

Footnote Forte Solo Series

6 pm, 12 October 2009, City Art Rooms, Lorne St, Auckland

By Alys Longley for Yellingmouth (www.yellingmouth.blogspot.com)

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Footnote Dance Company's latest offering Footnote Forte gives a new twist to their repertoire, with a series of solo works, each one made by a different choreographer, performed in unusual locations. Here in Auckland it's the City Art Rooms and the bar Cassette Number Nine. I very much enjoyed the intimacy of the works and the intensity of the dancers- the intimacy of performer and audience is matched by that of the two dance artists collaborating in making a new work – as the evening unfolded I thought a lot about the provocative nature of the solo dance work.

Michael Parmenter's piece Somebody's Darling folds out from itself in enticing layers of formal play, narrative complexity and creative heritage; the work is choreographed to Douglas Lilburn's somber, moving piece Elogy, which dancer Francis Christeller's grandfather sung for its original recording. Christeller's intense performance quality reminded me of Parmenter's performance of his Long Undressing, especially as this piece is actually structured as an undressing, from the formal confidence of the performing opera singer to the near naked figure of a figure stricken by loss. I enjoyed the space that Parmenter gave his movement phrases, the formal cycle of movement echoing the shifting tones of Lilburn's arrangement of poems by Alastair Te Ariki Campbell.

Kristian Larsen's Adze was a work of sparking, diving, hurtling playfulness, with dancer Claire Lissaman flowing through unpredictable momentum paths into abrupt shifts of rhythm and form. Larsen made Adze as a tribute to local composer Phil Dadson, but I really can't figure out why Dadson's music didn't feature in the work – his creativity sure did though, Lissaman radiated the experimental pathways of Dadson's sonic / aesthetic experimentation with confidence and strength.

Dancer Anita Hunziker was positively ablaze with the confidence of a who-gives-a-shit electro-pop loving teenager in Sarah Foster's Firecracker. Her brooding demeanour shot through excessive pathways of what the programme describes as a "cathartic onslaught of movement". This movement was edgy, provocative, and very rock 'n' roll.

The final work of the evening (two of the program's works– Ross

McCormack's *Stealth* and Malia Johnstone's *Lens 1* are off the evening bill) was set in bar *Cassette Number Nine* – a perfectly chosen venue for Maria Dabrowska's *Stark*, which fantastically brought dancer Sarah Knox's tremendous skill and spark to the stage. This was a very tight, enjoyable piece, although I must say that it was almost too tight, with a bit too much 'tah-dah-ness' for my taste. I would have loved to see the darker, more challenging elements of Stark's legacy brought to the fore – and I would think that Dabrowska would be the one to do it, as she's proven she's highly capable of innovative and edgy work.

It was a pleasure to enter the field of such fiery, electric collaborations between choreographers, dancers and composers.