

Review:

1st April 2010

Ursula Beaumont for Lowdown Magazine

Freefall, winner of the Adelaide Fringe Best Circus Award, is a montage of fears, phobias, loves, hates, awkwardness and embarrassment. There are small fears and large fears and some of the seven characters overcome them and some don't. The performance is an hour of high energy with moments of intimate physical theatre.

The production has struck an exciting interplay between circus, movement, spoken word and character. The piece draws on the group's extensive background in circus, utilising traditional acts including hula hoop, juggling, handstands and acrobatics, which are presented in a nontraditional format. Circus and movement are obviously the cast's comfortable genres with delivery of text coming more naturally to some rather than others. Despite spoken word not being their primary mode of performance, the text is impressively integrated; sometimes used as an introduction to what is about to follow and at other times it is intricately woven into the physicality.

The strong sense of ensemble demonstrated in the performance has contributed to a well balanced show. The pace of the piece is played with, giving variation in tempo and atmosphere. Images of group acts through to duo and solo moments have a satisfying ebb and flow, also echoed through the lighting and selected sound tracks which include full instrumental pieces through to sparse percussive pieces. With fear and related emotions being the shows' central preoccupation, the cast unpacks common terrors through to weird and wonderful, uncovering the impact that anxiety can have on an individual.

There are shifts in characters' status as they work through concerns, subtly articulating traits which are expanded upon throughout the show. This is refreshing to see in circus theatre.

Freefall isn't particularly directed to family audiences but it does have a nice family vibe. The performers are gloriously open in their presentation of the work and the audience embraces this with gasps of wonder, laughter and applause. Performers make strong connections with the audience due to the familiar content of their fears. One character struggles with a fear of talking to strangers, throughout the show. He's on the brink of saying something and an audience member backs him to the hilt, calling out, "Go on, we're your friends!"

Freefall is devised by the performers whose ages' range from fifteen to 29; the majority of whom are completing school or have just done so. Gravity & Other Myths endeavours to, "... challenge the perception of creativity by young people by producing truly artful and professional works that surpass the traditional stereotypes of youth circus and theatre." The quality of this production lives up to this aim and the performers present the work with a wonderful sense of fun.

Gravity & Other Myths formed twelve months ago and has worked on *Freefall* with support from Cirkidz' graduate program. If *Freefall* is anything to go by, the program is hugely successful with a great balance between support and encouragement of independence. May this program foster many other groups and may Gravity & Other Myths have every success with *Freefall*.

Credits

Freefall Presented by Gravity & Other Myths in association with The Garden of Unearthly Delights with support from the Cirkidz graduate program

Group devised Gravity and Other Myths

Design Gravity and Other Myths

Lighting design Geoff Cobham with Gravity and Other Myths

Sound design Gravity and Other Myths

Performers Lachlan Binns, Jascha Boyce, Tilly Cobham-Hervey, Brie Henwood, Triton Tuni-Mitchell, Jacob Randell, Martin Schreiber