

[back to story page](#)

Printed from ABQjournal.com, a service of the Albuquerque Journal

URL: <http://www.abqjournal.com/venue/567985venue06-03-07.htm>

Sunday, June 3, 2007

Technology Focus of Moving Meditations

By Jennifer Noyer

For the Journal

The Wild Dancing West contemporary dance festival ends this weekend at the North Fourth Art Center with Double Vision, from San Francisco.

Led by artistic directors Sean Clute and Pauline Jennings, Double Vision is a group of dancers, musicians, video artists and performers who explore and reinterpret Futurist ideas, creating a bridge through choreography between the human effects of earlier technology and the complex technology of today. The results were full of humor, some stunning dance and video imagery, and a few quite frightening effects.

The first half of the program focused on Italian Futurist concepts from the first decades of the 20th century, when new mechanical technologies were changing the world. Accepted ideas about time and space changed rapidly. In 1924 choreographer F.T. Marinetti said that "time and space died yesterday."

Marinetti's "Machina del 3000/The Love of Two Locomotives for the Station Master" was humorously reconceived by Jennings and Clute. A Chaplinesque little man, danced by Tiffany Barbarash, waited for the train with his suitcase. When two robotic figures entered as humanized locomotive engines, they began a courtship with the little man. Barbarash achieved exaggerated comic macho gestures as she flexed muscles, did quick push-ups, and escaped.

Futurists created short works for the stage to describe the motions of machinery on dancers. Clute created short videos of a fast-forward mechanical bull, and a bowling scene where movement dissolved into repeated lines, or just repeated actions back and forth in time.

"Machina Tipografica," originally by Giacomo Balla, described the motions of a printing press in 1914 with 12 dancers in two rows using repetitive pushing and turning arm gestures.

"As If By Falling" was choreographed by Jennings for six dancers, designed with clear phrasing and formal development imposed on Clute's electronic sound environment. The dance opened and closed in a diagonal line from upstage right to downstage left. The dancers developed spatial designs from that line with sharp, angular gestures and fast directional changes. Occasionally, a figure would melt into a slower, curved shape, breaking the pace of machinelike movement. At one point, a figure appeared as a victim, crucified in space. The sound score gave no hints of phrasing or meter, but dancers picked up invisible clues, returning to finely constructed and sharply performed unison movement.

"Video Action Painting," a technological marvel by Clute, created a Monty Python-styled cartoon on stage, with the artist's hand designs projected, in the moment, on a video screen. It incorporated scenes from a bar with domestic scenes and voyaged from a small town to the west coast over a map, and through time, from horse-and-buggy to automobiles. I'd have to see this several times to really get with it, but it was amazing to watch.

The last dance on the program was both beautiful and frightening. Jennings' "Three Canons and Mise en Scenes (2007)" was performed to another electronic score by Clute. The first canon opened with rigid, doll-like dancers moving as though controlled by unseen forces. They would hit poses, then melt into new movement variations. Musical excerpts from Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 evolved within the score, increasing in volume, or completely disappearing in the third canon as the dancers transformed their movement into more classical lines and shapes. Here the lighting design became the dominant emotive factor. Ben Coolik was able to dissolve solid matter in front of the audience's eyes as figures were broken up visually into light fragments, like pixels, finally disappearing in darkness. Can technology wipe us all out? Wipe out art? It was worth thinking about and amazing to watch.

WHAT: Double Vision

WHEN: 2 p.m. today

WHERE: North 4th Theatre, 4904 Fourth NW

HOW MUCH: \$12 general admission, \$8 students and seniors, call 344-4542

All content copyright © ABQJournal.com and Albuquerque Journal and may not be republished without permission. Requests for permission to republish, or to copy and distribute must be obtained at the the Albuquerque Publishing Co. Library, 505-823-3492.

[Back to story page](#)