

## ENTERTAINMENT

JERSEY EVENING POST Friday, 26 March 2010 25

# Captivating dance unmasked

**Gill Kay** enjoys a night courtesy of the National Dance Company of Wales

AS a thick fog of smoke gradually engulfed the Opera House audience, it didn't take long for pretend fits of coughing to start up among the largely teenage contingent at last night's performance by the National Dance Company of Wales.

The company's opening work, *Veil of Stars*, began with dense clouds billowing from the stage and spreading gradually through the rows of seats. Despite the amusing outbreaks of fake coughing – it was very thick smoke – the dramatic moment was not entirely lost.

## Elegant

The ten masked dancers in semi-sequined costumes escaped the fog and launched into an energetic, elegant and mesmerising performance. The piece was by Greek choreographer Antonis Foniadakis and is said to be about how we hide our personality and choose to reveal how we're feeling. Whether this message was communicated or not is a subjective thing, but it was certainly stunning to watch as pure dance in its own right.

And the removal of the dancers' masks, which they then crumbled to pieces with their hands, was a novel, but distracting trick. Julien Tarride's electronic music really drove the pieces on, especially in the middle section, but the end fizzed out somewhat, as the thumping beat slowed and the dancers played pass-the-parcel with a dancer in an over-long series of lifts and slow-motion acrobatics.

The second piece, *Romance Inverse*, by Netherlands-based choreographer Itzik Galili, saw the five male and five female dancers divided into two. The piece was also in two parts and in the first, the dark trouser-suited women used large square boards – black on one side, white on the other – to construct areas for the men to perform in and



For one of the two dances, the National Dance Company of Wales came on stage in masks, which later crumbled to pieces. Picture: JON GUEGAN (00921814)

## REVIEW: National Dance Company of Wales, Opera House

around. It was a clever device that worked very well, almost imperceptively creating a constantly moving backdrop of cubicles, boxes, walls and stalls.

The half-naked men brilliantly executed Galili's technically bold and extremely energetic choreography to a fabulous score by Steve Reich.

However, the non-stop action called for a lot of concentration and the welcome change of pace and music came when the girls rejoined the boys.

The driving rhythm of marimbas and percussion from Dutch group Percossa was the backtrack to the ensemble piece. The men and women,

all dressed in halter-necked tops, gave an androgynous edge to the last part of the piece. As constantly

energetic and relentlessly intense as the rest of the performances, it was beginning to be as tiring to watch as it must have been to perform.

That didn't stop the near-full Opera House crowd from giving the performers the deafening and prolonged applause that they deserved.

Cruise and Stay on board  
the Ocean Countess

Jersey Evening Post

Premier Travel Agency

Scottish Islands  
Faroes and Edinburgh

The Nursery