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## THE Arts

### *A Kaleidoscope of Bodies in a Continually Changing Crowd*

The word “crowd” brings immediate images to mind: furious protesters, exhausted refugees and, now, trapped concertgoers. Throughout his career, the veteran choreographer Tere O'Connor has been waging a vehement battle against assigning meaning to dance. But in “The Goodbye Studies,” he veers toward it — on his own terms.

**GIA  
KOURLAS**  
**DANCE  
REVIEW**

In this new work, being performed by 12 stellar dancers at the Kitchen, Mr. O'Connor makes the idea of the crowd his subject. Even so, individuals are discernible throughout, and meaning, formulated by Mr. O'Connor's uncanny sense of structure, is attained not from story but from

#### *Finding meaning in sensation, not story.*

sensation. You watch, you listen to the steps, you wait: Inevitably, among the fragments — some soft and fuzzy, others jagged — a picture emerges.

Mr. O'Connor's crowd builds slowly. Lauren Vermilion, looking angelic in a printed romper, is the first to appear. She pads onto the stage, stands and shifts slightly before exiting and returning. Others follow her pattern until the stage is full of performers, looking out with expressions that signal gradations of empathy, dread and hope.

Without mirroring each other, Eleanor Hullihan and Tess Dworoman are a support system as they drift side by side, with brushing feet and drifting arms; later, Lily Gold and Oisín Mona-

*“The Goodbye Studies” runs through Saturday at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, Manhattan; 212-255-5793, Ext. 11; [thekitchen.org](http://thekitchen.org).*



PAULA COURT

**The Goodbye Studies** Oisín Monaghan, foreground, with Michael Ingle and Lauren Vermilion in this new work by Tere O'Connor, being performed by 12 dancers at the Kitchen.

ghan, caught in an embrace, roll on the floor as the others watch — fondly, casually — from the side. In other moments, dancers cross the stage in steely demipoint walks, as if wearing invisible high heels, or prance in profile. Mr. O'Connor's constantly

unfolding scenes have the feel of a needle dropping randomly on a record; it's the same band but different songs.

Like floating particles, the dancers converge and scatter through Mr. O'Connor's deft pathways: Duets and trios sud-

denly morph into loops and clusters. While the meditative grandeur of “The Goodbye Studies” is occasionally broken with moments that border on camp — as when the dancers lean forward and open their mouths in dismay — harmony is found in

its ever-changing structure.

The rich lighting by Michael O'Connor (he is not related to the choreographer) shifts subtly, so that the space can appear empty or confined. And while James Baker's crackling score is enhanced with a mostly under-

stated mix of sounds — birds, bells, a choir — the choreography, which already has a rhythm to its swirling patterns and purposeful steps, could be shown in silence. “The Goodbye Studies” is a dark beauty, and it doesn't need any distractions.