

## An Evening With A Special Friend Of Edgar Allen Poe's

By LINDA CAIN

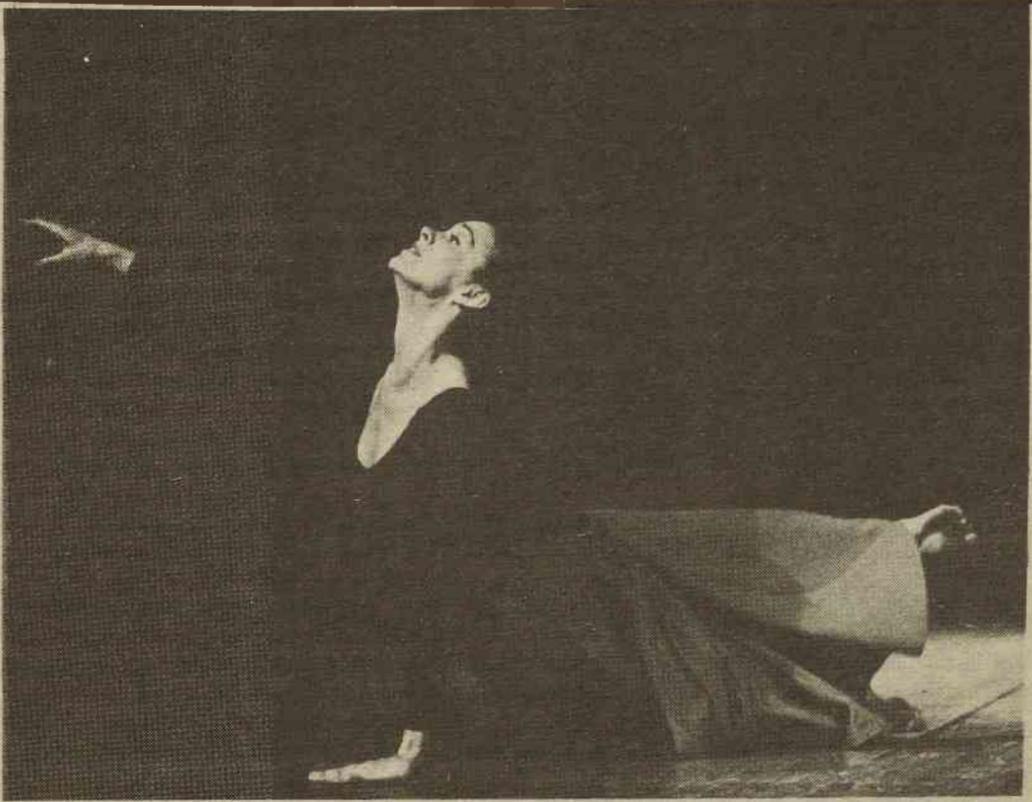
On the evening of October 27, 1977 members of the Brevard College community were transported back in time to the day of Edgar Allan Poe's death in 1849. The host for our journey was clad in a black cloak and top hat; he had no name but was only identified as a visitor in Poe's cottage just after his death. The main room of Poe's cottage was lighted only by an elaborate candelabra and contained a chair with claw feet and a coat rack upon which the visitor's cloak was hung. The two adjoining rooms contained various items of memorabilia such as books and pictures of the women in Poe's life. The host told his faithful followers of many episodes in Poe's life. He recited parts of many poems and tales by Poe, such as, "The Raven," "The Bells," "A Dream Within A Dream," "The Black Cat," and "The Tell-Tale Heart."

Mr. Minford's mind twenty years ago several of which were spent preparing his one-man play for public performance. Mr. Minford loved Poe so much that he felt that the true story of Poe as a human being should be told without the legends. When asked if he felt that he ever wished that he could have known Poe he replied that he felt as if he already knew him.

Mr. Minford is currently on his last tour. He opens February 22 for four weeks at the Cherry Lane Theater, an off Broadway Theater in New York City. The Cherry Lane Theater is not new to Mr. Minford; he appeared there many years ago in the original production of the "Boy Friend."

In "Journey to Eldorado," Edgar Allan Poe is always searching for Eldorado, a place where he is the only inhabitant. The visitor, Mr. Minford, is just passing by and leaves his audience with the thought that Poe "lived alone and died unknown." The only things Poe left behind were a key to his cottage, a nickel, and a crumpled piece of paper.

The host for our journey was an accomplished actor and director named Robert Minford. Mr. Minford's program of Edgar Allan Poe is entitled "Journey to Eldorado." "Journey to Eldorado" began as an idea in



THE FLOWING movement of the one of the Carl Ratcliff dancers.

## Dance Theatre Visits College In Recent Program

Remember how we longed as children to be dancers on the stage? On the night of November 17 childish dreams became a reality as we watched the Carl Ratcliff Dance Theatre perform on the stage of Dunham Auditorium. Suddenly we found ourselves becoming absorbed in the flowing movements of the six dancers on stage.

Appearing was the Carl Ratcliff Dance Theatre, a group of five professional dancers, each a soloist in his own right, with a wide variety of backgrounds and experience.

The Carl Ratcliff Dance Theatre was founded in 1969, based in Atlanta, Georgia. Since its inception the Dance Theatre has toured extensively throughout the Southeast both performing and teaching guest

seminars. In 1970, Ratcliff received a Choreographer's Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, to create a new work for the Company. In 1974, the Company received a grant from the Georgia Council for the Arts for a series of performances throughout Georgia. In 1975 the Company was commissioned to perform in the Gala Evening of Dance, highlighting Atlanta's first Performing Arts Festival, sponsored by Atlanta's Bureau of Cultural Affairs.

Carl Ratcliff studied first at the Lester Horton School of Dance and later became a principal dancer with the Horton Company. In the years that followed, he worked in clubs, stage, movies, television and concerts with Jack Cole, Roland Petite,

Eugene Loring, and Bella Lewitsky. Ratcliff and Lewitsky were partners in concert for several years and later co-directed their own school. From this background, came his own unique approach to performing, choreography, and teaching.

In 1962, he joined the Atlanta School of Ballet and the Atlanta Ballet Company as head of the Modern Dance Department. He has choreographed, designed and performed many major works for this company and numerous civic and cultural groups throughout the Southeast. This work continues today. However, it is the Carl Ratcliff Dance Theatre that best represents in its performances, organization and ambitions, what Ratcliff ardently believes dance can and should be.



MR. MINFORD (the visitor) reflecting on Edgar Allan Poe's life.

## Commercialism vs. Christ

BRENDA RACKLY

Today, if a child hears the word Christmas, immediately visions of Santa with his sleigh chock-full of trains, planes, balls, dolls, carriages, toy ovens, etc. are transcribed on his brain. 'Tis a select few who know well the story of the Bethlehem babe in the manger with the shepherds and wise men paying homage to the future king.

Commercialism (for such is the culprit) has also taken its toll on the adult level. Distribution of foods to the needy and Christmas

caroling the message of "peace, good will to men" to the shut-in have given way to the frantic hurry-scurry of gift buying and thereby assuring the stores of their greatest yearly harvest of sales - roughly one quarter of the year's total. "Peace and good will" is now dominated (if not entirely replaced) by a desperate struggle to get all preparations finished on time. Just how frustrating this procedure can be is readily discerned by the many who, on December 26, say "Gosh, am I glad it's over."

What's the answer? Alas, I don't know, for I am caught in the same web that entraps you. Perhaps if we all could slow down a bit and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, the advent of the Christ Child into the world, Christmas would assume a deeper meaning for us and this in turn might tend to put all these other elements in their proper perspective.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND  
 MAY GOD BLESS!