

DANCE

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PERIDANCE ENSEMBLE

21st Anniversary Programme

Gerald W. Lynch Theater, New York

Igal Perry's Peridance Ensemble recently celebrated 21 years at the Gerald W. Lynch Theater in New York. As with most gala affairs this was a substantial evening of works; each was by Perry, drawn mostly from recent repertory.

When presenting a show of works by one choreographer there is the usual danger that all the dances will begin to look the same as the evening wears on. Perry sidestepped this through smart programming: small works were intermixed with group pieces, there were unusual pieces not in his customary style, and there was live music and diverse lighting designs, all making for a varied and intriguing evening.

There's no space to recognise all the dancers, which I regret, since no one was 'just adequate'. All were very gifted and did not just dance well but really inhabited the works they performed. That said, here are a few highlights.

Perry's *Nocturnes* continues to be one of my favourites. This evening included notable performances by Christine Freeman and Junichi Fukuda in the first duet. Fukuda's genuine, virile, honest approach was a fine complement to Freeman's clarity of line and focus. Mei Hua Wang and Raul Peinado slipped through the quicksilver partnering of their duet while Juliana Scarpelli's wittily executed solo mixed swift liquidity with moments of sauntering non-chalance.

Wu Kang Chen danced *Farewell*, dedicated to the late, but very great, Benjamin Harkavy. Elena Comendador's green skirt-like costume was an excellent touch in this work which, par-



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adoxically, combined a constantly shifting restlessness with a sense of inner peace.

Silhouette, a solo for guest artist Elizabeth Parkinson, placed her in a predicament where evil forces were afoot. Sometimes she responded to them, other times she was jerked about by them like a puppet. I wished for more sense of conclusion from this piece... how did this heroine fare? Still, the opportunity just to see her coping with adversity was worth much.

Udarep Akubrad, an ensemble piece for the women, portrayed them as sexy goddesses, hips moving with snake-like sinuousness, reminiscent of Middle Eastern belly dance, but it was not all seduction: there was feminine power, assertiveness, strength. This, with live music from Israeli percussion duo Percadu (Adi Morag and Tomer Yariv) made the piece a real crowd-pleaser.

Igal Perry has built a strong repertory and assembled a talented ensemble to perform these works. Watch for continued growth - their momentum is building.

Tim Martin