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Music Review | American Composers Orchestra

A Daredevil Spirit, and Acrobats in Contemporary American Fare

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There was a circus air to the American Composers Orchestra concert at Zankel Hall on Friday night. For one thing, there was a daredevil element: the orchestra presented three world premieres and a technically challenging work on a single program. For another, there was the three-ring promise of something for every taste: the works could hardly have been more different from one another. And there were even acrobats - well, dancers: a duo from the company Pilobolus executing a tangled, erotic duet simultaneously onstage and in a film in the final piece.

That piece was called "Lucid Dreams," by Edward Bilous (music), Alison Chase (choreography) and Mirra Bank (video), but it seemed an awakening after what had gone before.

Mr. Bilous really does write film music, and his "Lucid Dreams" actually was accompanying a film, but of the three premieres it sounded the least self-conscious. Mr. Bilous's score threw a lot at its audience, demanding a simultaneous focus on screen and sound and stage, but it came off as a successful fusion, the music intertwining with the dance, the amplified voice of La Tanya Hall interwoven with hand-clapping and percussion.