

# thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Image: Ryne Fuller

## Drill, Dash, Dream

by Julius Ferraro

The Sculpture Courtyard tucked behind the fidget space is a bucolic little surprise. Grassy circles, crumbling walls, climbing vines, large wooden tables in the shapes of the boles they were cut from. A meandering indoor space with dusty glass doors.

As the sun goes down and late summer twilight creeps into the garden, it's all wonderment and exploration, surprise and nostalgia, and a striking location for *wise norlina*, a compilation of works by three choreographers, Stacy Collado, Kat J. Sullivan (a writer for thINKingDANCE), and Hillary Pearson. Throughout the dances, they foreground various expressions and fears from childhood.

Part one starts off with that standard-bearer of children's dance recitals (and oddly refracted sexuality), *Lollipop* by the Chordettes. The dancers wear bright white undershirts which barely reach the elastic band of their gleaming tighty whities. The choreography is teasing and sharp, flowing, active limbs extending from stiff spines. The dancers stick out their tongues at us.

Jamin Freas approaches Sullivan, who is lying on the ground. He lifts her knees and crooks one over the other, then rolls them to the side, forcing an emotionless gesture of coyness.

Lollipop ends and is replaced by Glenn Kotche's drill-like *Drumkit Quartet No. 1*. As its deliberate rhythms rap out, the dancers dehumanize. Sullivan plants her palms in her armpits, elbows akimbo, and crooks her legs slightly. The performers scuttle like roaches into distant areas of the garden and perform jerky movements at the edge of our vision, even as we crane our necks. Do we follow? Two dancers hold hands and walk coolly out the main gate together.

Part two. The gallery is a gutted, brick, barn-like space, with a vaulted ceiling and heavy beams. This dance begins as a handful of cold movements done in order, but out of sync, by five performers. A dancer runs and throws herself onto her knees - oof - onto the

concrete, good thing she's wearing kneepads. She arches her back dramatically, her arms out in straight lines diagonally back from her shoulders, her neck thrown back. Staring up and back at the ceiling, almost worshipfully, she jerks a little left, a little right, a little left. Her eyes are wide and animal-like as they gaze upwards and back.

Underneath this is Alarm Will Sound's *Blue Calx*. Melancholy strings meander like ivy over insistent, rapping, rhythmic fours. Falling over this is a less rhythmic, more intuitive, hollow thudding, like cannon shots, or some chaotic thing pounding on the wall.

Part three is a long race around the gallery between a child dancer and an adult. No matter how hard the child runs, she falls behind. This goes on for so long, with nothing dancier about the circular run, that we start to see it for what it is: an exhausting relay, an impossible attempt to keep up.

*wise norlina*, Stacy Collado, Hillary Pearson, and Kat J. Sullivan, Sculpture Courtyard, September 18-24,

<http://fringearts.com/event/wise-norlina-2/>

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