

the village

# VOICE

BY DEBORAH JOWITT

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KOOSIL-JA HWANG'S press kit is held together by nuts and bolts and covered in bubble wrap. An apt metaphor for her imaginative-ness and the combined fragility and toughness of her ideas, it doesn't provide many clues to her often stunning but inscrutable *Memoryscan*. But then, as a theme, "memory" is dandily permissive, able without apology to process fragments of personal and cultural history belonging to the choreographer and collaborating performers: Mary Spring, Margaret Hallisey, Kathryn Sanders, and Michael Portnoy. Live video (by Benton Bainbridge), prerecorded video (by Caspar Stracke), music (by Hwang), and lighting (by Carol Mullins) compound the hallucinatory fervor of images and words. Since these are memories, we don't have to bother wondering what it means when Portnoy lip-synchs Jerry Lewis on the loose in an executive suite (in the film *Errand Boy*), or becomes a cow for Hallisey to look at askance. We can enjoy the curiousness of Hallisey singing an Irish song in a high, windy voice, her face pressed to a pane of glass held by Spring and Sanders.

Screened images dance with live ones. When Spring sits and tilts her head or bends forward, the filmed autumn woodland behind her tips in sync with her altering perspective. Events combine weirdly. Sanders give what turns out to be a golf lesson while Hallisey wanders about punctuating it with little beeps. Portnoy delivers a whacked-out lecture on the avant-garde, referring to the "Pina Bausch Conservatory for Flower Arrangements," and vowing intensely, "I will not change the floor for the ceiling." Spring and Sanders as unruly kids (little outfits pinned to their fronts) act up at a family dinner; Dad (Portnoy) keels over, and Mom (Hallisey) returns pregnant and stepdances barefoot. A seemingly tender trio for the women becomes less so when you realize two are manipulating the third by her head.

Watching *Memoryscan* is like flipping through a family album of people's dreams. Not much binds them together, but what pictures! ▣