

Wow, falling behind here. Let's catch up then, shall we?



Wednesday we enjoyed a matinee of [The Other Place](#) at Manhattan Theater Club. This taut drama by Sharr White stars Laurie Metcalf (*Rosanne*) as a powerful drug company executive and former scientist who is relating to us a story from a business trip a while back. Utilizing a combination of flash backs and flash forwards, the script builds a complicated framework within which the complete story eventually is fit.

We soon learn, however, that we cannot be sure just how much of what this woman tells us we can believe. She is cagey about her name, for example, when talking with a doctor in one of the many threads of the tale. She accuses her husband of adultery, but is he really guilty? She claims he is divorcing her, but he tells us otherwise. She has long, fraught, phone calls with an estranged daughter, but does she really?

It would be giving away too much to tell more about the basis of these uncertainties, but suffice to say that the play, which opened to fairly good notices the next night, paints a daunting and frightening picture of what can happen to our inner, and outer, worlds when our minds get away from us.



Cudos to the design staff. The set, by Eugene Lee & Edward Pierce, is an elaborate semi-cylinder of window frames, with embedded lighting elements, which matches the elaborate framework of the story telling to a tee. Lighting by Justin Townsend compliments the set nicely, and serves to establish the many different settings required by the script, all within the single set. But it is the costuming by David Zinn which really does the most with the least to move the story along. Within Zinn's single costume, Ms Metcalf transforms from a high level business woman, with impeccable style, to a forlorn mother, lost in this world and losing everything. By the simple removal of a jacket here, stockings there, or the addition of a shapeless sweater, we see many different sides to this one, complex, woman.

Daniel Stern as the lonely and left behind husband, who must struggle against his wife's constant anger and accusations, turns in a mostly muted, but moving and frustrated performance. When he erupts in sobs 2/3rds of the way in, we are moved to do the same. Zoe Perry (Ms Metcalf's real life daughter) ably dispatches the three roles she is tasked with. A heavy matinee, to say the least!

That evening took us to the Joyce for some dance, part of the [Focus Dance 2013](#) program. We saw a program with [Camille A. Brown & Dancers](#), and [Brian Brooks Moving Company](#). Ms. Brown's group performed *Been There, Done That*, *City Of Rain* and *The Real Cool*. The latter, a sole piece featuring Ms Brown, was a lovely piece, often using small front-mounted pin-spots to project large expressive shadows of her onto the rear cyclorama.



Mr. Brooks' company used a very physical dance form to explore movement in some new ways, in *I'm Going To Explode*, *Descent* and, with Wendy Whelan, *Fall Falls*. I was especially moved by *Descent*, a dance in three movements. In the first, dancers dragged partners, literally, across the stage and maneuvered them about as if dolls, at times — all while lit from the sides by horizontal wedges of light.



The second movement presents us with a stage lit only from 6 feet up. The dancers enter the stage from left or right, putting lacy fabric aloft with the breeze from wood fans they wave upwards. It was like watching well choreographed jelly fish dancing! So lovely, so lyric, so fresh! Each dancer would cross from left to right, or right to left, their focus upward on their fabric, and the fabric would twirl and bob in the drafts.



The program closed with a duet by Mr. Brooks and Ms. Whelan, part of her series *Restless Creature*, which explored the interaction of bodies and the shifting of the planes of horizon and plateau, their bodies sometimes climbing the floor or walking on the air. Hard to explain, but lovely to behold.