

A very modern journey

DANCE CORRIDOR

Lucy Guerin Inc, Meat Market, North Melbourne, October 17. Until October 25. Running time: 60 minutes

Hilary Crampton Reviewer

LUCY Guerin defines *Corridor* as an attempt to link how we respond physically to language, drawing on text from Kafka's *The Castle*.

The audience is seated in a single row on either side of the narrow performance space, our heads turning back and forth as if at a tennis match, trying to capture the action, sometimes in our face, at other times at the far end.

The dancers — Sara Black, Antony Hamilton, Kirstie McCracken, Byron Perry, Harriet Ritchie and Lee Serle — enter



casually, chattering on mobile phones. We are immediately plunged into that strange half-world the mobile phone or the mp3 player imposes of the listener being physically present and aurally elsewhere, frequently in public places, unwittingly sharing intimacies with the surrounding public.

The movement language deliberately avoids any links with familiar styles, resorting to often deliberately awkward actions, twitchily distorting the body into asymmetric, angular shapes, or adopting an almost ape-like crouching, swinging

momentum. The dancers dance energetically, skilfully and courageously, not held captive by stylistic conformity.

At intervals they must respond to various forms of verbal input. Serle and Perry deliver commands to them over mp3 players. The dancers endeavour bemusedly to find responses — the commands are often highly amusing — as Serle yearns "I wish you would rise from the dead for me; I wish you would fly". One section is concerned with notions of image and the current obsession with the body beautiful.

At other times the input is written on cleverly devised screens used to herd or corral the performers into concentrated interaction, often laden with conflict.

Guerin's production and

design team employ strategies now becoming a bit of a trend: the desire to position the audience contrary to conventional theatre practice and the use of mobile technology following the performers up and down the space, taking us on the corridor journey as well. There is no doubt this enhanced our capacity to engage with the performers, to enter into the experience and to draw some imaginative implications of our own from the work. The corridor is such a metaphor for life's journey and its encounters.

Guerin's collaborators — sound designer Haco, set designer Donald Holt, lighting designer Keith Tucker, costume designer Paula Levis, and paper coats designer Susie Gerraty — served her well, establishing a compelling context.