

## The Dance: Alfred Desio, In a Tap-Dancing Program

By JENNIFER DUNNING

**A**LFRED DESIO offered the perfect hot-weather entertainment on Monday at the Dance Theater Workshop's Bessie Schönberg Theater, under the aegis of the workshop's summer "Out-of-Towners" series. Mr. Desio and his two engaging sidekicks, Damon Winmon and David Sharp, danced and acted their way through 11 numbers, two of them choreographed by Mr. Sharp, that involved an amazing variety of electronic equipment.

Mr. Desio has developed a system, called Tap-Tronics, in which tap-dancers make their own music as they dance by means of microphones in their shoes, which are wired to transmitters, receivers and special-effects modules. Two numbers — "Zapped Taps" and "Ragatap," conceived and performed by Mr. Desio — feature an overbearing bank of machines with winking colored lights. They are likely to be of greatest interest to electronic whizzes. But the delighted fascination that seems to drive the Los Angeles-based Mr. Desio to explore these high-tech extensions of traditional tap also informs his and his partners' dancing. His intricate, deft footwork and his ease are compelling. But in the end it is the cagey exuberance of this leprechaun tapster that makes the work so enjoyable.

Not all of the dances featured spontaneously generated electronic scores. The program opened with the introspective "Danca Solitaria," a solo set to cool guitar music by Egberto Gismonti, that introduced Mr. Desio's individual way of moving. In the show-stopping "Tiger Rag," Mr. Desio and Mr. Winmon sing and

dance their way through an ancient recording of that song. And in "Dinah," Mr. Winmon goes mad in a search for some simple maracas accompaniment, dancing to music by Harry Akst and Thelonious Monk.

But Mr. Sharp engaged in a charming game of hide-and-seek with sound in his solo, "Alternating Current," where movement and music had as intimate a relationship as the lines and colors in the painted screens, by Mr. Desio, that served as the program's shifting backdrop. And "Capriccio Stomp," a duet for Mr. Desio and Mr. Winmon, suggested that the age-old camaraderie of street-corner tapsters prevailed here, too, despite the modernization of the form.

The program also included electronic percussion numbers composed and performed by Roger Boyce, who is clearly as in love with his instruments as the dancers are with tap.