

Gay City

APRIL 7-13, 2005



THANG DAO AND GINO GRENEK, DANCERS WITH THE STEPHEN PETRONIO COMPANY, PERFORMING A DUET

Gay City

APRIL 7-13, 2005

Emotional Rescue

Stephen Petronio is indelibly sober and strong

On the serious and political side, Stephen Petronio's new four-and-a-half minute duet "bud" is the best artistic response to the 2004 election imaginable. A preview of his next project, the dance premiered at The Joyce Theater as part of the choreographer's exceptional 20-year anniversary season performances, March 22 to 27.

Danced with aplomb and abandon by the beautiful Gino Grenek and Thang Dao to Rufus Wainwright's "Oh What a World," this work is really an anthem, a

beacon of pride and hope and declaration of gay love, like nothing seen on stage in a long time. Tara Subkoff dresses the men in red trunks and mirroring half jackets fastened on with black elastic straps, their legs naked as always. The two halves making a whole could have come off as corny, but here, with the obvious references to both Plato's "Symposium" and to "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," it was, like Wainwright's lyrics and "Bolero"-derived music, secure and emotionally unequivocal. The two dancers are strong, slicing and eating up the space together, but they also hang to each other.

The piece is plain, evocative, amazing and undeniably Petronio. Gay marriage may not be a reality, but gay love is—and now is not the time to hide it.

BY BRIAN MCCORMICK