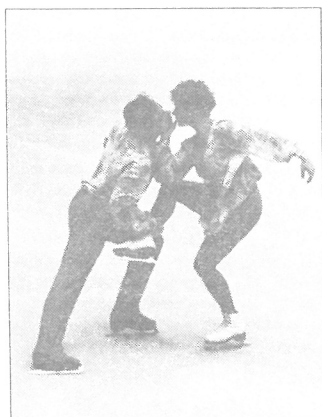
Bill and Nina have enjoyed a spectacular 1989-90 season thus far, with a performance in December at the General Washington Country Club skating show in Audubon, Pennsylvania, along with JoJo Starbuck. They then returned to New York to appear in Dick Button's Candid Productions, as part of the "Twelve Noons of Christmas" at the World Trade Center.

After their spectacular success in Orlando, which has been a springboard for their current whirlwind schedule, it was the principality of Andorra which next hosted these unique performers, along with Olympians John Curry and the pairs team of Barbara Underhill and Paul Martini. Following an exhibition in Aspen, Colorado in support of Winterskol, Nina and Bill have returned to New York to participate in Ice Theatre of New York's ice concerts at Rockefeller Center. Later this year, it is off to Jaca, Spain, to which they have already been invited to compete at the 1991 World Professional Championships.

Nina Newby is a USFSA Gold Medalist in Dance, and bronze medalist at the 1987 U.S. Professional Championships, which earned her the opportunity to compete in the World Professional Championships at Jaca, Spain later that year. She also concentrates on ballet and on her adjunct career as an instructor at New York City's SkyRink.

Bill Aquilino competed as an amateur in National and Junior competition in 1985 and 1986 under the direction of Ron Luddington. He began his career as a professional in Lake Placid in the summer of 1989 under the direction of Priscilla Hill. Bill's devotion to performance led him to relocate to New York to pursue his performing career, his involvement with Ice Theatre, and his instruction at SkyRink.

Bill and Nina's success this year further secures their place as innovative contributors to the world of ice dancing.



Lady Caliph

Choreography:

John Curry, Nina Newby, Bill
Aquilino

Music: Ennio Morricone

"Ice Theatre is a wonderful vehicle to explore the artistic design of figure skating."

Nina Newby

"The joy of ice skating is the creative liberties that it gives you."

Bill Aquilino

"The venue of the performing figure skater allows him to be more creative than he is on the stage or any other medium ... we have so many more dimensions to work with ... hopefully we'll have the opportunity to explore those possibilities."

Kenny Moir

KENNY MOIR



Kenny Moir's professional career encompasses impressive accomplishments within a variety of fields. A professional at SkyRink, Kenny was also the coach of the critically-acclaimed (and also multi-talented) Katherine Healy of the Skating Club of New York.

Kenny has participated in a wide variety of productions and exhibitions, including Dick Button's "Skating Through the Years" in the winter of 1987, performances in Andorra in May 1988 and January 1989, JoJo Starbuck's "Breaking the Ice," also in 1989, and the Winterskol exhibitions held in Aspen, Colorado.

In New York, to which he relocated in 1983, Kenny assumed a featured position as a principal skater with Paradise on Ice. He has also appeared in Dick Button's Candid Productions as part of the "Twelve Noons of Christmas" at the World Trade Center. He debuted with Ice Theatre of New York in 1986, and has appeared regularly in Ice Theatre's Rockefeller Center ice concerts, and at the NJ Special Olympics in 1989 and 1990.

Kenny was a Canadian National competitor from 1971 to 1978 and placed fifth in senior Nationals in 1978, positioning himself as a world team alternate. He was also a principal performer with the Ballet of Toronto from 1980 to 1982. As a choreographer, he worked on the 1988 HBO special, "A Tribute to Dorothy Hamill."

Kenny's skills as a choreographer and performer continue to add excitement to the Ice Theatre repertory, as well as delighting skating audiences in the U.S. and abroad.

Friends Business & the Arts

With every issue of this newsletter,
Ice Theatre wishes to introduce some of the many
friends who bring to the company a richness and
vitality for members to continually enjoy.

Pam McCormick's projects have been described as "art works that move with water and wind." These water and wind sculptures, among them "Channelling", Ice Gliders", "Wind Fall" and Kite Boat" have been exhibited throughout New York, including the Conservatory Pond in Central Park, the East River and Castle Clinton in Battery Park. Her works have been featured on television and in numerous publications including *The New York Times*, *Arts Magazine*, *Who's Who in American Art* and several trade catalogues.

