

# New Moves And Existential Musings From Liss Fain, Erika Shuch

Rita Felciano | San Francisco Bay Guardian | September, 2008

Coming right off the top of the new season, two local choreographers, Liss Fain and Erika Chong Shuch, have thrown a spotlight on the marvelous richness of Bay Area dance. These women couldn't be more different from each other. One creates cool, intricately flowing balletic dances; the other, spunky and quixotic dance theater.

At YBCA, in its Forum space, Erika Shuch Performance Project's existential musing, *After All, Part I*, engaged with its excellent performers. The stage oozed with talent and energy, thanks to the eminent, wistful dancer Joe Goode, singer-composer Dwayne Calizo, charming teenage vocalist Gracie Solis, percussionist-actor Matthias Bossi, and actor Beth Wilmurt, not to mention a quartet of dancers and a motley movement chorus of 23.

Drawing from a number of writers, Chong Shuch fashioned dances, monologues, and songs into a circular structure about, well, the meaning of life — as seen mainly from the perspective of a goldfish. Shuch has gathered — and created — marvelous material but it needs to be more organically shaped.

Individual segments work well. Wilmurt inhabited Michelle Carter's sparkling text as naturally as her pisca-sartorial accoutrements of sunglasses and form-hugging sequins. Though plagued with what appeared to be vocal difficulties, Calizo's character of a hobo Santa Claus who carries everything with him was a fanciful creation. Bossi roared through Octavio Solis' "Last Psalm" (an inversion of "The Lord Is My Shepherd") with a mixture of bravado and cynicism. Given the current political climate, he was as hilarious as he was chilling.