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Dance

Mary Brennan

Sara Pearson and Patrik
Widrig at CCA, Glasgow

Body language

AND there just walking, slowly, upstage, her and him . . . there's been this mood of unspoken bickering, of personalities jarring — tension and opposition in the very set of each body, in each considered phrase of the dance . . . and suddenly there's this radiant togetherness, the steely-sullen isolation rolls away and he's lifting her, offering her the serene cradle of his body like some sheltering second skin, supporting her even as her arms yearn upwards and away from him.

It's such a poignant transition. And so seamlessly achieved. Like those moments when stock-still explodes into dervish whirlings, or a reiterated remark — "Does this feel good?" — shifts gear from the sensual to the academic.

Pearson and Widrig have made a fine art out of dislocation and resolution. Each piece in this programme of three short works (two of them adapted down to duet form) deals with the dissonances and harmonies of relationships through dance that is often abrasive with shrewd gamesmanship

and challenge, is frequently witty — tricky even — but never prefers glib effect over a sincere bid to communicate something about human entanglements.

At times the fragmented collages, the assorted incidents, which they cluster together and present as one piece, end up a mite hiccuppy — not all the connective tissue is clear even upon reflection.

Pearson has such a delicious, mercurial dash: so softly sinuous one moment, so firecracker electric in vehement spins the next. And sassy too. Widrig can be so feline-feminine, prowling and pliant, yet always with a calm degree of stalwart if perplexed maleness.

Between them they chart so many pleasing elements of body language and movement — how good to know that such accomplished performers have just completed a summer school in Glasgow, they have so much to pass on, not just to audiences but to practitioners.

See for yourself their exceptional skills, this triple bill is repeated at CCA tonight (Saturday).