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## Contemporary Flamenco @ Riverside Theatres

Rebecca Varidel  
6th May 2016  
[Arts & Entertainment Features](#)

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The intimate space of the Lennox Theatre Riverside Parramatta hosted a fascinating new double bill of contemporary dance last night.

Before interval dancer and choreographer Annalouise Paul presented us with her inspirational modernism and minimalism forged between her backgrounds of contemporary dance and flamenco. In expecting the clicking heels and correctness of a straight unmoving body in flamenco, we were wrong.

"Forge is a metaphor for the human soul that is beaten and shaped through life." And in forge Annalouise Paul presents us with her imagery of two dimensions then moves us into a three dimensional world that explores sound and how the body responds to it. During the performance the versatility of her costume, with her facial expressions arm body and leg movements, creates new images that wrap her structured improvisational dance.

Acclaimed flamenco dancer Pepa Molina has recently returned to her country of birth Australia after 23 years in Spain. In this magnificent new contemporary work Bush Bailando, Pepe Molina merges her heritage with traditional and contemporary flamenco dance. When asked about the use of clarinet and saxophone with flamenco guitar she explained that the woodwind was inspired by the Australian diggeridoo but she thought its use would be disrespectful.

Beginning her post-interval performance the barefoot Pepa Molina explores the stage to bush sounds before fastening her shoes. At times we are treated to only percussion, sometimes provided by Molina herself as she clicks her fingers or castanets. Or even clicks her Spanish cane as a third leg. At times she is accompanied by one or both musicians, Marco Van Doornum (Flamenco guitarist) and Stuart Vandergraaff (wind instrumentalist). The musicians also provide space for Molina for a number of costume changes from vested black to daring red. Her dress performance is complete with long trains of frills, swished and swirled to the beat. Her heels click. And when she lifts her long dress so we can observe them we watch in awe. And as the final sounds of her performance return to the bush we close with her clicking heels and the nearly percussive laugh of the Australian kookaburra.

Molina plans to turn her inspired contemporary flamenco choreography Bush Bailando into a longer work later this year following her return dance work in Spain where she is well known.

Forge and Bush Bailando will be performed at the Riverside Theatres again tonight and tomorrow night.

Photo credit: Heidrun Lohr

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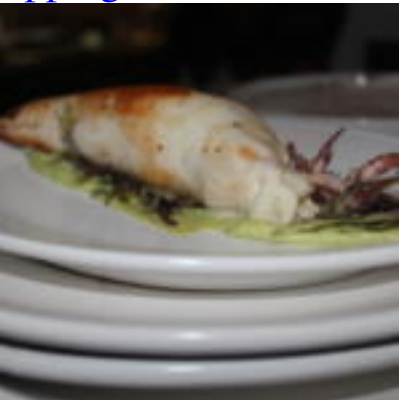
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