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Many Shades Of Sorcery

Jen Rosenblit's "a Natural dance" induces a kind of morning-after haziness, its images revisiting you in the hours after you've seen it like scenes from a

fitful dream. None of it quite makes sense: Why is Justin Cabrillos wearing that "Where's Waldo" costume? What are Effie

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**DANCE
REVIEW**

Bowen and Addys Gonzalez doing with all of those microphones? What is the meaning of this monologue about colors?

These episodes don't add up. And they probably aren't meant to. Given full rein at the Kitchen's black box theater, where "a Natural dance" had its premiere on Thursday, Ms. Rosenblit, for her first evening-length work, has come up with something willfully diffuse. Her impetus, to interrogate the adjective in the title — to confront its "implicit paradoxes," says a news release — manifests as an assortment of overlapping

"a Natural dance" continues through Saturday at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, Chelsea; 212-255-5793, thekitchen.org.



ANDREA MOHIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jen Rosenblit Hilary Clark, left, and Ms. Rosenblit, the choreographer, in "a Natural dance," her first evening-length work, at the Kitchen.

studies, each concerned, it seems, with just running its course. I found myself comparing these curiously assembled parts to guests at a party: some arriving uninvited; some overstaying their welcome or making a scene; others leaving without

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saying goodbye.

If, by “natural,” we mean “occurring in nature,” the set design, by Sam Roeck, is anything but. A metal platform adorned with two pink throw pillows, it juts into the first few rows of the audience, serving at one point as an industrial throne where Ms. Rosenblit finds a comfortable seat, the choreographer taking stock of her work.

The first to arrive is Mr. Cabrillos, in all-white, including his high-top sneakers, which squeak against the white floor as he runs toward and away from the audience, a stuttering back and forth that eventually sends him onto the platform. This kind of dogged futility keeps asserting itself. Spinning in place, Mr. Gonzalez sheds his white T-shirt, tosses it, retrieves it and repeats. Later he rearranges a forest of microphones around Ms. Bowen, who languishes beneath them, uttering the puzzling refrain, “Helen, where did you go?”

This comes after her lengthy enumeration of various hues and their uses. She chirps: “65. Daylight Blue. Useful for achieving depressed moods.” When Hilary Clark enters, she and Ms. Rosenblit, like twin sorceresses, gesticulate toward a corner of one wall. The spell refuses to be cast.

Ms. Rosenblit designed the costumes and the sound, which includes violent clashing and her own voice wailing, “Baby.” But it’s her presence as a performer that’s her greatest strength. The way she invests herself in a task is as captivating as how she just lets it go: dangling, incomplete.