

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD - June 25, 2005

Five Short Solos - By Jill Sykes

Five Short Solos

De Quincey Co

Performance Space, June 23 Until July 3

These five short solos run side by side in a corridor and two small galleries divided to make them half the size. It is claustrophobic, occasionally smelly and to varying degrees confronting.

Only eight people are allowed into each space. Tacky music plays when it is time to move on to the next one. After an hour and 15 minutes you have seen them all. And you may wonder what has hit you.

You have probably decided by now whether this is for you. If you are still thinking about it, be encouraged. *Five Short Solos* is a De Quincey Co presentation that will be talked about for years.

Part of the strangeness of it all is that everyone is audible in such a small area. As you absorb one performance you can hear the one you have left and the one you are going to. They impinge on what is in front of you - and mostly offer a different impression from the one they made when you were there. Audience reaction is unexpected, too: the people behind us laughed more than we did.

Director Tess de Quincey has produced an experience of movement theatre that is not quite like anything else, while shaping five performances of individuality - despite some being more obviously reliant on elements of butoh-based Body Weather techniques.

The senior performer, Peter Fraser, is outstanding for the way he has moved beyond this foundation into an expressive world of his own. He transforms body, mind and emotions in a riveting performance based on water. He laughs and cries, and carries you with him on his roller-coaster journey.

Tom Davies is developing a similar ability to transform himself, assisted here by a pile of dirt and a barrel. Victoria Hunt digs for Maori memories in the earth and sky. Linda Luke emerges from under a rock to explore extremes of violence and lyricism. Kristina Harrison unpacks her urban identities.