



To Performing Arts Dept. Dance assessment report. D F Hooper.

Venue. Dundee Rep Theatre.

Title. Scottish Dance Theatre Autumn Tour 2002.

Type. 3 evening performances. Thurs, Frid, Sat 19, 20, 21 Sept.

✓ Date of visit Friday Sept 20th.

✓ Size of Company. 8 dancers. 4 men & 4 women of varied experience in this unique company directed by Janet Smith. Two dances, one from last year, 'Inside Somewhere' (Sean Feldman) & a new work, 'Revenge of the impossible things' (Tom Roden & Pete Shenton) Performance approx 1½ hours with interval.

Choreography, Standard & technique. follows.

Music. Good sound facilities. Recordings used, & dancers' spoken dialogue in second piece.

✓ Design. First dance Blue Background with large circle & leafy projection onto back wall and floor rear centre stage. Flight of steps up left rear corner. Second dance. Clear stage.

✓ Technical. Perhaps both choreographers could enrich the audience experience with fuller use of coloured lighting. This enhances the aesthetic quality of the dance and provides subtle changes effecting the dancers costume colours as part of the visual experience for audience appreciation. Within a fully equipped theatre maximal use should be made of lighting potential to enrich & colour dance as a performing art form.

✓ Size of audience. About ½ full on this second evening of three. Mixed audience with many youthful dance enthusiasts. Dundee Rep enjoys an enthusiastic dance following at all levels in the local area, educationally, and recreationally.

✓ Management of event. This is a well managed theatre with full services and a well informed helpful staff.

✓ Information. Programme provides explicit quality of information with cast list etc. enclosed.

✓ Publicity. Advance publicity in local papers, mailing list, and leaflets of season of plays, other touring groups. etc.

✓ Accessibility. Booking easily made by phone. Location in city centre which can limit nearby parking spaces.

✓ Disability issues. Former problems solved with lottery funding

✓ Customer service. Friendly, helpful, and courteous throughout. Excellent restaurant also available.

CS / JS / PE / BB / LM

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Artistic Assessment.

Inside somewhere. Ch. Sean Feldman.
For a guest artist to be able to work with these excellent young dancers is a privilege. Over the time I have been to see The Scottish Dance Theatre it has been obvious that Janet Smith has developed the professionalism of her company. Sean Feldman has been able to draw upon their talents.

The yellow, orange, brown, and mauve costumes enabled the viewers to realise the changes of partners and groups which were so fluidly carried out. Such sensitivity of touch and relationships projected with excellent quality were a delight to see. Motifs included delicate arabesques, spins and turns, with spectacular lifts. The footwork and floor work conveyed a total exhibition of technical mastery. Variations of pace, with the sound effects and the constant interchanges produced a total experience of beautiful sensitive flowing relationships between the dancers.

Nothing was predictable for the audience, but for me having seen this last season my comments then still hold. More use of the creative potential of the props (Spinning cycle wheel and an old boot) could have been taken by the choreographer. But this was really an excellent performance by these young dancers even though some are newcomers since last year.

'Revenge of the Impossible Things' Directors (not choreographers) Tom Roden & Pete Shenton of New Art Club.

This was programmed as Dance Theatre. It presented as a brainstorming session by the dancers who spoke to the audience to share their imaginative ideas on a number of random thoughts.

Unfortunately it was not a choreographed dance which one was expecting from SDT. The audience were amused and entertained by this presentation but it was not Dance of the quality expected from this company. It was naive, frivolous, random theatre (in that it was on a stage). That it was mutually enjoyed by dancers and audience was probable, but it seemed more like a creativity session such as one would enjoy as a participant in a community worker's recreative activity class. Perhaps the two directors concept of the genre of dance differs from mine, but this was not Dance to suit the exceptional and expressive abilities of Janet Smith's company of young dancers. She should take care lest her dancers adopt this sort of trivial entertainment as worthy of their professional aspirations and abilities. Any Art form relies on taking an idea or theme and working on it to bring aesthetic value to it so that it may be appreciated. None of the creative ideas in this developed much value as an art form and Dance is a performing art first and foremost, as well as being educational, recreational, and therapeutic. I was quite disappointed by this being presented as worthy of the company it was far beneath their excellent standards.