



Welcome to this introduction to Frock. For current tour dates, please refer to our website www.stopgapdance.com, and head to the productions page where you'll find Frock.

Stopgap Dance Company presents Frock, an outdoor contemporary dance production.

Six striking dancers collide in an uplifting dance riot set to an exclusive art rock soundtrack by Hannah Miller. In this outdoor dance work, experience playful observations of the past that explode into a punkish celebration of individuality and difference.

Introduction

Premiering in 2019, Frock is an outdoor dance work devised by artistic director and choreographer Lucy Bennett, with support from the dancers. Frock tours to outdoor arts festivals across the UK and internationally.

Frock features a cast of six disabled and non-disabled dancers - a few members of the cast alternate between performances.

The soundtrack and music was composed exclusively for Frock by Hannah Miller, of the art-rock band Moulettes, with additional material from Oliver Austin. The costumes were designed by Martina Trottmann.

Access

Frock tours to outdoor festivals who may or may not provide an audio describer for the full work. As the performance begins in a relaxed way, there is opportunity to talk with our dancers and our team to find out more about the production prior to the show.

Please contact the festival if you have any questions about their access provisions.

Stopgap has an Easy-Read visual story of the show, alongside some audio insights created by the dancers. You can access these on Frock's production page on our website, which again is www.stopgapdance.com

The Performance

The performance has a running time of around 25 minutes. The start is unannounced, dancers blend in with the audience and emerge to begin dancing.

Frock is generally performed in cities and towns, on highstreets and in outdoor environments familiar to local audiences. The setup is simple, audiences stand or sit around all sides of the square performance space. There is no front to the work – we experience it in the round from all directions.

Frock has no set, it exists in the urban landscape, the dancers often weave in and out of the square performance space and into the audience. There are minimal props within Frock, in sections of the work, the dancers use delicate china teacups and saucers. Several silver teaspoons also feature with a crash...

The Dancers

Within Frock, the dancers are split into two even groups - which are called the Suits and the Skirts. Themes of relationships, behaviour and collectivity are explored through these two groups and within the choreography through group unison, through trios and through duet work.

The cast includes Skirts: Christian Brinklow, Jannick Moth, Nadenh Poan. And the Suits include: Annie-Rose Grantham, Hannah Sampson, Alice Shepperson, KJ Mortimer, Amy Butler and Abbie Thompson. Hannah and Abbie, and KJ, Annie-Rose, Amy alternate their roles for different performances, but each group always remains a trio.

The Suits and Skirts embody different characters within a spectrum of masculine and feminine, inspired by the habits and behaviours of generations past. They explore gestures within the choreography, and convey multifaceted personalities through character and movement. Each dancer's character is dimensional and substantial, the depth of their personality and the web of relationships is shown through duets and interactions between each other within the work.

The Suits - An assertive and confident trio, each dressed in structured classic suits. Embodying more masculine gestures, the group's movement is more tight and angular - they are at times cocky and assertive to the Skirts, often shifting and stirring up the space.

The Suits all wear variations of dark suit jackets and smart trousers held up by black braces, underneath they wear white baggy fit shirts and each wear a tie. On their feet they wear dark trainers. Part way through the work, their jackets are removed and placed in the corners of the performance space.

The Skirts - A playful, intricate, flirtatious trio, dressed in floral skirts and dresses. Embodying more feminine gestures, the Skirts movement is softer and more expansive, exaggerated by their costume. Each of them wears either a floral and floaty dress or knee-length skirt with a blouse, alongside socks and trainers.

Scenes and Storyline: Here is an overview of each of the four scenes throughout Frock,

The Opening: “Kitchen Sink”

The dancers begin in the audience, holding their teacups as if at an event. When the music starts they arise and ask an audience member to look after their cups. As they enter the space they form two distinct groups or clubs, these are the Suits and the Skirts. They parade and promenade as if involved in a kind of court dance. The Suits and Skirts pretend to be comfortable with one another, but really keep to themselves, rarely making eye contact or getting too close. They are particular with their footwork, wheelwork and gestures. The scene finishes with a solo from one of the Suits who enjoys being watched and commands the attention of onlookers.

Scene Two: “Adaptation”

This is an explosive scene reminiscent of a West Side Story dance off! The two groups jostle for space with large chunks of unison dance that shifts through the space with gestures and deportment appropriate to their characters of Suits and Skirts. Halfway through the full cast smash to the ground on their backs. A lone Skirt begins a frenzied jig before they are joined by all the cast. The groups now begin to mix a little more, eventually finding their way into partner work using contact, lifts and throws. The scene becomes more chaotic with sprinting, spinning and diving trio work culminating in a striking image - one Suit stands turning on the wheel of Nadenh’s upturned wheelchair like a plate spinning, Nadenh, a Skirt, uses his hand to spin this wheel of his chair whilst he lays in it upturned on the ground.

Scene Three: “Elastic Band”

A Skirt soloist announces their arrival with a crash of numerous silver teaspoons. They imitate washing up before sinking into a lonely solo. The scene continues in the form of solo duet, solo duet and so forth. The Skirts and Suits who aren’t currently dancing pace the space in time to the bass, as relationships are formed, evolved, dismantled, and reformed. It finishes with a hypnotic duet that plays with strength, inversion, and trust.

Scene Four, Finale: “Little Collisions”

An alarm sounds. A beat kicks in. The full cast are taken away with the music and begin to play and have fun. A loose and jovial unison begins with dancers dropping in and out of the unison and into partner work. There is a section of duet work where different bodies collide, squeeze and co-ordinate with one another. As the track escalates to a crash, a kiss up high between two dancers happens. Halfway through there is a lull, we are back at the event drinking tea, a little stifled, the teacups are returned to the audience. The dancers smash and slash with their limbs at the space that contains them. They take back the teacups, creating a chorus line playing with the rhythm of the cups in a neat unison that builds again to a frenzy! The music and the dance crescendos with exuberant energy and finishes with all but one dancer crashing to the floor, the lone Skirt from earlier smashes their tea cup and takes a curtsey. Glad to be finally free of the tea, teacup and all it represents.

We look forward to meeting you at a Frock performance sometime soon.