

# Diversions still as graceful as ever

IN THE programme notes for Diversions' recent production at the Sherman Theatre, Cardiff, the *Western Mail* is quoted as having said of the dance, *Journey*, that it is "ravishingly choreographed . . . heart-breakingly beautiful and graceful".

Quite right; and so it remains.

Transferred from Chapter, where it was originally seen, to the more distanced, larger stage of the Sherman, *Journey* suffered a little from the lack of intimacy and a lessening of cohesiveness, as well as from the indisposition of John Wesley Taylor, but Alison McBeth remained as alluring and timeless as ever as "she who journeys".

*Flying the Flag* is an intriguing and intricate dance of flags and poles that is by turn witty and deeply moving. That


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the dancers and choreographers should hold the audience fascinated in the palm of their hands with a silence broken solely by the evocative sound of fluttering flags, and then steal upon that silence with *Land of Hope of Glory* was to both raise a chuckle in the audience and provide a quintessential example of the originality and humour of this brilliant company.

Danced between wire fences to New York-influenced music by Steve Martland, *Letters (Remember Me)* choreographed by Beppie Blankert is a tough, uncompromising dance that is far removed from the simpler pleasures of *Flags*. Its more urban sophistication indicates a process of growth and maturity in the company.

Fresh, honest, creative, stimulating and entertaining, Diversions is a sparkling jewel in the crown of Cardiff's, indeed Britain's, theatrical and creative world; their every performance remains a precious experience.

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