

Passion, Indignity, Distress and Devotion

Excavate: A two man dig
Reviewed by Celeste Tripodi
The Canberra Review, May 25 2006

Dance is a form of baring one's soul. Even the most introverted person can shine through dance. When the dance is improvisational, something else happens - you reveal your innermost naturalness through the external body.

A white screen at the back of the stage exposed a single sentence, "What you risk reveals what you value." I saw this when Corbet and Lehrer performed "Excavate" in September of last year but this time it had an effect on me. In this one sentence I saw where Lehrer and Corbet found their strength.

"Excavate" has been an evolving journey for the duo who have danced and performed together for over 12 years. I arrived with the unconscious intention to compare this show to what I had previously witnessed, but within the first moments I knew this would be an impossible task. It was a completely different performance.

Lehrer and Corbet's unraveling of character was elevated and sublime in expression. They revealed later that they don't go on stage with an overt meaning. It happens however it happens, and every individual draws something unique and special from their experience.

Part of the excitement and appeal is that the performers are also unaware, themselves, of where the journey will take them. "You are yourself," as Lehrer states. Well, Lehrer and Corbet are themselves poetical. There's the sensation of intimacy as they listen deeply to each other's bodies. They play with sensation, timing and listening, but mostly with relationships and the hidden emotions and language within them. There is no fairytale happy ending to the journey of a relationship and they don't pretend that there is. It is a process of passion, indignity, distress and above all devotion.

As a show that "came from nothing", as Corbet puts it, he and Lehrer have certainly built a rhythmical whirlwind.

Passion, indignity, distress and devotion

DANCE

"Excavate: A two man dig"

Performed by David Corbet and Jacob Lehrer.
Australian Choreographic Centre. Season closed.
Reviewed by Celeste Tripodi

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