

Review: An Act of Now, Melbourne Festival

CHUNKY Move has always maintained a reputation for putting on unique dance events.

19th October 2012

By Stephanie Glickman



New artistic director Anouk Van Dijk continues that priority in *An Act of Now*, which asks audiences to don headphones, follow a traffic controllers signals, trek down a hill and settle in around a glasshouse caging eight dancers.

Opening night turned into more of an event than bargained for when dancer Stephanie Lake injured her wrist and proceedings were brought to a halt.

Nina Wollny fearlessly jumped into Lake's role, bringing a new and unanticipated meaning to the show's title.

While the physical experience of travelling to the site is a production in itself, the guts of *An Act of Now* is the 70 minutes spent watching the dancers trapped in their see-thru home.

Niklas Pajanti's tight lighting initially renders them aloof silhouettes and then introspective individuals resting with feet up walls or slumped against the wide window frames.

Herald Sun

But repose unleashes into unhinged tribal warfare with bodies whacking into the walls, splattering to the floor, slapping, collapsing and egging each other into combat. While the claustrophobia and the aggression are overextended at times, there's an emotional ebb and flow between anarchical chaos and tender, sensual connection between bodies.

Van Dijk's choreographic palette runs a wide course and enables the dancers to explore their ensemble relationship both physically and theatrically.

There's a well-mined tension between them inside the set -- where the dancers hang off rafters like bats and cling to walls like swatted flies -- and the vast peripheries of the empty theatre beyond that allows for Big Brother-esque scenarios.

Van Dijk has assembled a unique and refreshing collection of bodies and personalities to debut with Chunky Move as the company moves into its next phase of life.

Just like the dancers before them, this generation is fierce.

AN ACT OF NOW

Chunky Move, Melbourne Festival

Sidney Myer Music Bowl, until October 27

Rating: ★★★½