

MACLAINE

SHIRLEY



YOU CAN

DANCE WHILE



..... Some of the singing numbers were more treacherous than the dancing, because the movements were seductively subtle. I had never realized the intricacies involved with body movement in such a refined way. I had been free about it before, so attention wasn't necessary. As I worked, I had to concentrate on every shift from one leg to the other, every slight turn of balance; and, of course, every harsh and athletic move. But the danger points were the subtle ones. I relearned the show from a handicapped point of view. It was an experience that was to be ongoing.

I went to Dr. Leroy Perry, a sports chiropractor, scientist, and inventor who runs the International Sportsmedicine Institute in Los Angeles. We talked about my training program with Mary. We tried to figure out what was going wrong. He treated me with ultrasound and ionized electricity, which he administered to many of the injured Olympic and professional athletes he takes care of.

My biggest fear now was fear itself. I didn't know how I'd react to performance energy, the bright lights that affect your sense of horizon and balance, and the quickness that always accelerates when you have to mentally be a few beats ahead of the music and the audience. The need to be careful would slow me down, make me tentative, cause me to hold back, and possibly make me look like I couldn't dance at all.

Perry bandaged my leg using a figure-eight East German technique, which insured that the kneecap would stay in place. I knew I would be favoring the right leg, so I needed to build up the strength in my left one with weights and exercises.

Then Dr. Perry and I tried to figure out why I really went down. We concentrated on my shoes. A dancer who is strong, as I was, should be able to correct an imbalance in mid-move-