In October of last year, Pam McCormick was invited by Ice Theatre of New York to create set designs for the company's Halloween Skating Benefit (see page 4). The following month, she again presented one of her brightly-colored plexiglass art sculptures for Ice Theatre's series of special performances at "Thanksgiving for Art", an ice skating party at Wollman Rink organized by Doing Art Together (see page 5). Her collaboration with Ice Theatre of New York is described in her own words:

"When Moira North and I first met, I was very enthusiastic about what she was accomplishing with Ice Theatre of New York in presenting a new art form - a form with all of the artistry and sensitivity of contemporary dance, yet not exactly dance - with all of the skill of Olympic skating - yet not exactly Olympic skating. The video tapes she loaned me showed a daring and an adventurous approach to movement on ice. I was thrilled to be a part of it when Rob McBrien asked me to collaborate with him on a work for the benefit performance Halloween party.

Since my sculpture for the past four years has focused on making sculpture that floats on water and takes its form from the wind, this ephemeral set design on frozen water seemed challenging and appropriate. Live performance combined with the fragility of the moment in which the water is frozen, plus the idea of the wind formed by the movement of the skaters rather than by air currents created by outdoor weather conditions, was stimulating. I wanted to create a work that seemed to appear from nowhere and to come from underneath the ice and to radiate the warmth and energy of this fascinating and creative group.

Rob's choreography seemed to imply the mystery of things evolving and changing as they moved up and out and around the watery ice. We collaborated marvelously in such a way that allowed us to create our own art work, relying on intuition and shared empathy to do the best work we could mutually do. The time was limited. The meetings were few but the performance was wonderful! I was proud to be a part of it and was really thrilled to see the skating and energy of the performers! I think we saw great theatre that night. I am sure successive events will continually attract more and more people. In spite of the wonderful refreshments, food plates were set aside or put on the floor so that people could stand on the benches and tiptoes to see every motion. Everyone felt the vibrant radiance of this special evening.

I look forward to collaborating on new works with Moira, Rob and other Ice Theatre choreographers in the future. Ice Theatre really is very special in the way it nourishes the uniqueness and idiosyncracies of each of the creative people involved without restriction. I look forward to participating in future events as soon as possible."

PAM MCCORMICK Environmental Sculptress

"... I wanted to create a work that seemed to appear from nowhere and to come from underneath the ice and to radiate the warmth and energy of this fascinating and creative group. . . Rob's choreography seemed to imply the mystery of things evolving and changing as they moved up and out and around the watery ice ..."

-Pam McCormick
on her collaboration
with Ice Theatre

"... a sport that is inherently artistic, with limitless potential in its development as one of the performing arts. . ."

-Paul M. Levesque
on ice skating

PAUL M. LEVESQUE Vice President, Rothschild, Inc.

Comfortably sitting behind a paper-inundated desk, Paul M. Levesque is the picture of every executive at the helm of a financial enterprise. The high-floored office at One Rockefeller Plaza with a commanding view, copies of financial dailies and prospectus reports strewn on every available space, mammoth rolodexes for whose information anyone would sell stocks, and yes, the ever-ubiquitous computer. If desktops are any indication of personal interests, take note: the space possessively occupied by the hallmarks of corporate activity is surpassed in square inches, however, by a more spacious desk corner reserved for minature American and Canadian flags surrounded by glass figurines of athletes.

Clearly there is one resume that does not deserve to be buried in the familiar sky-high stack we all label "Papers to be filed". This Vice President of Rothschild Inc. also happens to be a superb sportsman who has been a member of Canadian National and Olympic Bobsled and Luge Teams in the 1960s and has been awarded with the Canadian Centennial Medal (1967), the John F. Kennedy Memorial Sports Medal (1968) and was inducted at the Sports Hall of Fame of the Loyola College of Montreal (1983). There is no saying what percentage of his rolodex cards or computer megabytes contains data on his current international sports affiliations and merits alone.

No stranger to winter sports, Paul Levesque is accustomed to participating among and coaching the best and the brightest in a range of athletic endeavors that display magnificent feats of strength and technical virtuosity. He can also appreciate the beauty and artistry of these ventures, regarding figure skating among them as "a sport that is inherently artistic and with limitless potential in its development as one of the performing arts." One early afternoon in mid-January, Levesque descends from his office to the spacious Plaza below: that patch of New York known worldwide as Rockefeller Center. A crowd has developed around the skating rink and Levesque, like most New Yorkers who would leave their offices at the invitation of free lunch-hour entertainment, watches in pleasure. The Golden Prometheus is for once a backdrop rather than the main attraction as members of Ice Theatre of New York take to the ice in a range of repertory that brings rousing applause from onlookers. This time, Levesque did not have to travel to the slopes of St. Moritz, Piedmont or Grenoble---at the call of Olympic or National Championships---where free hours from bobsled and luge competitions would find him "always delighting in the figure skating performances." Right in his own office backyard, some of the world's finest professional skaters--among them Olympic and World medalists--were now conducting groundbreaking artistic performances for free.

