

SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

We Unfold

Sydney Theatre

There is no real imagination or beauty in Rafael Bonachela's *We Unfold* for Sydney Dance Company, and the chief culprit is the score.

Too many modern dance works suffer at the hands of composers whose limp musical ideas fail to act as sufficient fuel for choreographers. Ezio Bosso's new symphony is forceful and climatically premature. From its start it resembles the clichéd theme of a filmic hero on his final ride to rescue his lover from peril. This mood is drawn out and repeated, and unhappily distorted by a pounding and vibrating sound mix (the symphony is recorded rather than performed live).

Faced with Bosso's creation, Bonachela's choreography is at best persistent. His attention to hands and wrists is light and elegant. His side balances – which see dancers parallel to the floor with their outstretched legs interrupted by a single angled foot – are coolly conceived. Partnering is steady, although men jumping with their full weight onto the spines of women remains – at least for me – odious.

Bonachela uses the same solution whenever the music peaks (which it does too frequently). He introduces the entire ensemble to the stage in a cacophony of chops and jabs. There is also some hara-kiri that one can only assume is the lament felt by Bonachela for having left his home in Europe, as described in the programme notes.

Daniel Askill's video art is incongruous and distracts from the dance. It begins as a travelling field of stars (à la your outmoded PC screensaver), fades into a colossus whose hair catches alight, shatters and then returns to space. Askill's contribution is doubtless an urbane installation in itself, but it does not suit

the stage.

Jordan Askill's costumes, on the other hand, are simple and sparkling. They bring a little twinkling camp to the weary tradition of skin coloured briefs and gauze drapery.

Dancer Adam Blanch stands out with his infinitesimal solo beneath a projected sun. His petite airborne turns provide a fleeting moment of physical and emotive levity.

Malcolm Rock