

DANCE
Neil Jillett



Lucy Guerin: Perfectly judged work in 'The End of Things'.

THE *End of Things*, by the Melbourne-based Lucy Guerin Company, is one of the finest pieces of contemporary dance, local or imported, seen here for a long time.

Its power and comic beauty imposed a spellbound hush on the opening-night audience, a tribute to the elegant thoroughness with which director-choreographer Guerin and her dancers, designers and technicians have developed and polished this imaginative work.

The End of Things also has a perfectly judged length — 50 minutes — strengthening its case for having a run beyond its short festival season.

The work is open to many interpretations, perhaps most obviously that it is about loneliness, missed opportunities and coping with disappointment. At its centre is Trevor Patrick, a proficient dancer and superb mime, as gawky as Jacques Tati and as apprehensive as Buster Keaton. He's a sad sack who comes across as Everyman's socially inept and sexually deprived cousin.

He teeters and slides in and out of changing spaces and circumstances, an oddly appealing and finally triumphant character, sad and funny yet untainted by Chaplinesque bathos. Patrick's performance is finely complemented by Brett Daffy, Stephanie Lake and Ros Warby, representing the life to which he aspires.