A few months earlier, Levesque was introduced to Ice Theatre by the company's president Moira North, who invited him to the group's rehearsals, workshops and performances. More than the availability and the accessibility of Ice Theatre of New York's performances to the city's audiences, it was the vitality and energy of this company that drew Levesque to the company. "They put on a nice show and I'd like to learn more about about them and see what I can do to help," he declares of Ice Theatre's performances at Rockefeller Center--an annual feature of the company's programs. Welcome words from one with an energy, drive and determination that was apparent as he joined members of Ice Theatre for lunch at the American Festival Cafe immediately following the performance. Seated between artistic director Rob McBrien on his right, fundraising committee director Meg Akabas on his left, and surrounded by a lively group that included president Moira North, skaters Gary Beacom, Nina Newby, Bill Aquilino, Jojo Starbuck and guest members from the Moscow All-Stars, it was clear who was conducting the discussion with aplomb. We welcome his business expertise and his own personal enthusiasm for artistic skating in support of our young company.

NORTH BY NORTHWEST: PRESIDENT'S TRAVELS

by Moira North

"What the Russian All-Stars presented confirmed that 'ice theatre' did not exist purely in the mind, but that it could be visually manifested artistically and technically...What has been provided to Russian skaters for the development of this particular facet of ice skating impels us to rise to the occasion of this movement in artistic skating and to seek the support that allows us to do what the talent and dream demands."

While my colleague Frank Nowosad reviews "Torvill and Dean and the Russian All Stars" (see below) I will devote this piece purely on the latter performers.

Foremost among the impressions left by watching the work of the Russian All-Stars is the reverence granted to artistic direction and choreography, with ensemble—as the name of their company suggests—taking precedence over solo principal performers. Another impression is the seriousness of themes and music that pervades their programs. Both impressions leave no doubt in audience's minds that what is beautifully presented—the art form in ice skating—parallels performance standards that would welcome patrons of the more traditional performing arts like ballet, opera, and theatre.

For ice skating companies like Ice Theatre of New York, the Canada Ice Dance Theatre, and The Next Ice Age, such impressions only serve to underline one aspect central to our projects: the importance of an ensemble of excellent—although relatively unknown—skaters working under the artistic direction of someone whose interest is in presenting Ice Dance Theatre similar to that of a modern dance company or a theatre company. It is on such shared vision that Ice Theatre of New York—though unexposed to the work of the Russian All-Stars until today—was founded in 1984, and has been artistically directed by Rob McBrien since 1986.

The form or concept of an ensemble is not, by any means, new. We are very familiar with this in terms of modern dance companies—like Twyla Tharp's or Laura Dean's. In terms of ice skating, however, we really do not have a precedent in North America other than John Curry's company which, unfortunately, no longer exists. What has been achieved in Russia—by companies like the Russian All-

THE RUSSIAN ALL-STARS



Stars, the Leningrad Ice Ballet and Igor Bobrin's Ice Show—is a statement of what has yet to be accomplished in North America. The biggest challenge for us all, and a foremost concern in my position as co-founder and president of Ice Theatre of New York, is to not only assure the required training for such an ensemble, but to also find the appropriate medium, the appropriate venue and the appropriate way to show the "ice theatre" in which we are interested.

When people think of ice, they naturally think of a family show. What we are interested in—taken within this context—can either disappointingly fall short of or gratefully go beyond those general expectations. One cannot completely underestimate the importance of ice shows like Ice Capades and Holiday on Ice in introducing skating to a vast majority of people of all ages. Yet neither can one totally overestimate the attraction of an "ice theatre" for an audience that, comfortable with far less and therefore unyielding to far more innovativeness in ice entertainment, may prove more untapped than limited.

What the Russian All-Stars presented confirmed that "ice theatre" did not exist purely in the mind, but that it could be visually manifested artistically and technically, and that it can be critically acclaimed. What has been provided to Russian skaters for the development of this particular facet of ice skating impels us to rise to the occasion of this movement in artistic skating and to seek the support that allows us to do what the talent and the dream demands. The relative newness of any format understandably dictates the challenge of marketing or introducing this so that it reaches a wider audience. With this awareness, however, is the affirmation that our works are presented less to meet more popular expectations than to go beyond them and set new standards for performance. Standards that celebrate what skating can be, and respect both a performer's and audience's quest for artistic and technical excellence in our art.

Upper Photo: Members of the Russian All Stars perform "Spartacus" in a guest appearance at Ice Theatre of New York's Rockefeller Concert Series. *Lower Photo:* Backstage after the "Torvill and Dean and the Russian All Stars" show, from left to right: Laura Cierco from Andorra; Tatyana Tarasova, Artistic Director of the Russian All Stars; John Curry; Moira North; Rob McBrien; Antonio Carulla, Director of the Palau de Gel of Canillo, Andorra.

