

A Maze-ing Grace

BARBARA FELDMAN AND DANCERS: LABYRINTH and repertory works. At the Educational Center

for the Arts. Closed.

Webster's definition of a labyrinth is "something extremely complex or tortuous in structure, arrangement or character." Last week's premiere of Barbara Feldman and Dancers' "Labyrinth," featuring music by Dwight Andrews, satisfied all the complexity requirements with one happy omission — it was *not* tortuous. The work fittingly takes off in several directions at once but survives any number of potential pitfalls to end up brilliantly provocative, uncommonly accessible and even subtly optimistic.

Feldman's dancers maneuver the black-and-white boundaries of light and sound with their customary poise, but add a dramatic element of awestruck innocence to their journey. They alternately mirror and obstruct one another, always looking ahead to the next challenge to their impeded movement.

The quest is well illustrated by Andrews' quirky collage of several musical styles, interspersed with a Garcia Lorca poem. Despite the constant interaction the artists remain fascinating as individuals, maintaining distinctive identities.

"Labyrinth" is about exploring options. It's about resilience. It's about maturity. These characteristics also typify Barbara Feldman and Dancers. They have found their way through the maze.

Christopher Arnott