

PROPELARTS – REVIEW 15 April 2009

moonwebs & scorched thongs – Review

By Lisette Kaleveld

Moonwebs belong to mystical and timeless worlds; scorched thongs conjure the warm freedom of a well-trodden summer.

I'm not sure what's behind title exactly, but this contemporary dance by STEPS Youth Dance Company is certainly apt at hooking the imagination, on all levels.

Fifteen girls and 15 boys between 13 and 20 years old perform this youthful celebration of gender.

In the opening scene a man in coat tails and a woman in a scarlet dress of old world style stand upright, rigid and elegant in their roles. In the background, undifferentiated forms, bodies dressed in white roll across the floor. This tide of bodies moving in one direction across the stage is a pattern that will be repeated throughout the performance. Each time it's slightly different in pace, beat and tone, but it's always a mesmerising effect. There's a sense of progress and movement in time.

Some scenes in the performance, like the school bus ride, are fun and playful, directly human. Others hold a stillness and otherworldliness. The contrast keeps me wanting to see more.

Costuming is playful and symbolic. Men and women explore their own gender stereotypes with traditional elements like coat tails and hoop skirts, reinterpreted in sharp blacks and whites.

As is STEPS tradition, all the young dancers were central to the choreography and/or the ideas behind the moves. The result was a sincere colourful performance that anyone would enjoy.