



## REVIEWS 2011–12

### DICHTERLIEBE

“I mention Laurence Lemieux third only because of my own prejudices, coming to *Dichterliebe* as a lifelong accompanist of baritones (there’s one in my family) and as a pianist. Her contribution in collaboration with the assembly of choreographic talent is perhaps the most remarkable part of the work, something genuinely new.”

– Leslie Barcza, [Barcza Blog.com, October 11, 2012](#) [READ MORE »](#)

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### FROM THE HOUSE OF MIRTH

“As for the singers and dancers, led by Laurence Lemieux as Lily, they blend their talents seamlessly in a wonderful ensemble performance.”

– Michael Crabb, [Toronto Star, May 10, 2012](#) [READ MORE »](#)

“Dancer Laurence Lemieux portrays Lily’s descent with subtle lyricism and attention to Kudelka’s finer choreographic details (wrists come briefly together as if bound, small careful steps with skirts held up in both hands or hands fluttering like fans). Though tightly contained, Lemieux’s performance gradually extracts sympathy from an audience that might otherwise condemn her character’s seemingly self-destructive choices.

Lily Bart may appear to be the author of her own misfortune, but it could be want of compassion and love that finally kills her. Surrounded by false friends, gossip and judgment, in her final moments Lemieux’s Lily literally has her back to the wall as she succumbs to her addiction and finds release. Lemieux slumps there like an abandoned doll, a broken plaything that nobody wants or needs.

*From the House of Mirth* is crafted with care and performed with solid skill by singers, dancers and musicians alike. This is a complex endeavour and the work’s multidisciplinary coherence is a real achievement.”

– Kathleen Smith, [The Globe and Mail, May 10, 2012](#) [READ MORE »](#)

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## FROM THE HOUSE OF MIRTH (Continued)

“Laurence Lemieux masterfully captures every nuance of that journey with heart-rending dignity. In one breakout solo scene, which I think is meant to evoke Lily’s participation in a racy tableau vivant, Kudelka has Lemieux channel the spirit of Isadora Duncan. Stripped of her restrictive layers of clothing, Lily allows her whole body to become an eloquent plea for the freedom to do what she pleases.”

“This is such a wonderful, innovative show that it’s a tragedy that Coleman Lemieux’s new digs, The Citadel, on Parliament St. can only seat 60 people. Most of the shows, which run to Sunday, are already sold out. Dozens of people were turned away at the door ahead of today’s matinee.”

– John Terauds, [MusicalToronto.org](#), May 10, 2012 [READ MORE »](#)

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“James Kudelka has perfectly captured the sense of Lily Bart’s revolving body as she is put through a series of intricate class-conscious movements with three other women culled from the depths of high society. Set to a beautiful and evocative score by Rodney Sharman - with selections from Franz Liszt and Franz Grothe - Claudia Moore, Christianne Ullmark, and Victoria Bertram mingle with Laurence Lemieux’s stunningly performed Lily, providing a demure grace and cunning charm that brings the quartet of desperate socialites together in graceful and elegant movements.

Gradually dissipating, and then ruthlessly separating through the repetition of a gorgeous symmetry, these revolutions into the tragic denouement of Wharton’s class-based tragic love narrative render the overall experience a kind of courtly collision of music and movement - a veritable mash-up of theatre, opera, and lightly gathered, choreographic romance machinations.

Performed beneath and around a posh, gilded cage like structure by David Gaucher - resplendent through the inert presence of a sumptuous chandelier - the dance sequences run seamlessly throughout the ongoing score. Kudelka could open up these interconnected segments a little earlier, bringing a somewhat more explosive nuance to the drama at hand, and yet this is a small sacrifice for the final, brilliant punctuation of Lily’s demise.

Lemieux is in fine form as she leads her social competitors through Kudelka’s ensemble of courtly/esque formations, with hints of balletic gestures and sharply modern limb extensions that infuse small movements of the arms with a kind of tightly knit upper class grace-cum-refined/repressed energy. A commingling of polite society and ruthless ‘courtly’ love is made all the more layered and deceptive by the rich, varied operatic voices of Alexander Dobson, Geoffrey Sirett, Graham Thomson, and Scott Belluz.”

