

# THE Arts

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## Choreographers Intensely Personal and Absolutely Not

As titles of dance programs go, “Male Bonding” is pretty catchy. But this two-part event presented by the La MaMa Moves! festival had little to do with any

### DANCE REVIEW

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affinities between the impressive lineup of choreographers taking part. Instead it showed a rich variety of intention and approach, from technically sophisticated to almost dance-free, intensely personal to determinedly neutral.

“The Bowing Dance — a duet for me and you” by the Irish choreographer John Scott belonged to the neutral category. The burly, appealing Mr. Scott, who performed this work on the Saturday night and Sunday afternoon programs at the Club, enacted both the “me” and the “you” of the title as he issued directions and followed them with the requisite actions. (“Me, I bow. You, you bow too.”) Performed in two parts, the work can feel like a brilliant piece of absurdist theater, a meditation on identity, an entry-level primer on choreographic composition or nothing very much at all. Perhaps it’s all those things at once, which is to say, art.

Where Mr. Scott was resolutely impassive, even in the sudden



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John Scott in “The Bowing Dance — a duet for me and you.”

flopping, writhing end of his first section, Miguel Gutierrez offered a solo, “Nothing, No thing,” full of raw, compressed emotion. The piece is long and difficult: the movement ungainly, a deeply personal monologue uncomfortable to hear, a bellowing song at

the end both tuneless and bathetic. But Mr. Gutierrez is never less than a completely honest performer, and his self-revelation is never self-indulgent. He holds out the promise of uncharted territory with no guarantees of safety involved.

### Male Bonding

La MaMa E.T.C.

Sunday’s program offered two more solos. In Andrew Dinwiddie’s piece the lanky Benjamin Forster moved in silence with big, undancerly lunges, his arms swatting at the air. Nicholas Leichter, on the other hand, was all cool control and underlying panic in “Love Letter,” his body snapping through staccato club-dance moves to an Amy Winehouse song, even as his flicking fingers and sudden intakes of breath suggested the precariousness of his poise.

Larger-scale works came from Ben Munisteri and John Jasperse, both demonstrating just how good these choreographers are. Mr. Munisteri’s “Remix” showed his beautifully constructed ensemble work and acute eye for visual effect as six dancers moved in fluid counterpoint to songs by Jeff Buckley and Beck. And the lush complexity and detail of the work-in-progress excerpts from Mr. Jasperse’s new “Pure” were simply gorgeous. The premiere is next month at the American Dance Festival: attendance seems in order.