



Dance Review

Dance, spoken word share stage in Wild Space performance

By Elaine Schmidt, Special to the Journal Sentinel
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In the world of [Wild Space Dance Company](#) and its artistic director, Debra Loewen, "wild spaces" aren't necessarily actual physical places.

Wild Space opened the program "Reckless Wonders" Thursday in the Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Stiemke Studio Theater, exploring, among other things, the intersection of storytelling and modern dance intersect with "'And then...!' a true story, with Ex Fabula."

The piece, directed by Karen Kolberg, featured Tracy Lehrmann, telling the captivating story of her first job, a gig on the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Dancer Angela Frederick created a constantly moving backdrop to Lehrmann's presence and words. She stepped out of the background and into the narrative periodically, underscoring and illuminating the story through physical interactions with the storyteller.

The intersection of storytelling and dance proves to be fertile ground.

Mauriah Kraker performed her own work, "Outer Dark." Kraker, who has a magnetic physical presence onstage, moved with catlike strength and grace, bringing focus and intensity to the piece, sculpting it with precise, angular movements.

"Katherinette," based on a French word for an unmarried woman of a certain age, featured dancers Suzanne Lappas and Stephanie Nugent moving to the music of Handel. The pair, costumed in gracefully draped, lacy dresses, brought warmth and tenderness to the many interactions on which the piece is built.

"Clever Hominini" opened the evening. Choreographed by Katie Sopoci Drake and Javier Marchan Ramos, the piece featured Drake and Kraker in a vigorous, precisely choreographed piece that found them moving in tight sync with the sinewy, rhythmic sounds of music by Colin Stetson.

"Sound," an excerpt from "Cloudless," by Susan Marshall in collaboration with original performers Kristen Hollinsworth and Joseph Poulson and staged by Hollinsworth, closed the program's first half. The playful, fascinating piece found dancers Monica Rodero and Daniel Schuchart in constant, always shifting physical contact.

The evening closed with "Carried Away," a captivating piece choreographed by Loewen in collaboration

with the company. Moving to the sounds of two saxophones, ranging from Baroque music to extended techniques, Kraker, Rodero, Schuchart and Yeng Vang-Strath slipped in and out of the spotlight, in solo and ensemble scenes, in movement that felt inspired by, if not completely improvised to, the music.

IF YOU GO

Wild Space's "Reckless Wonders" will be repeated at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Stiemke Studio Theater, 108 E. Wells St. For ticket information, call the Rep box office at (414) 224-9490.

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