

KICKING UP THE HEELS

Contemporary dance gets the queer treatment in a new work soon to open at the Malthouse.

by DAREN POPE

Kyle Kremerskothen has a busy couple of weeks ahead of him. The 26-year-old dancer will be appearing in two works to be staged at the Malthouse Theatre as part of a pas de deux season of contemporary dance.

The bill includes the world premiere of Phillip Adam's *Brindabella* and a return season of Lucy Guerin's *Aether*. The fact that Melbourne can lay claim to both these works confirms the city's reputation as the home of contemporary dance. That said, it's still a challenge to commit to an evening of esoteric dance. Guerin's *Aether*, for example is inspired by the increasingly invasive role of media (email, TV, internet, text messages etc). Adam's *Brindabella* uses Jean Cocteau's 1937 film, *La Belle et le Bête* (Beauty and the Beast) as a departure point.



Heavy stuff? Not necessarily, says Kremerskothen. It's perfectly fine to walk away from a night of contemporary dance feeling like you didn't get it.

"With abstract works there's not always a literal meaning," he says. "In Lucy's work there's no narrative, so in the first half there's a lot of dancing and a lot going on with projections accumulating into signs and symbols and text and stuff, it's quite experiential in that sense."

If *Aether* is a sensory exploration of media, *Brindabella* has masculinity in its sights.

Described as a queer take on *Fantasia*, Adams says audiences can "expect the unexpected".

"It's the most sexually charged performance that Melbourne is going to get," he says.

The new work is set in the Australian landscape of the *Brindabella* ranges. To allow for a broader exploration of the masculine, Adams has recast the character of the Beast as four Furies (played by Derrick Amanatidis, Luke George, Tim Harvey and Kremerskothen).

"Homoerotica is definitely prevalent in this work," says Adams. "It deals with masculinity and paying homage to the male form."

The success of dance guru Merce Cunningham's residency for the International Arts Festival seems to confirm a broadening appreciation

of contemporary dance in Melbourne.

Kremerskothen says dance companies like Chunky Move have also played a part in the acceptance of experimental works of Lucy Guerin and Phillip Adams.

"Contemporary dance can be anything," he says. "It's really not limited at all, not like (classical) ballet or something like that where you have a set of choreographed steps and then you structure those in a particularly way – contemporary dance can be whatever it wants to be."

The CUB Malthouse
Lucy Guerin Inc's *Aether*
November 28 – December 1

BalletLab's *Brindabella*
December 5 – 8
Details: 9685 5111

A/PR/12