

'DANCE JAMAICA'

Review by Archie Lindo

The new book "DANCE JAMAICA" by Professor Rex Nettleford has as its sub-title "Cultural Definition and Artistic Discovery" The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica 1962 — 1983.

Just off the press, published by Grove Press, New York, with a foreword by Edward Kama Brathwaite and photographs by Maria La Yacona the 317-page book sells for \$192.

The book, in addition to having a brilliantly written and comprehensive text is profusely illustrated in black and white artistic photography. The Ford Foundation provided the basic funding for the book.

"DANCE JAMAICA" is divided into nine Chapters with copious notes and references to fill out a very informative and revealing tale of an artistic group of which Jamaica can be truly proud.

The Chapters

The Chapters include "Dance and Survival"; "Cultural resistance in Caribbean Society"; "The National Dance Theatre Company History and Development"; "The Repertoire, The Music, Technique, Vocabulary and Style; The Artists, Technicians and Administrators"; "The National Dance Theatre Company as Catalyst"; "The Company and the Critics" and "Beyond Survival — the Company as Model" and there is an additional brief Chapter "The Future — a Question of mirroring Society".

The Company is lucky in that from its inception records were kept, full records of accomplishments, problems, and facts concerning performances, performers and audiences.

To those of us who have watched the Company with keen eyes since its humble birth, its growth and its remarkable development through the years, the book will come as a gentle, yet, paradoxically, a forceful reminder of what some of us tend, at times to forget.

Revealing eye-opener

The others who do not know the NDTC as well as they should, the book will be a revealing eye-opener to what the NDTC has meant to the Jamaican society.

In reading much of the book I have been forcibly struck by the amazing weaving into the fabric of the Jamai-

can society that the NDTC has been and continues to be. The fact that the dance itself has been so "wrapped up" in Jamaican life and customs are brought out in the book, which, to my way of thinking, gives the NDTC much more accomplishment than many of us tend, at times, to give it.

One should never forget that its members are not paid and the many sacrifices they have made to carry the Company through all its fine achievements.

In its numerous travels the NDTC has proven to be Ambassadors of good will and com-

manded respect for our country.

The entire makeup of the NDTC with all its performers, its technical team, its various jobs which several people whom we never see on stage, are all recognised and credited in the book.

Like any good efficient Company there must be a leader; and Professor Rex Nettleford, in his own inimitable way, has been the moving force through those first 21 years. He might not have pleased everybody, but good leadership is always able to surmount the difficulties and opposition and to overcome them.

Professor Nettleford, as modest as he might be about all this, deserves tremendous applause for what he has accomplished with the company.

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