

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Lora Allen

Infinite Unfolding

by Kat J. Sullivan

I need you to feel this with me, not just picture it. Feeling it is key.

Midway through *bloom*, Andrea Lanzetti is sitting, like you might be right now, in a stark white chair towards the back left corner of the stage. She faces the corner, too. A light underneath the chair illuminates her long neck, tan shirt, and her black pant legs blossoming in layers like tulips. After a series of unbridled duets and a solo that has her spinning infinitely with blithe control, I see sweat pooling in crescents under her arms.

Lanzetti is breathing heavily while she recovers, as perhaps you are too at this moment; or maybe you are not.

Ashley Lippolis and CrystalNicole, meanwhile, gambol around each other on the floor with the fluidity of water, catching and releasing one another. Lippolis rolls to the left and reaches her arms around to catch CrystalNicole in the exact moment she collapses: not exactly saving her, but simultaneously arriving where she is.

(Are you there with me? Do you feel that?)

And when Lippolis pikes her legs up, balancing on the back of her shoulders, and CrystalNicole lies behind her with her shins parallel to floor; when Lippolis bends her legs and her shins find CrystalNicole's, and as she collapses to her side Lippolis's legs slide across her and *Lippolis ends up on the other side of CrystalNicole*.

This is the moment when I actually thought, *Holy shit*, and my own legs twitched in my seat, trying to feel that movement—to meet up in the perfect place at the perfect time, to fall together, to not so much be received as to be greeted.

This is the source of incredibility; the delicious kinesthetic puzzle falling into place. I do not know if choreographer Lora Allen is able to impart this movement quality to others or if she finds others with similar dispositions (likely some of both); regardless, her choreography rolls. It unfolds. One movement leads directly into the next without a seam, perfectly placed so a leg swinging around means being where a head lands, and where the body curls to be trundled onto a lap, and where one thing is another is another is another.

bloom is the choreographic response to David Ohle's novel *Motorman*; though, as the program asserts, *bloom* is not about *Motorman*. The dance is the feeling of being in your body while reading the book, of feeling the movement of the words kinesthetically; of one thing flowing into another, of plotless continuity. The flow of Allen's choreography sometimes veers unexpectedly in counterintuitive directions and yet, somehow, everything falls into place in the only way it could have.

I want you not just to imagine but to feel in your own body what it would be like to sit on the floor with your legs out in front of you and circle your right arm from overhead out to your side, and just when your wrist is reaching shoulder height another body leans just into the nook you didn't realize you were even creating, and the weight of you both leads you down.

Or to feel what it would be like to arrive in a lift, not without effort but without anticipation, someone's arms hooked behind your knees, curling you into a ball or bud off their chest, and suddenly pausing in that moment feels like a strange jolt, oddly disorienting amidst the cascade and the course.

To feel everything, in each moment, aligning into the next.

bloom, Lora Allen, Christ Church Neighborhood House, February 25-26th, 2017. <http://www.philadelphiadance.org/calendar/?eID=9031>

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