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Breath & Bone

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By Hoyt Hilsman

Artistic Director Monica Favand explores the fusion of modern Western dance with the rhythms and tone of African and Asian dance and music. With the talented ensemble of dancers of the TRIP Dance Theatre company, as well as gifted musical composer Charlie Campagna and vocalists Moira Smiley and Jessica Basta, Favand weaves an enchanting, impressionistic evening of dance and media.

There are echoes of the 1960s in the big-screen video projections, first of jellyfish swimming at sea--the dancers seeming to mimic the creatures' undulating movements--then with a series of more-abstract, even psychedelic projections that evoke deeper, more-primitive human feelings. In "Beneath the Water," Campagna's haunting music begins slowly and sensually but then becomes harsher, suggesting a looming environmental disaster for nature's most vulnerable creatures.

In "When the Bones Lie Open," Denesa Chan and Taryn Wayne dance a powerful, athletic duet with overtones of death and transfiguration. And in the final piece, "Body," the company enacts vivid, poignant memories of pain and loss, accompanied by Campagna's music, which uses live vocal and instrumental music in four-channel audio to produce an almost-hallucinatory effect.

Dancers Chan, Wayne, and Favand--along with Shannon Harris, Andriana Mitchell, and Tomas Tomayo--are inspiringly precise as they execute each quick and challenging movement, and they dance as a smooth and fluid ensemble. Also impressive is Campagna and Favand's use of the dancers' vocalisms, including snippets of speech and deep breaths, all of which adds to the supernatural effect of the music and media.

As with any powerful dance piece, *Breath & Bone* reaches to a primordial place, a depth of human feeling that is more the province of music, voice, and movement than of words.

Presented by TRIP Dance Theatre at the Unknown Theater,
110 Seward Ave., Hollywood.

Fri.-Sat. 8 p.m., Sun. 2 p.m. Jan. 6-15.

(323) 466-7781.

