

## Dance

**Jacky Lansley**

Clare Studio, London

★★★★☆

Choreographer Jacky Lansley has an eclectic professional history spanning some 30 years. Her new work,  *Holding Space*, brings together six diverse performers, ranging from 61-year-old Sandra Conley, a former Royal Ballet principal, to Lucy Tuck, with a background in musical theatre, and actor Gareth Farley. It is a measure of Lansley's experience that this gem coheres so well while preserving its performers' individuality.

The choreography is pegged closely to the music — movements from Schubert's haunting late piano sonatas, played live by Philip Gammon. The opening episode combines steps and turns with simple arm gestures to form uncluttered, open phrases. The second section spirals around Conley and Tania Tempest-Hay, who seem like different ages of the same woman, or perhaps a daughter following her mother's footsteps. Tempest-Hay swirls passionately, leaning into and striking against Farley; their counterparts Conley and Fergus Early reflect the moves like an older, wiser echo.

The third and fourth sections become more character-driven, the dancers donning hats and coats, "presenting" themselves as performers before withdrawing in puzzlement, consulting books as if these could explain why they're there. Finally they strip back to the white costumes they wore to begin with, melting back to their unadorned selves.

Just as Schubert's music "holds" the silence between its notes, so the choreography holds the spaces between the dancers — and it's those gaps that tug at our imaginations.

**Sanjoy Roy**