

# The Harvard Crimson

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## Dance Group Inspires Local Students

### Harvard Teaches High School 'Tension' Dance

By JOSEPH F. KAHN

Fifteen pairs of high school students quivered and jolted, brandishing their arms in the air, intense and taut. It was a dance, not a fight, an exercise in controlled self-expression led by choreographer Sabrina T. Peck '84.

Peck took a troupe of Harvard dancers to two Cambridge public schools yesterday, where she taught students spirited "tension" dances in an attempt to encourage self-expression through dance and to involve Harvard undergraduates in the community.

Members of the Harvard-Radcliffe Dance Theater Project performed a modified version of one of the numbers from their upcoming production "Citystep," encouraging students to participate on stage and demonstrating the principles of dance theater.

Working through the steps of Peck's "Backstreet Suite," students at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School learned about the emotional value of each movement. Ultimately, they performed the number—set to sophomore Adam A. Gorgoni's original music—for their classmates.

"We tried to bring Harvard and the community together through a production which, both in form and theme, would have an impact on the students," Peck said yesterday.

The exercise was "good for channeling expression and a good way to get kids interested in dance," said Judith Contrucci, director of drama for Cambridge Rindge and Latin.

Contrucci said that the students were able to "immediately identify" with the



Members of the Harvard-Radcliffe Dance Theater shake a leg as part of their effort to reach out to Cambridge high school students.

material the Harvard group performed because it was focused at that age group. The group's style related to the students' familiar social dancing, she added.

The dance company also passed out 300 free tickets to the "Citystep" performance at Sanders Theater on Monday and Tuesday of next week.

"There's considerable tension be-

tween Cambridge and Harvard," said Michael W. Miller '84, coordinator of special projects for the group, adding that no Harvard arts groups had done a similar program in the schools in the recent past.

"Citystep" centers around the expression and representation of daily life in a

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## Dance

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city through the medium of dance. The "Backstreet Suite" dramatizes back-alley confrontation between gangs but teaches the students to express their tensions through dance.

The production, which include scenes in an all-night coffee shop, an alleyway, and a lonely apartment, attempt to portray the "pulse and vitality of urban life," Peck said.

Founded this year, the Dance Theater Project plans to visit more schools in the future, focusing on student involvement. Miller said that the group intends to teach students about the entire process of dance production.