

REVIEWS

Unique Touch Crew

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Large Cast and a Small Stage

Jimmy Lusero's and Lauren Beale's Unique Touch Crew is presenting a work, "Funeral For Yesterday," in the Boulder Dairy Center for the Arts East Theatre this week, as part of the 2007 Boulder International Fringe Festival. With a cast of about ten musicians and dancers, a keyboard, a drum set, a huge bass, and a large array of props the work literally overflows the teeny East Theatre stage. In costumes that include everything from white faces to a Batman mask and cape, the cast becomes an underworld society dedicated to getting rid of yesterday, but which seems to have uncertain plans for tomorrow. Several songs by Lusero ("Master of Ceremonies" and "Death") are designed to reveal the work's intention and story. Unfortunately the lyrics of those songs are lost in the terrible East Theatre acoustics, and the din of loud music.

The Thursday August 23rd performance was saved by Beale's ("Yesterday") incredible movement capabilities – she can say more with one hand than many dancers can with a whole body solo – and choreography Beale set on herself, Linda White ("Madam Death"), Mikey Mestas ("Death's Assistant"), and "Underworld Nymphs" Mimi Ferrie, Caroline McCauley, and Leslie Merrill. "Tomorrow" never seemed to arrive, other than in the cast's imagination. Long battles between the cast and Beale went on way too long, and Beale's choreography was way too short. That did not seem to phase a friendly and appreciative audience, most of whom submitted 3X5 cards telling what they wanted buried during the show. With some serious editing, and if placed in a proper theatre, this piece could really work.

Of special note was a solo by Beale in which her every move was initiated by touches of another dancer. In that solo Beale's movements said more than the whole rest of the show. "Funeral For yesterday" will be presented one more time on Saturday August 25th at 8:00 PM. If you go you will get to see a group have great fun, even in death.

Donald K. Atwood MFA, Ph.D. atwood@worlddancereviews.com

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