

Brave, beautiful magic

DANCE

One Flat Thing, Reproduced

The Courtyard, State Theatre Centre of WA
REVIEW NINA LEVY



Twenty metal-rimmed tables carve the State Theatre Centre Courtyard into grid formation. It's a landscape of narrow corridors, shiny surfaces and sharp corners.

Over 20 minutes, 14 dancers will turn this inhospitable installation into a colourful jungle of interweaving limbs and catapulting bodies.

This is Strut Dance's production of William Forsythe's seminal dance work, *One Flat Thing, Reproduced*,

first presented by Frankfurt Ballet in 2000.

In Perth, it has been remounted by Forsythe's repetiteurs Cyril Baldy and Ayman Harper, performed by a collection of independent dancers from around Australia and New Zealand.

Although *One Flat Thing, Reproduced* is part of a larger Forsythe work, inspired by Robert Scott's doomed South Pole expedition, it stands alone with verve. Set to Thom Willems' eerie, icy electronic soundscape, the piece sees the dancers navigate the prison of tables and one another.

Moving variously solo, in pairs or larger groups and under, over and in between tables, the dancers dive, swing, roll and clatter perilously close

to sharp edges. While the choreography is tightly detailed and dancers frequently perform in fast and precise unison or interwoven with other bodies, there are also elements of improvisation.

Thus the dancers are highly dependent on one another for cues. A slowly fanning leg may signal everyone to mimic that pace, a call of "Go" might trigger a break into a new section.

Quite simply, this work is magic to watch.

The tables form a kind of ocean; the dancers pierce its surface, they dive beneath it. That sense of danger is compelling, too.

The movement is so expansive, so luxurious — it doesn't appear to take account



Dancers navigate the prison of tables. Picture: Paul Selwyn Norton

of hard surfaces or sharp edges.

And so, though the audience is invited to "roam" as the work is performed and watch it from different angles, on the night viewed it seemed no one moved a muscle. We were all, I think, transfixed.

To the dancers, I simply say this. You astounded me with your bravery and beauty.

To anyone who hasn't seen this work, I say, it plays the State Theatre Centre Courtyard until today and it's free. Whatever you do, don't miss it.

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