

Holding Space

Clore Studio, Royal Opera House, London

June 28-29

Choreographer: Jacky Lansley

Producer: ROH2

Cast includes: Sandra Conley, Fergus Early

Running time: 55mins

To selected movements from Franz Schubert's late piano sonatas, beautifully played by Philip Gammon, Jacky Lansley brings a most interesting work to the third stage of the Royal Opera House. The classic structure of Schubert is a slightly enigmatic backing for a work which explores how seemingly insignificant gestures have both expressive meaning and eloquence.

The choreographic vocabulary hints at both gesture and movement from the baroque period as well as the latest contemporary dance moves. It is an exercise in perception too as one is invited to consider how a change in viewing a position altered one's understanding of it rather like walking round a sculpture. It is not just the object but also the surrounding space holding it which forms part of the artistic whole. The choreography is well balanced between the use of the floor and ariel steps, fast-moving sections and slow moments, angular arm movements and more rounded, delicate fluidity together with some visual jokes.

Of the pleasing group of artists, the most polished and deeply musical are Sandra Conley, an ex-principal of the Royal Ballet, and Fergus Early, another ex-RB dancer and founder of Green Candle Dance Company. Robin Eun-ha Jung has a joyous, strong, fluid technique that is a delight to watch. Gareth Farley, Tania Tempest-Hay and Lucy Tuck complete this group of capable performers.

Gavin Roebuck