

**The Land of Yes & The Land of No**  
**Wednesday 19 October**

**Duration** 70 min

**Choreographer** Rafael Bonachela

**Ezio Bosso** Composer

**Alan MacDonald** Production Designer

**Theo Clinkard** Costume Designer

**Guy Hoare** Lighting Designer

Artistic Director of the Sydney Dance Company, Rafael Bonachela's creation *The Land of Yes and The Land of No* opened tonight to a warm reception. As it was stated at the after party this choreography was Bonachela's audition piece for his job application to be Artistic Director of the Sydney Dance Company. The work having first performed for the Bonachela Dance Company in 2009 is a strong testimony of his style and choreographic commitment to his craft.

Sitting in the front row, I marveled at the fitness level of these outstanding dancers going through the repetitive paces at such speed and grace. The choreography begins in silence with one beautiful performer CharmeneYap extending her languid limbs and rolling through a liquid repetition of movement before the music begins.

The composer Ezio Bosso's score is at times very Philip Glass in style yet more melodic and very captivating always taking the audience from adagio to crescendo in a matter of minutes and back again. Only one piece towards the end of the work included a non descriptive vocal element that was performed with such beauty by dancer Richard Cilli, almost seemed out of context with the rest of the score.

The patterns and pathways within the choreography represented the ebb and flow of life, sometimes stopping and starting again to join forces with different people at different intervals. A par-de duex or a group of 3 or 4, then an explosion of all the dancers passing, crossing each other only to stop and freeze, maybe glance and move on. Bonachela's interest in traffic signs and how they direct our everyday lives in different ways without our notice was represented in these short dance sequences along with the set design by Alan Macdonald who had symmetrically neon light tubes turning on and off creating the mood and shapes within the cityscape.

The complex choreography was supported by the simple yet stylised costumes designed by Theo Clinkard who often works in Opera and other dance companies in Europe. Each performer had their own cream outfit which reflected the society that they may have belonged in a future world. The soft fabric many with sunray pleats were romantic yet very modern, the dancers I believe would feel very comfortable in them.

*The Land of Yes and The Land of No* is a relentless 70 minutes of strong dancing by an excellent cast of performers who have been grilled by the dance Director Amy Hollingsworth - was it a yes or a no? I believe a yes, although many audience members I spoke to wanted more emotion, more balance between the dancers technical excellence and emotional well being that was void in this style of choreography.

Perhaps this void of really getting to know the personalities in *The Land of Yes and The Land of No* was intentional. I hope this future world offers a little more. Never the less a great chance to see this fine company of artists perform a slick piece of artistry within 70 minutes at the Sydney Theatre venue with time to linger over a pino grigio at Hickson Road Bistro to cap off the night.