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THE Arts

The Whiteness of Snow, Reflected in Naked Human Bodies

In Melinda Ring's ambitious new triptych — a dance, "Forgetful Snow," and two daytime performance installations — the subject isn't too difficult to work out. Four white walls,

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DANCE REVIEW
including the risers, are painted a dazzling white. (It's Benjamin Moore's Super White; the fumes linger.) In the center is a plush white carpet. The dancers are nude.

The space is so white and so quiet that you're instantly transported to a place of stillness. It's like looking out the window after a night of heavy snowfall: Time is suspended under a blanket of white.

At the start of "Forgetful Snow," which opened on Thursday night at the Kitchen, the

As the exertion increases, the skin tone turns pink.

dancers Talya Epstein, Maggie Jones and Molly Lieber stand on the carpet, distanced from one another. Another dancer, Lorene Bouboushian, is off to the side. Holding a white board — a little like a ring-card girl in a boxing match — she flaps it up and down, generating a breeze that stirs Ms. Epstein's abundant curls as she stands with her legs crossed and her elbows angled up. Finally, Ms. Epstein collapses backward.

Melinda Ring's triptych of new works will be performed from Wednesday through Saturday at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, Chelsea; 212-255-5793, Ext. 11, or thekitchen.org.



PAULA COURT

Melinda Ring From left, Talya Epstein, Maggie Jones and Molly Lieber in Ms. Ring's "Forgetful Snow," one of three of her works at the Kitchen.

Ms. Lieber's head droops to the right, while Ms. Jones falls on her side, with her legs parted, while reaching an arm behind her back. Like branches weighted with heavy snow, their bodies sag, bend and eventually buckle.

Ms. Ring takes her title from T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," as in "winter kept us warm, covering Earth in forgetful snow." Her primal, corporeal exploration

also extends to two performance installations, "The Landscape" and "(Memory of) Snow Machine," which are shown on performance days from 3 to 6 p.m.

Within this wintry meditation, Ms. Ring juxtaposes the nakedness of snow with the naked body; for a while, the dancers work in isolation: balancing shakily on one leg, lunging deeply while rotating the front knee in

and out, or crumpling onto the carpet. As the rate of exertion increases, the dancers' skin tone becomes tinged with pink. It is, after all, Super White. You can see everything.

The mood shifts as the dancers grab onto one another in fitful bursts of wrestling. They slap skin and run wildly through the space, pausing to hop in messy pas de chats that end in stumbles

yet regain enough momentum to lead into the next elusive gesture.

"Forgetful Snow" can be tedious in parts, especially when the dancers try too hard to work themselves into a state, but the partnering — like unstable snow drifts — is surprising, shifting the room's tone from cool to warm. It's palpable. After the dancers exit the space one by one, the chill returns.