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DANCE REVIEW | 'LUCY GUERIN'

Stylish and Brooding, Like Flashes of Light

By JENNIFER DUNNING

Lucy Guerin has said that the inspiration for her dances comes to her like flashes of light. And that was the effect of the two stylish, brooding pieces presented on Thursday night at Dance Theater Workshop by Ms. Guerin, an Australian modern-dance choreographer with a large following in New York City.

In "Melt," two women (the piquant Ros Warby and serene Stephanie Lake), twine and separate slightly, their arms snaking out or crooking inward like archaic sculpture, as a hypothetical temperature rises. They become a little sultry as the atmosphere warms. But the overall impression is the play of light and shadow on their bodies and the wall behind, in an exquisite projected video by Michaela French.

Trevor Patrick's portrayal of a lonely, obsessive man and his circumscribed life is the heart of "The Ends of Things." It is a stunning performance, crammed with subtle nuances of affecting humility and daring. The man is set upon by a mindless trio (Ms. Worby, Ms. Lake and Byron Perry) representing the outside world in all its crassly intrusive glory. The end is ambiguous: he has lost everything he owns but has gained a temper.

The "flash" here is the man's tiny home, ingeniously designed by Dorothea Sapinska with lighting by Margie Medlin. Shifting projected backdrops and sounds accompany him wittily through his dreary morning routine. Ms. Guerin plunges her audience into something very like one of William Trevor's short stories that delicately excavate peculiarly English everyday madneses. Unlike those stories, however, neither "The Ends of Things" nor "Melt" sustains its initial premise.

Franc Tetaz created the perfectly calibrated sound scores for both dances.

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