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THE Arts

Ennobling Many Forms Of Work And Creation

There is late seating in Adrienne Truscott's "... Too Freedom..." But beware: You may find yourself led onstage for a brief detour before being ushered to your seat. Spotlights may also be involved.

CLAUDIA
LA ROCCO

DANCE
REVIEW

Tardy audience members are just one of the many disparate elements Ms. Truscott is pulling into this roughly hourlong dance, which is having its premiere run at the Kitchen (delayed by Hurricane Sandy-related flooding at this Chelsea space). Other aspects, at least on Saturday night, included the matter-of-fact consumption, by four dancers, of a roast chicken; some recorded and live sound effects by Neal Medlyn; and construction of a three-sided wooden structure by Carmine Covelli and two Spanish-speaking day laborers, Adan Escalante Vazquez and José Manosalvas.

This all sounds humorously quirky, and it is, winningly so. But "... Too Freedom..." is not actually a funny dance, not at its generous and thoughtful core. What's there instead is a quiet exploration of what it is to work, whether your task is to construct a wall or a movement phrase. How does a person in charge (the choreographer, for example) build a constructive, productive space, and how do the workers (dancers, for example) move through that space, completing what needs to be completed while maintaining their own integrity?

And what role does the viewer have? In this dance, which gives a lot of time

and space over to the act of taking in unconnected tasks, the viewer has a lot to choose from — "too freedom," indeed. I kept thinking of John Cage's evergreen definition: "There are things to hear and things to see, and that's what theater is."

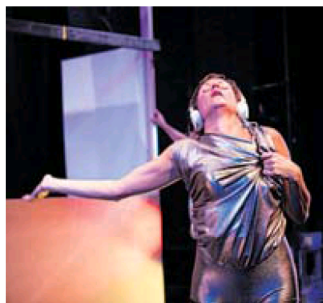
Ms. Truscott is often on her own, aurally isolated by headphones as she zips about the elegantly bare black theater, moving through angled and idiosyncratic phrases with a dogged, even obsessive persistence. Responsibility is a lonely thing. "I just have to stick with this," she seems to be saying, "and trust that something worthwhile will come out of it."

Mr. Medlyn, Mickey Mahar, Laura Sheedy and Gillian Walsh, meanwhile, having dispatched the chicken, try out some of Ms. Truscott's vectorlike movements. It's a pleasure to watch these artists thinking on their feet, finding their ways through spare, sometimes synchronized phrases. (Mr. Mahar was new to me; what a loose-limbed, beautifully ungainly wonder he is.)

There are other things to watch, too: the walls going up, and a trick teapot that pours an endless stream of liquid into a small cup. Carrie Wood's lighting is both subtle and overtly theatrical, including towering light stanchions at the back of the house. The costumes, designed by Larry Krone with Ms. Truscott, make all sorts of neat little conversions through the help of snaps and reversible fabrics. Part of the work's generosity and nimbleness lies in Ms. Truscott's ability to keep all these elements on equal footing without making things seem cluttered. "... Too Freedom..." ends with a sweet, scripted moment (in Spanish) for her and Mr. Manosalvas. He asks if he can go, but Ms. Truscott needs one more thing from her three construction workers: she needs for them to dance.

And so they do. It's simple and beautiful. It's just right.

"... Too Freedom..." runs through Saturday at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, Chelsea; (917) 410-0269, thekitchen.org.



PAULA LOBO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

... Too Freedom... Adrienne Truscott in her new work, which includes building a wall, at the Kitchen.