– David Bateman, [BatemanReviews.blogspot.ca](#), May 11, 2012 [READ MORE »](#)

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## VARENKA, VARENKA

“Letters are tough to dance and today’s audiences can’t be expected to be on top of their Dostoyevsky, so instead Lemieux focuses on the emotional turmoil of her two characters, so physically proximate yet so far apart, using a movement vocabulary that melds modern dance and gestural language into a potently expressive medium.

Tall, gaunt Bill Coleman is a natural for archetypal anti-hero Makar. As painted by Lemieux, he’s a man who knows, despite flashes of irascible bravado, that the object of his adoration is likely his last chance in life. He’s a tragic wreck of a man, flailing amidst his own delusions....

Lemieux and Coleman, in real life a happily married couple, are both seasoned artists who know how to invest the tiniest gesture with meaning. These are richly harrowing portraits.”

– **Michael Crabb, Toronto Star, March 25, 2012** [READ MORE »](#)

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“The current re-mount of *VARENKA, VARENKA!* at the recently opened Citadel Theatre on Parliament Street is a testament to the dedication and the immense skill and collaborative brilliance of the partnership of Lemieux and her husband Bill Coleman. Lemieux is able to move through the piece with great finesse, at one point using the voluminous folds of her lower costume to sharply inhabit the quick expressive forward movements of her arching body. Coleman’s subtle balletic movements, combined with the sharp explosive minute tableaux he creates in the finale, and throughout, reveal how the simple fold of an arm or the abrupt turn of the head can become a profound and moving example of fine dance theatre, infusing an old classic with the vibrance and immediacy of a live performing body.”

– **David Bateman, BatemanReviews.blogspot.ca, March 22, 2012** [READ MORE »](#)

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“The piece consists of small moments like this – watching Lemieux seem to physically deflate, seeing the two of them suspended in air or stuck in a mechanical routine. The dancers are terrific (and have great planes in their faces that take to shadow beautifully)...”

– **Glenn Sumi, NOW Magazine, March 29, 2012** [READ MORE »](#)

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## LES CHEMINEMENTS DE L'INFLUENCE

“An undoubtedly original piece, Lemieux dissects her father’s theories using intricate contemporary movement, interesting musical compositions, impressive lighting designs, and a newly renovated theatre space in the round (well, more like a square).

Lemieux takes us on a passage through time of what appears to be her personal understanding of her father’s unwavering dedication to his research, and his sensitivity towards Quebec and its people. At times free-flowing and light, at other times heavy and indirect, Lemieux captures through movement and emotion the trials, tribulations, joys and frustrations that go along with a lifetime commitment to research.”

– **Adelina Fabiano, MooneyonTheatre.com, February 17, 2012** [READ MORE »](#)

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“Lemieux’s powerful presence never falters, and there are gorgeous visual moments, due to the combination of stark, cool evocative lighting by Gabriel Cropley, the simple costuming, and the Hockey recordings. At times one might be reminded of the direct playful forms inhabiting the open compositional field of a William Kurelek painting. Lemieux empowers and politicizes the playful as she presents these sharply delineated forms through her lone dancing body in a way that subtly transforms all of the elements of her choreography into a beautifully layered dance narrative as homage to her father’s detailed and painstaking work.....

.... a multi-media sound and visual landscape that allows audiences to listen, learn, and observe the delicate, complex movement of body and mind as they inhabit a variety of complex ideologies, at times political, at times sociological, and always punctuated by gorgeous sound and movement.”

– **David Bateman, BatemanReviews.blogspot.ca, February 19, 2012** [READ MORE »](#)

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## ALLONEWORD

“**Still One of the Greats Award:** James Kudelka, for the fascinating *AllOneWord: The “See” Series*, performed by Toronto’s Coleman Lemieux & Compagnie, with each vignette, about seeing or being seen, choreographed to the same piece of music, Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber’s *Guardian Angel* passacaglia”

– Paula Citron, *Globe and Mail*, December 29, 2011

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## LIVING DANCES

“The contemporary dance group Coleman Lemieux & Compagnie have become the all-important conservatory of smaller works by James Kudelka. Their concert, *Living Dances*, was presented in honour of Ryerson Theatre School’s 40th anniversary. Kudelka’s *Fifteen Heterosexual Duets*, *Soudain l’hiver dernier*, and *In Paradisum* were presented together on the same program in Toronto for the first time. The dancing was magnificent, and the chance to see these three classic works together was an unforgettable experience.”

– Paula Citron, *Classical 96*, November 12, 2011 [READ MORE »](#)

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