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Dancers' Locker, Stanley/Nozaki/Kalbusch – review

written by Ezekiel Oliveira | July 30, 2018



Dancers' Locker is the experimental studio presentation platform from Frontier Danceland company dancers and guest artists. The evening opens with *Diamond*, choreographed by Adele Stanley. In pastel costumes, four dancers pose in a vertical line. They explore group unison, cannon and a group ripple effect that lets the ensemble shift the immediate space surrounding the dancers. When they collapse, Adele Goh swiftly becomes the subject matter being dragged across the floor. The group creates an impressive space illusion as they travel on a diagonal downstage but leaving the limbs behind creating a compelling vision of moving back and forwards when in fact the motion goes in one direction only – smart.

The music varies from upbeat retro to the beautiful, relaxing sounds of Nicolas Jaar as the dancers shift to a more pedestrian movement style bringing our attention back to the subject of this work, 'one person, many perspectives. One mind, many voices'.

The second installment of the evening is *7.6 Billion (-1)* by Keigo Nozaki. The situation is a public space; two wooden stools and one park bench. The piece opens with a sequence of tableaux where the dancers seem secluded, sequestered, incommunicado as they strive to expand on movement and expression accompanied by a bashful soundtrack of a child's music box. Adele Goh stands up on a stool but she looks unhappy, this is followed by a spoken word section where isolation is overstated; 'not possible, wait, we have to talk', she says. The dancers toss themselves around the space with great falls and quick recoveries, but this short piece is accompanied by six different music entries, and sometimes I can't help feeling that the sound could perhaps underscore the choreography rather than signpost the ideas. The dancers look in their element, tackling the difficult material wonderfully.

Compagnie Irene K. finishes the evening with a surprising piece. *Eat it!*

Peppers, carrots, aubergines and others demarcate a generous circle where the dance takes place. Jessica Van Cauteren and Anaïs Van Eycken dance within this space, smelling, touching and picking the produce of the floor. They are eager to investigate the ins and outs of the foods as these get rearranged into a square and a pile. The composition is appetising even if sometimes diverts my attention from the actual movement, but noticing these beautiful images of vegetables on stage is pleasing. A third dancer patiently witnesses this situation from the outside, and before we know it, he is setting up a new composition on the floor where a new duet is about to commence. Partnerwork floods this composition with beautiful intimacy, Van Eycken is lifted from the floor up to shoulder level, and the two dancers push and pull against one another to finish placing two potatoes on the eye sockets of Hiroshi Wakamatsu, it's hilarious, especially followed by a humorous moment where Wakamatsu gets his mouth stuffed with chillies. This piece is a mouthful of spice, humour and brilliant partner work.

Dancers' Locker 2018 by Frontier Danceland 27-29 July at Goodman Arts Centre.

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