

WW REVIEW: PLACES PLEASE! TEASES & DELIGHTS AT JOE'S PUB

By: Christina Pandolfi
May 7, 2017

As audience members, we're often not privy to dress rehearsals. We don't get to travel behind the scenes and see the inside of a dancer's psyche. But "Places Please!" commissioned by DANCE NOW, broke traditional boundaries in both environment and format. Shown at the legendary Joe's Pub, longtime collaborators Larry Keigwin and Nicole Wolcott treated us all as friends, bringing us into the intimacy and anxiety that drives the creative process. And oh, what fun we all had!

The performance began sweetly and nonchalantly, with Larry and Nicole "rehearsing" and playing off of each other's eccentricities. With playful banter, the two frolicked and twirled, showing off their years of experience and technique with ease. Frequent on-stage costume changes, sustained pirouettes and constant push and pull - both literal and figurative - helped create an entire universe of its own. The pair's comfort lit a spark on stage, bringing to life their individual and shared memories through concentrated movement. And while most of the showcase was funny and zany, including rip-roaring one-liners, period-piece wigs, and sequins, the highlight of the evening was experiencing the artists' vulnerability.

Addressing the audience in an open and honest monologue, Nicole expressed her fears about aging in front of the dance community: what happens when a dancer gets older? What becomes of the mind, body, and spirit when no one tells you it's time to stop? After baring her soul through speech, Nicole let her body do the talking. As if moving through water, her grace propelled every sweep of the arm, pirouette, and cabriole. It was the lone piece in the show where the entire audience quieted completely. And it was a privilege to behold.

Larry's vulnerability took on a different appearance, one of childlike sweetness and nostalgia. His natural exuberance and charisma was infectious as he pranced around the stage and into the audience singing "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats", bathing in the memories of times past. But it's exactly Nicole and Larry's differences, their artistic tension that makes them the perfect fit. And when their individual energies came together in a final celebratory pas de deux, the energy shook the entire room into a frenzy.

"Places Please!" was unlike anything I've ever seen, and I hope to join that party again soon.

Source: <https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/BWW-Review-PLACES-PLEASE-Teases-Delights-at-Joes-Pub-20170507>