

## THE ENDS OF THINGS

Choreographed by Lucy Guerin

19 - 28 October 2000

National Theatre

Corner Barkly and Carlisle Streets, Saint Kilda

Bookings on 136166 or via [Ticketmaster Online](#)

[For more details, see the official Melbourne Festival site](#)

Many haven't heard of **Lucy Guerin**, but she is regarded as a quiet achiever of dance choreography. From her base in Adelaide, she has danced with leading companies including Dance Exchange and Dance Works. A seven-year stay in New York in the 1990s gave her work an international perspective and reputation.

It's Guerin's confidence in both choreography and content that makes **The Ends of Things** such a strong piece. With a keen eye to the iconographic, Guerin takes a singular theme or idea and runs it in as many directions as possible.

The idea concerns the ends of different things: of connections with other humans, of the milk in the fridge, of what happens when things simply run out and aren't/can't be replaced. The main character, fleshed out by dancer **Trevor Patrick**, is a skinny, shaven-head fellow who lives in a tiny, tent-like home in the middle of the stage. He is Leunig-ish, but without any ray-of-optimism that might save him at the last moment. He is certainly reaching the ends of things. Tired, he washes his face, brushes his teeth, but there is a feeling that this might be the last of his routines.

Surrounding him are three ghost-like figures, dancers who enact aspects of what he could have been, or perhaps once was. They draw him from his tent and toy with him. He is stuck in a moment of twilight, at that final moment when things are about to stop. I was reminded of the last chapter in Orwell's *1984*, when Winston Smith lingers at the cafe, knowingly awaiting the end.

Guerin's choreography is deeply sad. Gestures feel hopeless, each movement exhaustive and without end-point (as we are already there). Patrick brings a panoramic range of facial and bodily expressions to his futile character. This is an exceptional performance.

**The Ends of Things** initially started with an idea from the late **Jad McAdam**, much of whose music composition is retained in the final product. His sound design stands alone as a potent story: the music makes varying attempts to rise from the mire of nothingness, but is inevitably cut down.

If this is the ends of things, where will Lucy Guerin go from here?

Reviewed by [Ben Zipper](#).

