

# A dance with the diverse

## **DANCE** TERRAIN: MULTICULTURAL CONTEMPORARY DANCE FESTIVAL

Multicultural Arts Victoria and Ausdance Vic, Dancehouse, North Carlton, November 6-8. Running time: 120 minutes. [www.dancehouse.com.au](http://www.dancehouse.com.au)  
**Hilary Crampton** Reviewer

*TERRAIN* is an ambitious endeavour to provide a window for dancers from diverse cultures to explore the relationship between their cultural origins and contemporary existence.

This year's program features artists originating from China, Malaysia, India, Korea and Senegal as well as bringing together indigenous Australians from the Northern Territory with Koori artists and students from Northlands Secondary College.

Essentially, one could say all the works in the program deal either with a sense of identity or a sense of place and belonging.

The dance cultures of choreographers Rakini Devi, Lamine Sonko, Tina Yong and Sun Ping, Rachael Wallis, Feng Feng Wang and Soo Yeun You were as diverse as their ethnic origins, drawing upon contemporary dance, ballet, jazz, hip-hop and martial arts. Not all performers were comfortable in all styles, but the ensembles in Wallis and Sonko's offerings danced with exuberant energy.

Wallis's *Gu Maduwan Ngaraku Nidj Malin (Come Back Home)* brought the first half of the program to a spine-tingling end with an extended solo by songman Jonathon Munyarryun and didgeridoo solos by Arnold Marika and Amos Roach.

Feng Feng Wang's *Vista* was

largely abstract in conception, the performers plodding in a circular pattern, oblivious to the hidden figure in their midst, the cycle finally broken when they saw and embraced each other.

Yong and Sun Ping's *Untitled* was a reflection on memory, showing subtle inflexions of movement language.

The second half picked up the energy, starting with a delicate and moving piece, *Ball*, beautifully crafted and danced by Soo Yeun You. This was followed by Devi's amusing duo when, partnered by Kenny Feather, she split bodies and adopted diverse persona ranging from the exotic to the demure. Sonko brought the program to a rousing ending, ably supported by superb African percussionist Sena Sonko, kora player Simon Lewis and a background trio of percussionists.