

To Russia, with dance

TOE SHOES lie in a heap, far left, at the American Dance Center, as choreographer Phyllis Latin, above right, and her assistant Lesa Hayward, above left, watch Dik rehearse. The Moscow performances also will include the world premiere of a tap dance titled "Happy Feet," set to Broadway showtunes and choreographed by Hayward.



A quartet of Russian ballet dancers returned home two days ago after spending more than a week learning a new ballet at the American Dance Center in Saratoga Springs.

The work is part of a larger collaboration between the Phyllis Latin Dance Company, based at the Saratoga center, and a group of Russian dancers. Later this year, Latin and 17 members of her company will travel to Moscow to perform with an equal number of Russians.

Their program will incorporate a variety of dance styles, including jazz, tap, Broadway and ballet. Its highlight is scheduled to be "Pater Olympian," a ballet choreographed by Latin from a story by Robert G. Hoffman. Hoffman, who lives downstate, made a fortune in finance and had long wanted to find a choreographer and company to bring "Pater Olympian" — about a father-and-son pair of champions at the first



Olympics, in Athens — to the stage.

In addition to Latin and her dancers, Hoffman has hired a number of Russian dancers — including the recently departed foursome of Natalia Korneeva, Oksana Kuzmenko, Maksim Gerasimov and Victor Dik — to perform the principal roles in his ballet during its premiere later this year. Next month, during a visit to Russia, Latin and the four Russian dancers will teach the ballet to the rest of the company.

*Saratoga Springs dance company,
Russians collaborate on ballet*

PHOTOS BY CINDY SCHULTZ
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