

# DanceBeat

an **arts**JOURNAL blog

Deborah Jowitt on bodies in motion

## Seeing Autumn In With Cabaret

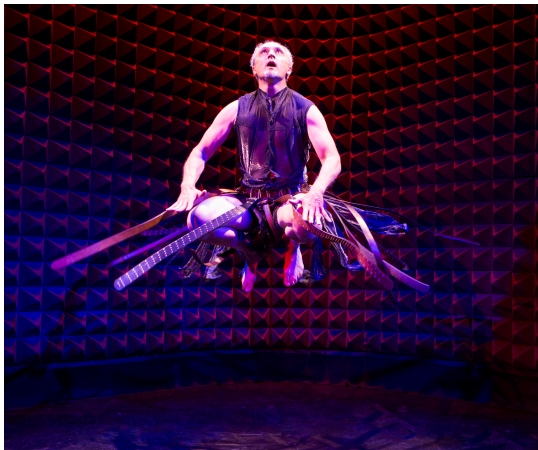
September 12, 2016 by Deborah Jowitt

### Dance Now presents its fall festival at Joe's Pub

Two of the works on the program fall more into the realm of self-exploration as modern dance defines it. Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig of the almost 30-year-old PearsonWidrig DanceTheater present separate solos at Joe's Pub.

For this condensed version of *...and still doing...*, Widrig wears a surprising costume—a black shirt and a skirt of dark, gleaming strips of various widths hanging from a wide belt (they could be leather); the effect is one of both confinement and wildness, since the strips flail about in the wake of his movements. His solo's low, skimming jumps; collapses; falls; and precarious balances on one leg suggest an ordeal, and he often gazes into the distance as if assessing his progress. He walks forward, but is pulled back. At the end, I pick out words about (I think) Yoko Ono, who is (perhaps in a dream he had) performing “for a very long time.” I thought I heard him say this: “She was doing it because she could not do it.” He, on the other hand, could and did.

Sara Pearson's excerpt from her *The Beginning of Forgiveness*, a reminiscence about her years-ago piano teacher, Patrick Finney (also a ballet-class accompanist), tells of their friendship and how she and he and her-then boyfriend got stoned on mescaline together. She makes us see a long, nondescript table as a support, a precipice, and, maybe, a piano. She doesn't pantomime playing an instrument, but, as she speaks her rueful, witty text, she occasionally lays her arms and body along the table—caressing it, resting on it, feeling its surface, getting wild on it, clinging to it as if afraid of slipping off. Finney, she finally tells us, committed suicide, and her last heart-twisting words before the lights go out are “No one could smoke a cigarette like he could.”



Photos: Yi-Chun Wu