

Swans, symmetry, and sensations

Looking back at 2009's top dance performances and events

BY RITA FELCIANO
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arts@sfbg.com

DANCE Looking back over a year's dance performances feels like reading a horoscope backward. Were there surprises, disappointments, new loves, emerging trends, familiar encounters, and reasons for hope and despair? Of course. Perhaps the best part of this yearly exercise is that it allows works to bubble up that for one reason or another — quality, daring, perspective, innovation — stuck in the mind. You want to see them again. Some, you actually will. As for the not-*that*-again, forget-it, or please-don't pieces, they already have sunk into the grand pool of oblivion. The following is a baker's dozen of top picks, chosen roughly in the order in which they were seen.

Sean Dorsey's dance-theater piece *Lou*, based on the writings of transgender pioneer Lou Sullivan and danced by Dorsey, Brian Fisher, Juan de la Rosa, and Nol Simonse, was a penetrating portrait of one man's courage and lust for life. It also highlighted Dorsey's increasingly fluid skill in fusing language and dance.

