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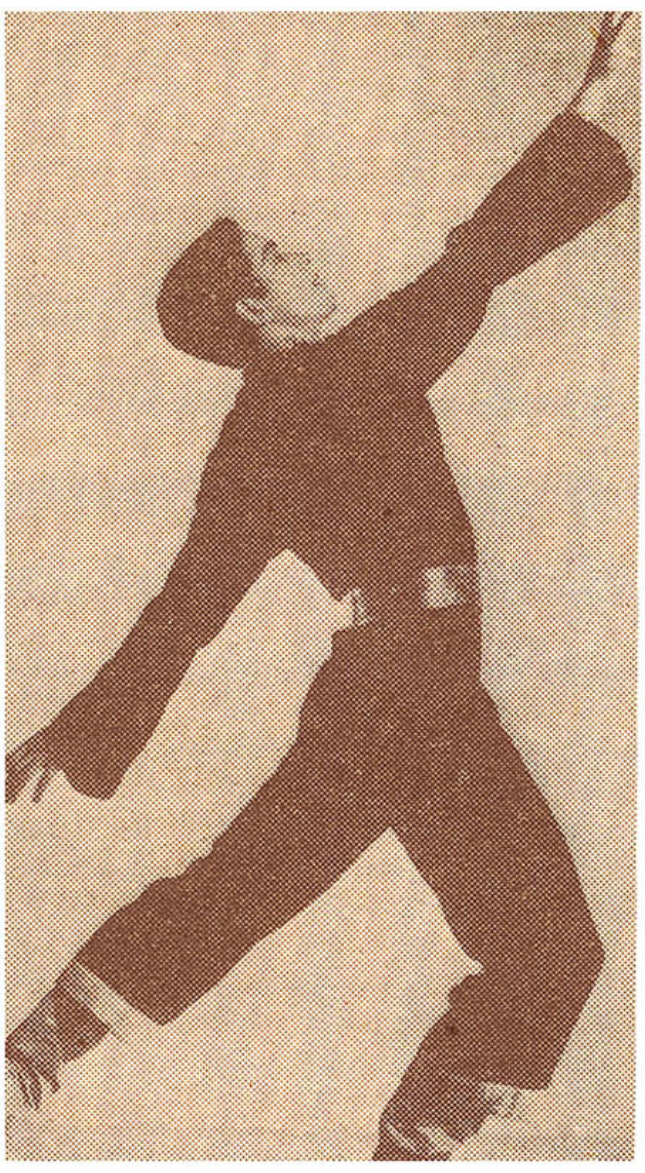

To View the Dances of Paul Haakon and Martha Graham, Big Crowds Paid Big Fees

"Dance International"

In New York last week, on the polished floor of the Rainbow Room, Rockefeller Center's skyscraping night club, Hawaiians, Chinese, Scandinavians and Africans stamped, whirled, leaped and gesticulated to a dozen different kinds of music.

To an uninformed Rainbow Room habitue, the spectacle would have looked like a floor show gone wild. Actually it was an exposition of no little cultural and social importance—"Dance International," a festival showing the progress of the dance in all nations since 1900.

Early this year, Miss Louise Branch, New York art lover, began to think of assembling an exposition that would include dancers and art works pertaining to dancing. She and Malvina Hoffman, famous sculptress (PATHFINDER, Dec. 4) who employs her as secretary, set out on a trip that carried them 12,000 miles through 27 countries. Last week, after "Dance International" had opened, the fruits of their travels came within public reach—over 2,000 dance paintings, photographs, sculptures, dolls and costumes, and dancing representatives from 42 lands.

More than a mere spectacle, "Dance International" was proof that the dance is still one of the most significant and prevalent of art forms. Originating as a religious rite in which men expressed their identity with the

rhythms they felt in nature—in wind, tides and heavenly bodies—it has been part of every culture and every civilization. Eastern religions still employ dance rituals, and even the early Christian church incorporated dance forms into its worship.

In the West, however, the dance has moved further and further from religion to become a truly artistic form. Part of this evolution was caused by religion itself, which—notably in the cases of the Waldenses of France and the Puritans of early America—outlawed dancing as an "invention of the devil."

Another fact demonstrated by "Dance International" was that dancing in 20th century America is a popular art. Despite sizeable admission charges, all of the Rainbow Room's exhibitions drew big crowds. Two high points of the exposition, which was scheduled to end January 2, were to be an "Evening of Ballet," featuring such artists as Paul Haakon and Martha Graham (see cut), and an "Evening of Modern Dance," starring such masters of impressionistic dancing as Charles Weidman and Doris Humphrey (see cover cut).

Dealing with an important cultural form, "Dance International" proclaimed its purpose to be primarily a social one. In a prospectus, Miss Branch announced that the exposition's backers hoped, "by bringing together dancers of all nations, to lay the foundation for future world peace."