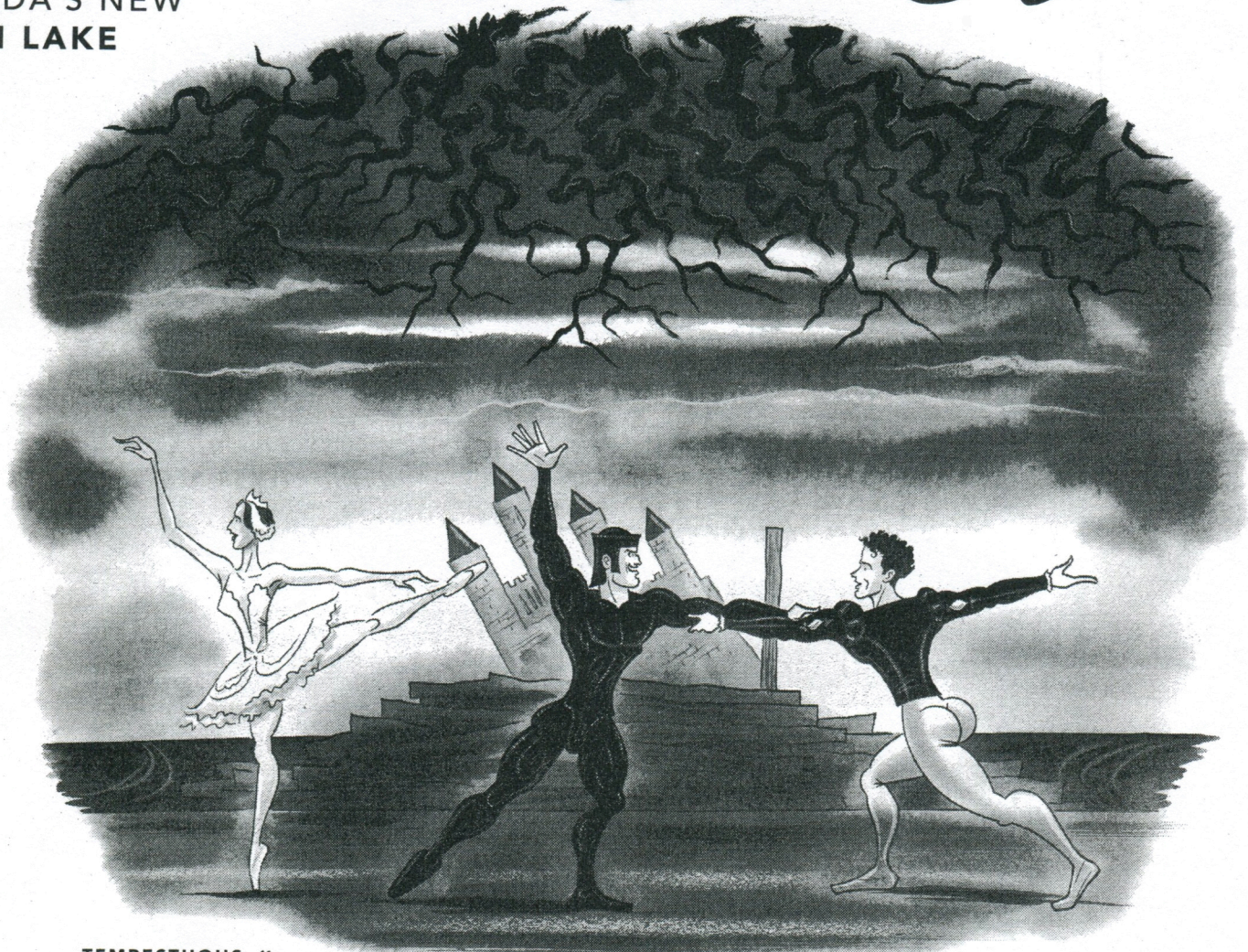


WÜNDER-KID
**MAURICE
 VELLEKOOP**
 DRAWS
 ATTENTION
 TO THE WILD
 DRAMA, ON
 STAGE AND
 OFF, AT THE
 NATIONAL
 BALLET OF
 CANADA'S NEW
SWAN LAKE

Humming *bird*

ILLUSTRATIONS
 BY MAURICE
 VELLEKOOP

TEXT BY
 GORDON
 BOWNESS



TEMPESTUOUS. »

The National Ballet Of Canada's wonderful new production of *Swan Lake* reintroduces the sorcerer character of Rothbart, danced with dramatic flair opening night by Rex Harrington. Artistic director James Kudelka has triangulated the classic story; sparks were flying between the sorrowful Siegfried (Aleksandar Antonijevic) and the irresistible Rothbart, as much as they were between Siegfried and Odette/Odile or Rothbart and Odette/Odile.

What mysterious force binds the three-some together? "It's so much about homosexuality," says Harrington, the National's out, gay star. "Who's the first person Siegfried sees in the forest? Me, not Odette."

And Harrington certainly looked the part

of a homo Lothario in his Santo Loquasto-designed, Tom Of Finland, black muscle suit.

One of the best moments in the ballet occurs when Siegfried gives the engagement ring to the impostor, Odile, invoking a tempest that swamps the castle, sweeping away its inhabitants, including the Queen (Victoria Bertram), in an awe-inspiring tumult of fabric.

In the end, passion vanquishes duty, nature wins out over civilization and time defeats pride. After the deluge, the naive Odette (Greta Hodgkinson) is left alone.

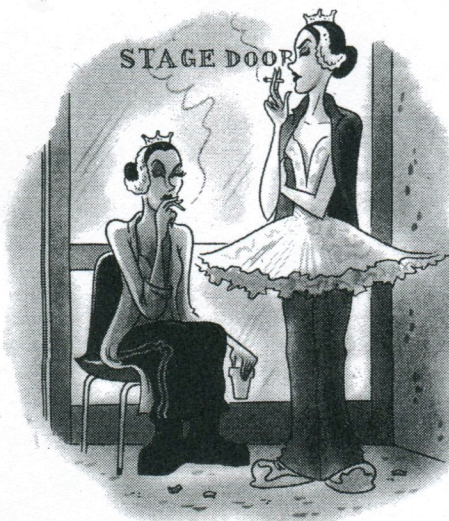
The new *Swan Lake* is sure to become a popular hit; look forward to the company settling into Kudelka's terrifically difficult choreography as the National takes the ballet across the country.





\$13 PRINCESSES. «

The supernumeraries, or supers, who play the ladies in waiting, arrive backstage. They're paid \$13 a show.



IT'S A TOUGH JOB. «

Two members of the corps try to relax during a dress rehearsal. The company was certainly feeling the pressure leading up to the ballet's debut.

The cygnets did an amazing job evoking the fluid beauty of swans. However, the problem with the corps is that individuals are only noticed when they screw up. One poor lass developed a case of the shakes opening night and had to be pulled midway through the performance.



PILLORY. «

Hilary Weston mingles with the glitterati opening night.

When the lieutenant governor first entered the theatre proper, everyone stood while the orchestra played the vice-regal salute, an awful medley of "God Save The Queen" and "O Canada." One woman refused to get up and received much tut-tutting disdain from people around her.

Afterwards, the woman explained: She refused to stand because she thought Hilary Weston was Isabel Bassett, the stingy Ontario culture minister.

Well, Weston and Bassett do sport similar dos.