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THE SKINNY

Vincent Dance Theatre: Act One @ Tron 31 Jan

Written by Gareth K Vile
 Friday, 01 February 2008

THE SKINNY

VDT retain fun without ever losing sight of the seriousness of their ideas

In this double bill, Vincent Dance Theatre presents radically different approaches: Look At Me, Mummy barely references traditional choreography, while Test Run stretches contemporary dance to frantic extremes. Both works are conceived as solos, but Janusz Orlik is joined in Test Run by a pair of fiends with violins who push his fluid, elegant performance into faster, and more extreme, responses.

Look At Me, Mummy could be an exploration of parenthood, or the desire for parenthood, or even a mourning for a lost child - or, ultimately, a study of motherhood as a homely metaphor for life's struggles. Stumbling around a set littered with the detritus of a party, Aurora Lubos recreates fun activities and imagines herself as a classical diva, only to be defeated by circumstance and

objects. Initially humorous, Lubos' repeated frustrations and failures gradually descend into horror: her early mistakes become more brutal. Eventually, she mimes a hysterectomy and wobbles over a version of 'Back to Black', alone and desolate. Look At Me is devastating and witty, abandoning any maternal stereotypes for a direct expression of clear ideas.

Test Run is easier: Pactrycia Kujawska and Matt Howden, violinists of exceptional ability, gang up on poor dancer Orlik, compelling him to respond to their complex musical explorations. Orlik is put through his lyrical paces furiously, and is finally left exhausted and sweating on the floor. Throughout Test Run, the relationship between movement and music is explored: does the music move the dancer, or does the dancer inspire the music? Howden and Kujawska respond to Orlik's own passionate dancing, inspiring them to greater efforts, which in turn push him further. Once again, the seriousness is balanced by a light touch and warm humour. VDT retain fun without ever losing sight of the seriousness of their ideas.

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