

Fish

Bangarra Dance Theatre The Enmore Theatre

Stephen Page is a truly fascinating choreographer. Unrestricted by set form, his style is a rich blend of traditional indigenous and contemporary dance. Myth and ritual are his heart and intricate technique his success. His creations are always enthralling dance theatre that involves every part of the dancers' bodies and stimulate every part of the audience's spirit.



Fish, playing a return season, at the Enmore Theatre, is certainly no exception to Page's genius. A journey through three worlds 'Swamps', 'Traps' and 'Reefs', 'Fish' celebrates the sea, the rivers, the swamps and the wealth of life and mystery they contain.

Bangarra dance the bodies of the waters: the murky, the mystical, the exhilarating and refreshing elements in their seasonal cycles. The dancers have incredibly strong while subtle bodies that beautifully sweep, crawl and leap to Page's smooth, dreamlike phrasing. Their flexibility is

exposed as they bend their backs, their elbows and knees; they imbue their turns, falls and body rolls with hypnotic conviction. The tone colour of the works ranges from smooth, balletic washes to sharp, wind beaten chopiness.

So comfortable are the dancers with each other, with the work and on the stage, it's easy to dive with them into the depths to which these magical works delve. The standard is so high, to single out any individual

performer would not do justice to the ensemble.

Lighting design, by Mark Howett (who also lit 'Rites'), shapes physical depth into the dances. In one piece, purple lighting downstage fades to a soft blue upstage, depicting the ebb and flow of the waters; in another instant, a spot is used to internalise a tender but painful moment of the life cycle, in one dancer.

Silhouetting highlights the different levels and plains Page choreographs in as well as the intricacies of his shapes and movements. The line of the body is complemented by Jennifer Irwin's costuming which seems almost to belong to the bodies.

Like the dance, David Page's musical composition fuses traditional and contemporary sounds into stirring and energising soundscapes and songs.

As the dancers make the action of washing themselves, the audience too is cleansed. Invigorated. Leaving the theatre, it feels like we've just washed up from the currents ourselves.

Ruby Boukabou