Communication is a complex beast. Context and interpretation is everything, and director/choreographer Lucy Guerin offers up a solid exploration of this concept — with an incredibly current twist — in the immersive fascination that is *Conversation Piece*, currently playing at Belvoir St Theatre.

Part dance, part theatre, part performance art, *Conversation Piece* is a cast of three dancers and three actors, and that’s the only real certainty in any given night. At the beginning of the piece the actors improvise an eight minute conversation, which they record onto iPhones — the central device that controls not only the sound, but forward movement of the show. This off-the-cuff discussion governs the rest of the entire piece as it is distorted, played back, and transposed into different social situations.

It’s surprisingly engaging. On Friday night the topics included hipsters, how hairy (or hairless) we have become as a society, birthmarks and extraneous nipples, and all the “ums” and “likes” that pepper spontaneous speech. It was an interesting, fun conversation — like eavesdropping on a group of friends at a house party or out to lunch — but transported into one-sided conversations (like theatre darling Ali taking one voice from the recording and turning it an overheard phone call) suddenly the eavesdropping, and the talking points themselves, are taken to a whole new level.

Interspersed with dance, communal making, seduction, and a brilliant psychological dressing-down all dictated by the same three-way, eight-minute, on the spot invented and recorded script, we are treated to a true exploration of the evolution of meaning through a snapshot of language.

Each performer is given their own spotlight, and that’s one of the great things about *Conversation Piece* — it challenges the actors dance, but no one camp is
And it’s such a strong ensemble: Matthew Whittet with his curiously boyish demeanour; Harriet Ri difficult to take my eyes off her); the likable Rennie McDougall, who delivered with charm in the op Macindoe with clean lines, grace in an Adidas tracksuit; Megan Holloway, open-hearted, the vulner born for stages and takes to dance-hybrid performance as well as she does classical and contemp:

“This is such a great example of theatre and performance as a living and growing artform, as evolution, as a mirror to society”

This is a piece that you could see over and over because every night and performance as a living and growing artform, as evolution, as a either. It’s so refreshing to go to the theatre and see something new. how it’s altering our communication, but rather introduces those ch

Conversation Piece is life in the moment, this moment, captured fle

Topics Mentioned:
Alison Bell, Belvoir St Theatre, Conversation Piece, Lucy Guerin

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