

Bateman Reviews

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FLUENCY

'BECOMNG NICARAGUAN'

There is a freshness and comic grace to the way in which Peter Chin inhabits a stage, qualities that infuse his work with a grand mixture of intellect and theatrical flair, giving his choreography, and the narratives contained within, a bright, bubbling brilliance, sprinkled with moments of sheer elegance. These qualities, through the presence of Chin himself, open his most recent creation and never falter from beginning to end. Through a mixture of astute cultural self-awareness and scrutiny, *Fluency*, as a kind of self-parody of Chin's own experience as a cultural tourist of sorts, never takes itself too seriously, and by doing so delivers a very serious and a very entertaining piece of dance theatre that flirts with the notion of the viability and significance of the artist within a complex global environment. A mixture of video images, projected text, and mock interviews lend a triumphant brand of eclecticism to the work, and enlighten audiences regarding the actual mechanics of being an artist in a world often overwhelmed by technology, diplomacy, and the fine art of keeping one's art alive, well, and funded.

At the heart of the piece is a fervent desire to actually embody the cultural and emotional depths that Chin has attempted to interrogate in his career as a dancer/theatre artist who gives himself completely to each new physical and emotional narrative that he encounters. Chin's artistic team rises to the challenge of bringing this multicultural vision into sharp focus as they all skillfully take on the intricate, nuanced movements that Chin himself enacts throughout, providing a consistent stylistic motif that holds the overall work together as a beautiful *mélange* of various dance theatre forms.

Alison Denham, Billy Marchenski, and Maria Constanza Guzmán bring a strength of character to roles that run the gamut from impassioned academic, engaged dancer striving to bring the choreographer's vision to life, and self-aggrandizing television host who consistently injects cultural arrogance into the mix. By placing themselves within this complex narrative in a variety of physical and textual vignettes, they become an extension of Chin's vision as they subtly relate their movement to his intellect and his physical presence. Marchenski, in particular, brings a superb blend of acting and agile, fluid physicality together as he embodies the most parodic character of the bunch with his quirky asides and physical innuendo as the ever editorializing talk show host.

Ultimately, the idea of 'becoming Nicaraguan,' the central catch phrase of the piece, reveals multitudes about an ever evolving global village, and the ways in which we relate to each other on an ongoing basis as citizens of a world moving too quickly to contain us all within one viable setting. Elements of parody, dance, theatre and cultural theory fluently inhabit *Fluency* in a truly enlightening, thought provoking, and entertaining manner.

Fluency ran at the Enwave Theare- Harborfront, November 3-5, 2011

Posted by david bateman at [5:34 PM](#)