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The Four Dances

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Editor Midge Greenlee executes arabesques in verse with . . .

FOUR DANCES

BY MIDGE GREENLEE

The Mikado

Oriental notes discordant
to the Western ear
summon minstrels of an ancient song—
composed in pantomime,
developed in the unfamiliar's
key of dissonance, with
all meaning told
in grace half-angular.
Variations, masked in Europe's
logic, obfuscate
harmonies immutable to the inmost sense
that reads words traced in
clearer script by wiser Eastern hands:
the lyrics of an older theme
unspoken, singing
always in the mind.

Cirque de Deux

Pale, pastel,
blue and gold-tasselled pink
swirling cloaks
sweep through muted glow
of rose and dull gold
into black velvet darkness—
beyond, beyond, transcending—
Delicately,
over the gossamer web of
pastel chords lifting to
transient sunset trailing
reflection, ethereal
moths drift, float,
leap in an upsurge of blue wings
and pink, flickering figures
in twilight radiance, dimming
settling, silken web
sinking to flutter,
to rest—
beyond, beyond, transcendent.

Madronos

Castanets gossip
where tempos flare
with el Greco's intense flame
and bell-skirted figures
step patterns tradition designed
then fade to one fine-drawn line
chanting melody
and lone figures
on shimmering trails of
violin brush-strokes
swaying, sketch solitude's dance
where single notes
carve Renaissance profiles—
brown, gold and chalky red—
from darkness, with slanted light.
Abruptly, many voices and hands
copy designed conformity,
seek reflected mirage of
acceptance, the many
unidentified voices—
One persists, one note singing
clear images for figures that dance
alone, in eternal incandescence.

Gaite Parisienne

Vivid in stark light—
white light, harsh—
mingled in the glittering portrait
of night, gaucherie, sophistication
hard-faced crowds and ingenue
design kaleidoscopic patterns:
light, bright world of color
dipped by Lautrec's brush.
From riotous background grace,
drifting, clouds colored glass
in wind-blown smoke,
creating perfection's white
flame flowing in uncaught
beauty, in silence, alone—
Crowds, strident, whirling in
ever-shifting designs, return,
rush through dream-colors, subtly **unreal**;
fragments of polished patterns **vanish**;
rising, one last silver flame
glows undimmed perfection
ageless in man's firmament
over the city's checkered light.