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### A Review of "Carmina Burana"

University Relations

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EDITORS' NOTE: The following is a review of "Carmina Burana, a premiere performance by the Minnesota Dance Theatre presented last weekend at the University of Minnesota, Morris. The review was written by Rane Hanson, Instructor of English at UMM.

by Rane Hanson

MORRIS (5/17/76) -- Proscenium Theatre of the new Humanities Fine Arts Center was the scene last Friday and Saturday evenings of a premiere performance by the Minnesota Dance Theatre of Carmina Burana, a new dance choreographed by Loyce Houlton specifically for initial presentation with the UMM Chamber Choir.

The Carmina Burana, "Songs From Bavaria," originates in texts of poems written by medieval monks who had strayed from their religious vows. The poems were discovered in a Bavarian monastery between the wars and then in 1936 put to music by Carl Orff.

The songs themselves follow no story line. Their common theme is of the worldly pleasures - dancing, drinking, looking at girls, gambling, loving, mimicking - that drew the monks away from their religion. The dance also has no direct story line although its consistent theme was apparent.

Several times the dancers ran -- at first away from the organized control of religion; later toward Queen Elizabeth who, when she turned to them, was faceless; another time to the church, which was empty; and finally, in a reverse of the initial running, to organized control.

They also ran in circles to symbolize the wheel of fate, or chance, that had control over their lives and their running. Near the beginning of the dance a girl was weighted down with black veils of responsibility while other women danced freely. Later she was released from her veils and ran to dance freely too, but fate made her run instead into death, a dancer with a black mask and black boots.

To follow the songs, the dance had its gambling, drinking, wenching, and swan killing scenes. It emphasized the human passions of even religious people.

Along with Carmina Burana the Minnesota Dance Theatre presented 243.6 on Friday evening and on Saturday night Knoxville: Summer of 1915 a dance based on the work of that title by James Agee.

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