

DANCE

She puts questions in motion

By **MOLLY GLENTZER**
Houston Chronicle

Some choreographers want to make statements. Lucy Guerin prefers to pose questions, both in the themes she explores and the movements she uses. So don't expect easy answers when Guerin's company visits Houston for the first time this weekend.

What you can expect, however, is some of the most intriguing modern dance of the year.

Guerin is from Melbourne, Australia. While Houston dance fans are familiar with Down-Under artists Natalie Wier and Stanton Welch via

their work with Houston Ballet, Guerin comes from the postmodern Outback. She's one of the best-known voices in her country's vibrant modern dance scene.

But she also has New York roots. She performed there in the early 1990s with such noted downtowners as the Bebe Miller Company, Tere O'Connor Dance and Sara Rudner. She won a Bessie, the New York dance world's equivalent of the Oscar, for *Two Lies* in 1997.

More recently, she won three Green Room awards from the Melbourne Festival for *The Ends of Things*, one

of the dances her company will perform here. Guerin says *The Ends of Things* almost didn't happen after her collaborator, disc jockey and composer Jad McAdam, died suddenly of an aneurysm.

"It was his idea originally.

He was thinking from a sound perspective, like the radio going off the air or the end of a record," she says. "He was someone I had worked with several times and really enjoyed. We had developed a good process together. He'd come into the studio and mix things live as we were working. That was often the way we performed as well. He'd mix CDs and records live during performances, so we could respond to each other, and that spontaneity made it a little bit different every night."

When McAdam died, Guerin nearly abandoned the project. "I was superstitious about it (because of the title)," she says.

The dance that evolved was a stylistic departure for Guerin, less abstract and more human than her other work. It's based on a central character who's going through an internal journey as his life, or some part of it, draws to a close.

In the beginning, he's confined to a tentlike set, where he's busy with such mundane activities as making tea, listening to the radio and urinating (make-believe, not the real thing).

Each small act is also a kind of ending: The radio goes off.

The milk runs out. A trio of figures who may represent aspects of his life — perhaps regret and missed opportunities — dances outside the room

See GUERIN on Page 18F.



100/34