It is said that no disaster occurs from one mistake, omission or event, rather it is a series of errors that builds to tragedy.

The achievement of Structure and Sadness in transferring this sequence into dance is no small feat, choreographer Lucy Guerin managing to sympathetically reflect on such a catastrophe with originality and genuine emotion.

Based on Melbourne’s West Gate Bridge disaster of 1970, in which 35 men died when part of the span collapsed, the work reaches deeply into the stresses of the physical structure and to the grief of those near it.

Six dancers manage to reach new levels of line and form surrounded by unique staging and lighting brilliant for its simplicity and effect.

Tension builds throughout the hour-long performance, with the construct emerging more powerfully with every passing minute. A growing house of cards - the longevity of which everyone wonders - mirrors the fragility of the builders' labors. When the house collapses the dancers transfer their energies to exploring the aftermath and its consequence.

There are some wonderful interludes. The portrayal of balance, so central to dance as well as the huge forces at play in construction, is beautifully executed in a series of scenes.

This is a clever, thoughtful piece. It reaches its audience through device but more meaningfully with inspired movement that reveals the delicate thread between life and death.

Structure and Sadness was well received and deservedly so. It clearly is a work which has taken enormous devotion for all concerned. And it tells us nothing can stop the stress of fate.

Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House, until January 12

$25
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