

Document Citation

Title	Ballet black
Author(s)	Clive Hodgson
Source	<i>London Film Festival</i>
Date	1986 Nov 23
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Ballet black, Dwoskin, Stephen, 1986

Sat 22 Nov



UNITED KINGDOM 1986

London FF
'86

Ballet Black

1.00 ICA

also Sun 23 Nov 1.00 ICA

Director: Stephen Dwoskin

Production Company: Urbane/Arts Council of Great Britain

Producer/Screenplay/Photography (Colour): Stephen Dwoskin

British Distributor/Export Agent: Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly W1V 0AU. Telex 895 2022

Leading Players: Members of Ballet Negres

Running Time: 86 mins

Festival: Rotterdam

Ballet Negres was Europe's first all black dance company, founded in London by Berto Pasuka in 1946. Born in Jamaica and trained in classical ballet, Pasuka brought together West Indian dancers and Yoruba musicians to create original works based on Black folklore, Caribbean life, and colonial experience. The fusion of Afro-Caribbean dance, classical ballet and mime was unique at the time and the company provoked an enthusiastic (if at times bewildered) response, reaching the height of its popularity between 1948 and 1950 before finally disbanding in 1952. Steve Dwoskin's film recalls the history of Ballet Negres through contemporary accounts and the reminiscences of members of the original company, filmed at a reunion after 35 years. And with characteristic intensity, he films a group of young black dancers rehearsing and performing a new production of one of Pasuka's most controversial pieces, *They Came*. Combining the material of a conventional arts feature with Dwoskin's highly personal approach, *Ballet Black* provides both a valuable record and an overdue acknowledgement of an important contribution to the development of Black culture in Britain.—Clive Hodgson.

Short: *The House of Superhumanism* (UK 1986/Dir Stephen Irwin). The art and philosophy of Superhumanist artist Nicholas Treadwell. 10 mins.