

A DANCE SHOW, COMEDY AND TEAR JERKER ROLLED INTO ONE

PRINT VERSION



Tempo Festival of Dance 09

[Brotherhood](#)

created and performed by Sweet and Sour (SAS) Dance Crew

at TAPAC Theatre, Western Springs, Auckland
Until 2 Oct 2009

Reviewed by Kat Walker and Temoa Rua, 1 Oct 2009

Sweet and Sour (SAS) Dance Crew have established themselves as one of New Zealand's prestige, exciting and entertaining hip hop groups, having won Gold at the 2008 World hip hop championships in the Varsity section staged in Las Vegas and been crowned the Battlegrounds World Supremacy Champions 2008 in Australia.

Brotherhood is SAS's debut appearance in Tempo at TAPAC.

Arriving in the TAPAC Theatre it was easy to immediately distinguish that *Brotherhood* performed and created by SAS, was not to be the usual hip hop dance concert. The theatre and audience was small and intimate unlike the standard hip-hop concerts, which have a large space and a large energetic crowd to fit.

The show started off with a section on cultural and personal identity. Included in this was a high energy- fast paced hip hop routine incorporating a variety of new school styles, bboy moves and some hard hitting popping sets. Māori and Samoan cultural dance motifs were infused to a powerful effect, bringing together the new and old.

As always, SAS pulled off their set with awesome energy and execution. There were a few moments when they slipped out of performance, looking at each other to find their place in the movement and unfortunately this showed on their faces.

There was a beautiful set where Hadleigh Pouesi, also the Director of *Brotherhood*, played

the keyboard and sang live whilst SAS danced alongside. It was a very touching scene and drew the audience in, but as performers SAS could work on having a bit more conviction in their movement quality and with their contemporary technique. As the show progressed we realised that its main focus was not on the dancing at all, so the few mistakes were written off by the effective storyline. All in all they set a high standard in all of their pieces.

Brotherhood is a collection of specific stories taken from the lives from the group as their 'stories of expression'. The first half of the show exhibited the natural humour and friendship between the SAS boys. It felt like we were merely hanging out with the brothers at a school lunch time. Their skits were packed with jokes that were fresh, light and got the whole audience laughing along. It was a great start to engage the audience with the characters before getting into the heavier issues later on. These issues were introduced subtly and slowly as the show progressed.

Costumes were kept simple and this in itself was effective. There were small changes from t-shirts to collared shirts to match the school lunch scene and back to t-shirts for practice and the following scenes. This kept the focus on the characters' personalities creating a more natural presence for their individuality.

The production's intensity started to peak as all the stories from the brothers intertwined. There was a range of issues from teen pregnancy, alcoholism, suicide and trust that all come crashing together. Scene nine is where 'tension peaks', and had the audience sitting on the edge of their seats to find out the results.

The stand out performance was David Pene, drawing together the stories that were presented, and drawing the audience into the issues of his story. He had hearts racing, wanting to reach out to help him. While parts of *Brotherhood* may be a bit heavy for a younger audience, and some very mild profanity is also involved, this is a must see for youth! It addresses many of the issues that are present for high school students today and the performers are easy to relate with.

A haka performed with the Mana and Mauri from SAS brings *Brotherhood* to an explosive conclusion.

Brotherhood was definitely full of surprises; it is a dance show, comedy and tear jerker rolled into one. Throughout the show the common question was asked, "When you look at my brothers, what's your first impression"? After watching the strong connection between the SAS boys on stage, we left TAPAC thinking SAS is definitely a strong Brotherhood and this production will only get better.- Thea