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DANCE REVIEW

Who Needs Melody When You've Got a Move On? Dusan Tynek Dance Theater Plays BAM Fisher

By BRIAN SEIBERT

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Andrea Mohin/The New York Times

Timothy Ward and Emily Gayeski, foreground, in the premiere of Dusan Tynek's "Stereopsis," now at BAM Fisher. The work was on a program with "Base Pairs" and "Romanesco Suite."

In the decade since the Czech-born choreographer [Dusan Tynek](#) founded a dance company in New York, he has earned a reputation for his imagination, his choreographic craft and his musicality. Yet none of the three works in his thematically and formally unified 10th-anniversary season, which opened at BAM Fisher on Wednesday, are accompanied by music. It would seem that Mr. Tynek has handicapped himself.

"Base Pairs," from 2010, is accompanied by a metronome. There is also the recorded voice of [Lucinda Childs](#), a cool customer reading an eloquently steamy prose poem by Cynthia Polutanovich about one couple's sexual encounter. Before he had his own troupe, Mr. Tynek danced in Ms. Childs's, and her mathematical structuring is a heavy influence on all three of this program's works.

Mr. Tynek likes layers of meaning. "Base Pairs" has been advertised as juxtaposing creationism and evolution, and its opening formation of bodies in a cross immediately becomes a clockwork of rotating arms and ticktocking torsos. But the tension that registers more strongly is that between personal romance and impersonal processes. One pair of dancers is continually replaced by another one, so that if you follow any individual couple, you get lost. The dance forces you to follow the phrase.

What's most compelling about Mr. Tynek's phrases is how they work in chain reactions; his designs have a direction. In "Romanesco Suite," an exciting premiere, the main direction is counterclockwise. At the start, a couple strolls in a wide circle, and throughout the piece that circling, taken up by other dancers, acts as a rotary motor, pulling in the work's other intricate patterns, its groupings of twos and threes, men and women. Halfway through, the fine dancer John Eirich arrives to give the wheel a push.

One additional layer of "Romanesco Suite" is the recorded sound of trudging feet and the buzz of cicadas, background noise not unlike the electronic sound scores of many contemporary dances. The title refers to a variant of cauliflower, a [vegetable](#) that exhibits fractal geometry. These elements, along with Roderick Murray's dappled-forest lighting, gently suggest correspondences between the patterns of nature and those of art. They are layers that don't detract.

Unfortunately, the program's other premiere, "Stereopsis," is overburdened. It features another poem by Ms. Polutanovich, a rewriting of Odysseus' encounter with a Cyclops. It's a good poem, printed in the program, but it's incomprehensible as whispered by Mr. Tynek, bare-chested in a blazer and writhing like Gollum. Chanted by the other dancers, with weird leaps to Chipmunk pitch, it's no more intelligible.

The performers, an archaic tribe, also vocalize: click their tongues, hiss, hum, shout "ha!" In "Base Pairs" and "Romanesco Suite," Mr. Tynek demonstrates enough rhythmic sense to forgo music successfully, but the vocalizing is a step into silliness. It's part of an overwrought theatricality that has tripped him up before.

That's too bad, because "Stereopsis" also exhibits Mr. Tynek's talents. It's another circle dance, and with the twosomes replacing one another and moving with vigor in opposite directions, the choreography generates terrific gyroscopic force. Dancers traveling back to front up the centerline, where I was sitting, arrived like a spear in the eye. The conceptual layer of "Stereopsis" is a study of depth perception. Mr. Tynek's depth as an artist can be best sensed in how he moves bodies.

Dusan Tynek Dance Theater continues through Saturday at BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Place, near Lafayette Avenue, Fort Greene, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4100, bam.org.