

# Irish Independent

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## Review: Cold Dream Colour – A Dance Homage to Louis le Brocquy

By Deirdre Mulrooney

IT'S NICE to see a bit of rock-star oomph being injected into the world of contemporary dance.

In 'Cold Dream Colour', Morleigh Steinberg's choreographic celebration of 94-year-old artist Louis Le Brocquy, her husband The Edge's haunting score (in collaboration with Paul Chavez) underpins the Butoh-inspired homage in a low-key, yet recognisable, way.

Steinberg and co-choreographers Oguri and Liz Roche create a 75-minute dream-space of hypnotic slow-motion dance tableaux in response to a series of Le Brocquy's paintings (helpfully reproduced in the programme note).

Embodying what might be the spirit of Le Brocquy's ethereal paintings, Oguri's opening sequence is spellbinding. His amoebic, creature-like facial expressions could have come straight out of Japan's premier Butoh company, Sankai Juku (who opened Dublin Theatre Festival in 2007), or else perhaps out of Le Brocquy's more mysterious portraits.

The spectre of a female nude (reminiscent of the 2002 painting 'Being'), behind a translucent, suspended plastic curtain then suddenly gives way to a Beckettian moment of visceral mouth-sucking evocative of Le Brocquy's spooky 1974 'Head with Open Mouth Clever'.

In what could be a roll on a lawn, after Le Brocquy's 1940 painting 'A Picnic', Irish contemporary dancers Liz Roche, of Rex Levitates Dance Company, Katharine O'Malley and the towering Grant McLay come to the fore in Roche's trademark soft gestural vocabulary. Roche's choreography approaches Oguri's exquisite Butoh being, and even sidles up to it, yet keeps its own integrity.

Beautifully lit by Oguri and Steinberg, there are two choreographic vocabularies at play. For example, a powerful solo performed in Morleigh's own diagonal, slanty light exists somewhere between contemporary dance and Butoh.

Roxanne Steinberg adds a graceful symmetry, while the child-like Cat Westwood introduces the joyful simplicity of Le Brocquy's 1951 'Child with Flowers', and a welcome breath of playfulness.

Mariad Whisker's subtle India-meets-Isadora Duncan flowing costumes clothe these shadows and suggestions perfectly in muted, neutral tones of grey, taupe, and off-white plastic.

More rhythmic variety and a climactic moment or two would have lifted occasional longueurs in this gorgeous, mesmeric tribute to a deserving Master.