Commentary

Torvill and Dean and the Russian All-Stars is like seeing two good shows at the same time. . . While Tarasova and her group approach their choreography from a traditional, dramatic point of view, eschewing abstraction or pure dance, Torvill and Dean are the modernists of the skating world, taking their inspiration from the touch of the blade to the ice. "We use the ice to achieve flow," said Torvill. "The ice is our medium, and fluidity is important to us." In an interview with the *New York Times*, Tarasova voiced her somewhat opposite opinion. "The most important thing is not what they wear on their feet but the artistic means used," explained Tarasova. "If the audience leaves emotionally fulfilled, it has had an artistic experience. My primary concern is a choreographic image, not the special properties of ice."

These divergent viewpoints could be said to represent the two very fundamental artistic ideologies that have separated the Soviet and the Western world for this century.

Frank Nowosad

Frank Nowosad is a skating coach, choreographer and writer on skating, dance and the visual arts.



*the nation's first not-for-profit
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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Ice Theatre of New York was formed in 1984 as the nation's first not-for-profit skating performance ensemble. Modeled on the structure of contemporary dance and theatre companies, Ice Theatre of New York has three primary aims: the creation of a popular repertory of skating performance pieces, the training of an ensemble of skilled professional skaters and the formation of a broader educational arm which reaches out to competitive and recreational skaters of all ages. With ongoing presentations at Manhattan's Sky Rink and The Rink at Rockefeller Plaza, Ice Theatre brings together a wealth of artistic talents from musicians, artists and designers to skaters, dancers and choreographers.

In the spring of 1986, Ice Theatre secured the talents of Rob McBrien, former Ensemble Director for The John Curry Skaters, as Artistic Director. Under Mr. McBrien's direction, Ice Theatre focuses on strong ensemble style and innovative choreography and design concepts. The Artistic Council for Ice Theatre includes Olympian skaters Dick Button, Peggy Fleming and Dorothy Hamill, artists Mimi Gross and Rudi Stern, performance artist and composer Meredith Monk, and Johan Renvall, Principal Dancer with American Ballet Theatre.

In addition to creating artistic projects for performance, Ice Theatre is dedicated to the implementation of Ice Theatre Workshops. Created by John Curry and developed for Ice Theatre by Mr. McBrien, these classes focus on ensemble work, incorporating elements of dance and theatre and emphasizing musicality. ITNY Workshops are currently sponsored by Manhattan's Sky Rink and a workshop-demonstration format has toured the U.S., providing an audition base for the company roster. Generating great enthusiasm in the skating community, these workshops are attended regularly by acclaimed professionals including Michael Seibert, Judy Blumberg, JoJo Starbuck and Ken Shelley.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Ice Theatre of New York wishes to thank the contributions of all its members. We especially wish to acknowledge the continuing support of the following individuals and organizations:

Curtis McGraw
Lila Wallace Funds
Nutrasweet
Materials for the Arts
Midtown Skating Corporation
Guy Robinson
Bill Simington
Pat Bugland

We also wish to thank the following for their generous support in making our Halloween Benefit possible:

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The Cutting Edge

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The Cutting Edge is a quarterly publication of Ice Theatre of New York.
Correspondence should be sent to Ice Theatre of New York, 155 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007. (212) 349-6232.

*"The creative edge...points to the direction in which Ice Theatre can play a unique role.
This is not commercial skating, and yet it has a ready audience..."*

Anna Kisselgoff, The New York Times, May 22, 1988

*"Thank you for the absolutely wonderful experience you led us through at the Artistic Program Workshop.
I know that the participants will grow in their artistry as a result of the contact with you."*

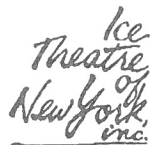
Letter from Joan Stevens, Chairman, Skater Development Committee,
Canadian Figure Skating Association, April 18, 1989

"You are adding a whole new facet to our diamond sport."

Letter from Carole Shulman, Executive Director,
Professional Skaters Guild of America, March 11, 1988

The making of the theatre where artistic innovation can grow is not an overnight phenomenon. The creation of repertory is reliant on the rental of ice time, as well as on paid services of skaters, choreographers and other guest artists. The management of the company depends heavily on services that must be provided with viable remuneration. The expansion of the company's goals to include the production of broadcast quality videotape work for private distribution or public television requires monies for equipment and labor. The development of a touring circuit in conjunction with a traveling school is substantially conditional on the availability of funds. The making of this theatre is dependent on your support if it is to succeed.

The Lila Wallace, Nutrasweet and Curtis McGraw foundations have recognized the quality of the company's efforts since its inception with nominal grants. The New York Times and other publications have favorably reviewed the company's artistic output. In this fertile climate, your continued support can guarantee the breakthroughs in ice performance which Ice Theatre aims as its goal to accomplish. At this crucial time in our development, your contributions can help sustain the momentum that will allow us to move toward performance levels yet unexplored.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

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