Alastair Macaulay

It was easy to pick a Top 10; a Top 20 would’ve been even easier: There’s been an abundance.

PAM TANOWITZ, ‘FOUR QUARTETS’ At its world premiere at Bard SummerScape in July, Pam Tanowitz’s “Four Quartets” proved the most sublime new work of dance theater this year. Since it’s concerned with the sublime — it incorporates T. S. Eliot’s celebrated poems — that’s only fitting. Remarkably, Ms. Tanowitz doesn’t illustrate the poems: She lets their words, spoken with a wide range of expression by Kathleen Chalfant, sound like emanations from the complex stage world created here.

CALEB TEICHER, ‘MORE FOREVER’ Another choreographer who reached a new peak this year was the tap artist Caleb Teicher. He, the pianist-composer Conrad Tao and six dancers gave a preview performance of “More Forever” as part of the Guggenheim Museum’s Works & Process series in October. (The finished work will be performed at the museum on Jan. 6 and 7.) “More Forever” constantly extended the sonic aspects of dance. The use of release and silence at the end of phrases was astounding; the interplay between quiet and loud, between percussive and stroked footwork, and the immense range of dynamics and meters within a phrase.

RICHARD ALSTON The choreographer: Richard Alston has been Britain’s foremost dancermaker for decades. New York Theater Ballet danced the world premiere of his “The Seasons” (to John Cage’s 1947 score) in April at Florence Gould Hall: a marvelous study of changing weather in pure dance terms. And no dancing all year changed my breathing more powerfully than his company’s performance in February of an older work, “Gypsy Mixture.” The announcement that the Alston company is to disband in 2020 is dark news for dance.

ISHMAEL HOUSTON-JONES, ‘THEM’ Pride Week in June brought the imaginative and intense prose of Ishmael Houston-Jones’s “THEM” (1986) at Performance Space New York. Performed with stunning power in terms of structured improvisations, this was a movingly mysterious AIDS drama. The interconnections in the evening, Teresa Reichlen’s moving “We, the dancers” speech, on behalf of City Ballet’s performers — who flanked her onstage — established fresh moral criteria for the company: “We will not put art before common decency or allow talent to sway our moral compass.” Amid a troubled year of stage for City Ballet, her words have only grown in significance.

ARUSHI MUDGAL, ‘MURTA-MURTA’ New York never seems to have a year without revelatory examples of Indian dance. This year’s Drive East festival began with a recital in the Odissi genre by Arushi Mudgal. Her long final solo, “Murti-Murti” (“Form-Formlessness”), covered a thrilling range of religious thought and movement texture.

JUDSON DANCE THEATER: THE WORK IS NEVER DONE! IN PERFORMANCE The Museum of Modern Art’s “Judson Dance Theater: The Work Is Never Done” (to Feb. 3) revisits New York’s radical dance experimentalism in the 1960s. Since September, its live performances have done much to deepen my admiration for the work of all the artists concerned (notably, Yvonne Rainer, Deborah Hay and Lucinda Childs). I’ve always been drawn to David Gordon’s Pirandellian examinations of life and art, reality and illusion, originality and pastiche; I love the philosophical intricacy that underlies them. But his new production of “The Matter” (1971) surprised me with its excitingly angry and skeptical tone.

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA, ‘PARSIFAL’ At the Metropolitan Opera, the confections of geometric groupings and ensemble gestures (choreographed by Carolyn Chon) in the revival of François Girard’s 2013 production of Wagner’s “Parsifal” stay luminous in memory. It was one of several productions that taught me how opera itself can become choreography.

TILER PECK AND ROMAN MEJIA, NEW YORK CITY BALLET The new partnership of Tiler Peck (senior principal) and Roman Mejia (young corps dancer) was the brightest and freshest of several Balanchine’s “Tschaikovsky Pas de Deux” (at Vail in August) and his “Allegro Brillante” (at Lincoln Center in September). Masterfully butt gleeful technicians, fleet in dynamics and changes of direction, these two — with the same dark-glittering eyes — are kindred spirits.

From left: Elena Zambelli, Joshua Andino-Nieto and Dawn Giurling Milatini in “The Seasons.”

JUSTIN PECK, ‘HURRY UP, WE’RE DREAMING’ Justin Peck keeps experimenting. Among his recent forays into presenting ballet in sneakers — each in a quite different rhythmic idiom — I’m espe-