

TALENT, VERVE, COMMITMENT AND PASSION PASSION TALENT, VERVE, COMMITMENT AND PASSION

[The Teen Show](#)

at TAPAC Theatre, Western Springs, Auckland
From 8 Oct 2009 to 9 Oct 2009

Reviewed by Raewyn Whyte, 9 Oct 2009

There is no denying the talent, verve, commitment and passion for dancing of the 42 teenagers who performed in this year's youth dance programme **The Teen Show** at Tempo 09.

Drawn from five of Auckland's larger dance studios, many of these young dancers aspire to a dancing life, and their performances demonstrated their ability to respond to the limelight. Notably, 41 of the dancers were female - their male counterparts are embracing hip hop this year and can be seen in at least four different Tempo shows.

The programme included a range of genres including contemporary dance, salsa, ballet, and dance on screen. Choreography was in the main devised by teachers, though a degree of input from students was evident much of the time.

Two works were choreographed by dancers. The trio **Sisters**, choreographed by Ashlee Bostock of the youth dance company One Step Beyond, was devised with input from her cast and explored the differing personalities and relationships between three sisters. The dance successfully evoked the distinctions between the sisters, shown particularly in interactions involving floor work and partnering skills.

And in their very stylish short film **Us**, directed and edited by tutor Carla Martell, six of Pointy Dog Dance Company's dancers took creative responsibility for their own choreography, devised with the camera's needs uppermost. Carefully chosen costumes - black and white dresses and accessories, with some red items for contrast, determined the 'look' of the film, and their restless bursts of movement, backed up by skilful fast cuts, heightened the impression of busy lives spent on the move.

Eight young women from The Dance Studio opened the programme with the Latin flavoured **Siempre Santana** by Jacqui Cesan, with music by Carlos Santana. With impeccable musicality and evident delight in their own dancing, this began with long net skirts cleverly taking the place of missing (male) dancing partners, the fabric swirling and floating on the air or held to one side as if

anchoring a pose.

In the second half, the dancers switched to very short neon coloured skirts over their black tights and leotards, and became lively and enthusiastic salsaers, crisply and confidently emphasising the cadences of the music while sustaining the requisite positioning of head and arms with considerable grace and charm.

One Step Beyond, the youth dance company from Marian McDermott School of Dance, presented two short works, the trio **Sisters** (above), and **Lifted** for seven dancers, choreographed by tutor Janine Parkes. Adapted from Japanese mythological paintings, this demanding work required the dancers to fully inhabit their ominous characters and sustain movement styling through which the characters were communicated. The dancers rose well to the challenge and their haunted presence was disquieting throughout.

Dance Unlimited, the youth dance company from East Auckland Performing Arts, also presented two short works. **Naisho**, choreographed by tutor Ichiro Harada for seven dancers, played on the idea of silly teenage secrets, was confidently danced and with a good deal of wit. The dancers, clad in school uniforms and toting laden backpacks, observed impeccable timing as they moved from freeze-frame groupings to bursts of dancing and back, alternately working with natural sound and music from Karsh Kae's Milan.

By contrast, **Bubble**, for six dancers, choreographed by tutor Geordan Wilcox to Salmonella Dub's music of the same name, put the emphasis on precise spatial arrangements and required a good deal of stamina to sustain sequences involving falls and rolls and spin turns and jumps. The dancers performed with aplomb.

Mt Eden Ballet Academy presented three short ballet works, each of them requiring fast footwork, impeccable timing and pinpoint spatial positioning. No problem for these dancers, even with the extra challenge of making repeated and very fast exits and entrances between the stacks of lights lining the wings on both sides of the stage.

Polished performances were given to all three works, in flats with demi-pointe work in **The Show Must Go On**, by Melinda Palmer, set to music of the same name by Queen, and **One Night Only**, by Trilby Palmer, set to an excerpt from the Dreamgirls soundtrack, and en pointe for the whizz-bang-paced **Music**, also choreographed by Trilby Palmer, set to an excerpt from the Burn The Floor stage show. Finesse was the watchword, with the well-schooled dancers showing confidence and charm in their execution of every move.