



# FiveLines

A Contemporary Dance Initiative

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## Leap 2016 WEAVING PATHWAYS Frontier DANCELAND | Review

*written by FiveLines* | February 22, 2016



A new generation of contemporary dancers brings a much-needed inquiry into the form of choreography, versatile dance material that extends from classical lines in the body to more challenging theatrical approaches to dance showcasing M1-Frontier Danceland PULSE Programme in Weaving Pathways.

The night starts with a performance from **Frontier DANCELAND** dancers, 'Life On' is choreographed by the inquisitive duo Aymeric Bichon & Christina Chan who have delighted the audiences of Singapore in November with a wonderful performance of **Flux of Time**.

'Life On' is a short dance piece based on Cheap Thrills by Sia – a welcome party. The piece unfolds pretty quickly immersing the entire cast in dance and celebrations alike. Particularly interesting in this piece is the diverse use of sound and music; the score of choreography is accompanied by the sharp sound of tap shoes, claps, and live songs as well as beatboxing. In comparison to previous works by Bichon and Chan this piece feels slightly underdeveloped or not quite finished yet. But the evening is really about the works that the company dancers have created on their pulse programme scholars for Weaving Pathways.

'32 variations' by Joy Wang brings together a very extensive cast on stage. These exciting dancers have on board the difficult and laborious task of dancing and interpreting a difficult and complex score of music – 32 Variations in C Minor on an original theme Wo080 by Emil Gilels.

The grandiosity of this score of music is best achieved from a choreography perspective when the entire cast work is in unison, allowing the audience to visualize what the original score of music looks like, cleverly done Wang manages to work with a difficult piece of music while showcasing its complexities. Repetition is fundamental in this work, sharing with the audience the choreographic outputs and interests at the heart of the dance. The dancers offer a wonderful and expressive performance of a more abstracts piece of dance where cohesiveness is at the centre of it all.



'for what its worth' is a slow revealing piece of choreography by Wayne Ong. In this performance the dancers look deeply immersed in the work, dancing behind white masks allows the young dancers to feel less vulnerable and hence more expressive in their bodies. A very

useful strategy – it grants the cast a chance to explore their movement on a personal level not seen before in the evening. The dance material is intricate and the connections between the dancers on stage are very powerful and moving, thus the audience witnesses the deep involvement and ownership of the dance material.

‘IN THE WAKE OF SLEEP’ by Adele Goh is the highlight of the evening. Goh manages to put the cast through a process in which they explore an array of dance vocabulary that sounds fresh and looks incredibly current in the landscape of contemporary dance. I personally feel that the second half of the piece is much stronger and bolder than the first one, simply because the dancers feel more challenged. A tight quartet grounds the dancers to their roots, their relationship with the floor – quirky and non-linear dance material, we can witness the dancers evolving into wholesome intelligent bodies exploring group dynamics that break down into small vignettes of dance.

‘ON LIBERTY’, by Hwa Wei-An is perhaps a teenagers dance dream; liberation is at the heart of this choreography where a group of female dancers feels empowered however shy through the tunes of Limp Bizkit and Korn.

The hair is let down and the similarities between the performance and a cathartic rock concert are very evident, the line between hysteria and pure joy are blurred and very well hidden within the dance material. What is striking about this work is the use of ensemble and repetition to empower young women, the liberation feels loud and in our faces.

‘SERIOUSLY NONSENSE?’ by Low Mei Yoke is the most theatrical piece of the evening. A large ensemble of female dancers portrays the same character throughout the work, however, the piece feels disjointed in its nature. Simply put the dancers look and most likely feel better when they are dancing their intricate dance repertoire than when they use their voice and laughter to communicate.

The theatrics don’t pay off as an investment in this piece, it looks diminished in comparison to the beautiful dance. It is not an easy task to ask a dancer to also be an actor, however, naturalism is an in-depth work that seems to only be growing in the company.

The champion of the night is movement, intelligently articulated through the night in a variety of dance compositions where the dancers explore their vicissitudes in performance.

LEAP 2016 – Weaving Pathways at Victoria Theatre 20th of February 3pm and 8pm

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