



## DANCE

# TESS DE QUINCEY'S MOONDANCE @ HOLY TRINITY CHURCH ERSKINEVILLE

September 13, 2015; JUDITH GREENAWAY;



It is fitting that there was no moon tonight. Moonlight gently touches the skin on late nights in the backyard staring up. It glares in the sky when full and ahead of you travelling west to home. That great rich object makes me feel small and earth bound. I still feel small but tonight MOONDANCE has allowed me that slight levitation above what binds. Like a tide pulled in a predictable pattern, I have been lifted.

Choreographed and interpreted by **Tess de Quincey** this acclaimed dancework brings

together the photographs of **Vsevolod Vlaskine**, animated into video by **Samuel James** with original audio by **Vic McEwan**. The work is described in the program as a 'synaesthesia – the stimulation of one cognitive pathway leads to the automatic, involuntary experience in a second cognitive or sensory pathway.' But its blending of terrestrial and celestial was a visceral experience for me.

Beginning as a cocoon of earth coloured coat and cowl, de Quincy is a speck on the floor in the upstage throw of a low lumen projector. A black dot: fuzzy, blurred, shapeless appears up high on the other side of the light path. As it disappears momentarily, only to return in a new form somewhere else, the audio is distant and yet present. It could be thunder, or bombs falling or perhaps the scratch of static indicates that it is just its own echo over cosmic distance. The dots become lines and brush strokes which could be kana.

The coat, the cowl and the artist within, writhe into invisibility as the shadow takes the attention of the viewer. It is only just bigger than the creature, it does not dwarf. It simply manifests the insignificance of the corporeal. When the audio gently elides into an electronic ring like a tuning fork surround, the twitching thing arrives centre stage and single blue lines appear over and behind.

The blue will dominate the rest of the performance as the lines create pulses and meshes to pervade the space. The audio will become recognizably musical before the noise of the spheres subsumes Shinto temple bells and jackhammer staccato what could be a distant call of birdsong. The dancer's face will flicker into light between her spasmodic fingers just before she turns to watch the growth of that shadow.

De Quincy is a practitioner of **BodyWeather**, a dance form which explores extremities and emphasises images. The craft is evident as limbs and torso are also lifted in extreme and static poses but the shapes sculpt the emotional responses in the same way that Butoh performances pierce rather than hit the emotions.

When the performance is concluding, the fuzzy, blurred shapeless dots are back. They are white when all else is dark and the artist is consumed by a circle of light and a loud electronic crackle. I felt dropped back to stability from the immersive experience which is MOONDANCE. Had there been a real moon would have looked pale and watery.