

Sigma's roving show a brilliant exploration of impermanence

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DANCE

STREAMS WHERE DEER DRINK

Sigma Contemporary Dance

Raeburn Park

Aug 3

On a typically humid evening, about 20 audience members gathered under a nondescript sheltered walkway, awaiting the start of Sigma's part-roving work, *Streams Where Deer Drink*.

As the title suggests, references to nature abound in the work. However, since the performance took place mostly within the concrete building space of 10 Raeburn Park, I was initially struck by the juxtaposition of the two seemingly contrasting worlds.

As the dancers moved fluidly, continuously, up stairs and along corridors, the audience followed, all the while listening to an accompanying audio track through their personal earpieces.

In the audio track, individuals were heard speaking about their impressions and memories of the space – for example, cute animals that one encountered while walking to Raeburn Park.

It was midway through the work that the brilliance of it dawned on me. *Streams* contemplate ephemerality – buildings and nature alike do not last forever.

It was especially poignant that the compound of 10 Raeburn Park, where Sigma's current studio is located, is facing the end of its lease in a year's time.

This work was thus a tribute of sorts to that fact, while at the same time exploring the complex intertwining of the natural versus the man-made, live versus recorded



Dancers move through corridors and stairwells at Raeburn Park for *Streams Where Deer Drink*. PHOTO: SIGMA CONTEMPORARY DANCE

STREAMS WHERE DEER DRINK

WHERE 10 Raeburn Park

WHEN Various dates till Sept 6, 2025; go to

www.sigmadance.co/swdd

ADMISSION \$30

video and audio, presence versus memory.

The first half of the performance unfolded along a short corridor and then in a stairwell. Dancers seemed to pop out of nowhere, keeping up the visual interest.

As with Sigma's previous work, well-thought-out videography played a significant part in *Streams*. Here, pre-recorded videos of the dancers were projected onto the same dancers performing live in the same specific spaces,

creating some interesting images and meanings.

In the second part of the performance, which moved into Sigma's studio on the third floor, dynamic partner and group movements dominated. Here, more performers joined in at a climactic unison section, where pulsing music and the group's rushing across the relatively tight studio space created a powerful image – a homage indeed to the company's physical space, which would before long disappear.

The wittiness of the work also lies in its using performance, an ephemeral form, as a medium to contemplate impermanence.

More than that, there are 10 scheduled performances, but they take place only once a month, ending in September 2025. This unconventional, drawn-out schedule adds to the complex layering of the ideas of memory, presence and continual change.