

EXCITING TIMES

[Dance on Film](#)

NZ-made Dance Films

at TAPAC Theatre, Western Springs, Auckland

3 Oct 2009

[1hr, no interval]

Reviewed by Shanon O'Sullivan, 4 Oct 2009 (www.theatreview.org.nz)

An innovative and varied selection of dance on film was offered to those lucky enough to catch this afternoon's show at Tapac. From New Zealand's established dance film makers, artistic practitioners and emerging dance artists the audience was treated to a vast array of stimulating dance films that capture the imagination and the heart.

Arc 1 (2000).

Trilogy series - Choreography and performance by Douglas Wright.

Directed by Grant Lahood and Douglas Wright. Music by David Long.

The trilogy series was divided between the Dance on Film program. *Arc 1* is a powerful film that captures the beauty of Douglas Wright's lithe body as he weaves amidst a barren landscape whilst mist billows and the sight and sound of flames leap spasmodically across the screen. The viewer is held mesmerized.

The Picnic (2003).

Directed by Alyx Duncan. Performance by Touch Compass.

Filmed at North Head in Devonport, Auckland, this beautifully crafted film presents Touch Compass dressed in regal attire having a picnic and by all accounts having a merry time. A sense of gaiety permeates the atmosphere as dancers mingle and entertain.

Lively, lovely, (and the rest) (2007).

Choreography, performance and direction by Eve Gordon. Music by Kevin MacLeod.

Fresh and lively, this film illustrates a newsreel winding and clicking over with a woman's legs kicking dainty pointed toes in the air. As a multitude of newsreels appear so too do the pairs of legs kicking energetically.

Pito (2009).

Choreography and performance by Taiaroa Royal and Taane Mete.

Directed by Mark Summerville, and produced by Heather Lee.

As two souls unfold and awaken they are linked by a long mane of hair. Leaving their perch and breaking free they tease yet protect one another within the depths of a dark environment. Then suddenly we are transported from primeval to panache as Royal and Mete dressed in diva drag strut and dance with finesse and flair.

Elbow Room (2009).

Choreography and performance by Zhara Killeen-Chance. Music by Zhara Killeen-Chance. An intriguing solo that explores the confines of space in which the body twists, contracts, and responds. Hands and arms intertwine around the torso creating a sense of locking and unlocking within the environment. Zhara Killeen-Chance comments "whilst restraints can be confining, they can also be freeing".

Arc 2 (2000).

Choreography and performance by Douglas Wright.

Directed by Grant Lahood and Douglas Wright. Music by David Long.

Someone bangs on the door, a cat meows, and a bird chirping grabs our attention instantaneously. In apparent response to the bird's chatter Douglas Wright glides within the confined space of the room. Sharp, staccato movement blends effectively to the incessant chirp of the bird and the supple body takes flight.

Maungauika. Directed by Moana Nepia.

Three bodies positioned one on top of the other in three oblong spaces. In slow motion each body slowly unfurls as silence fills the space. Moana Nepia explains this represents "place and layers of history". A strong image is projected as these different layers / bodies glide seamlessly.

Fly (2002).

Choreography by Shona McCullagh. Performed by John Callen and Richard Cesan.

Directed by Shona McCullagh. Music by David Long.

A vivid backdrop presents a poignant relationship between a father and his son. As the spirited son strives for his freedom he meets resistance from his father who does not want to let him go. The use of effective movement vocabulary allows one to be easily drawn in to the emotive narrative on screen.

The Moth (2007).

Choreography and performance by Geof Gilson.

Directed by Campbell Farquhar. Music by Sam Hamilton.

A man lies in a bed and becomes intrigued with a moth that flaps and flutters at his window. The man appears to enter a dream as light shimmers and flashes, and the use of animation creates a striking visual image.

Splenk (2009).

Choreography and performance by Mariana Rinaldi.

Directed and produced by Simone Beksinska.

Sparks fly and descend from above as a woman walks from the back graffitied wall and she stands under falling rain. Energy courses through her body as she dances wildly. Her body ripples to and from the ground and splashes of red soak her white clothing.

Living Room Fort (2006).

Performed by Geof Gilson.

Directed by Campbell Farquhar. Music by The System.

Strobes of light illuminate a digitized room with tables and chairs as a man walks and crawls through the space potentially looking for something. As light flashes brightly the image becomes blurred in this imaginary space.

Crazy Beat (2003).

Choreography by Carol Brown.

Directed by John Hardwick. Performed by Natalie Ayton, Catherine Gardner, Majo Itaro and Nadia Selliers.

Set within an abandoned hospital four dancers dressed in matching attire skilfully perform to a Bartok String Quartet as English rock band Blur are positioned in the same room playing live in the corner. An energizing juxtaposition, the dancers appear in perfect synchrony with the band.

Arc 3 (2000). Choreography and performance by Douglas Wright.

Directed by Grant Lahood and Douglas Wright. Music by David Long.

Set within an empty hall Douglas Wright gives us a breathtaking and soul moving performance. The camera follows Wright as he rises, falls and glides effortlessly across the space. His articulate and consummate skill graces us and his breath seems to transcend the screen. Captivated, this final film leaves a significant impression from the performance of a genius.

Tempo's Dance on Film program highlights the vast array of creative and skilful talents we have in New Zealand. As an evolving and growing genre of contemporary dance practice it is exciting times as dance practitioners explore technologies and continue to extend the parameters of contemporary dance.