

## Plot precision

**LOCUS PLOT** choreographed by Peggy Baker, w/ vocalography by Fides Krucker, music by John Kameel Farah. At the Betty Oliphant Theatre (404 Jarvis). To May 3, Thursday to Saturday 8:30 pm, Sunday 4 pm. Baker introduction 30 minutes before each show. \$22-\$28. 1-800-838-3006, peggybakerdance.com. Rating: **NNNN**

**Peggy Baker's** first evening-length work for an ensemble of dancers is a wonder of intricacy and construction. **Locus plot** is also an ambitious hybrid that doesn't always achieve the promise of its conceptual components; when it does (and even sometimes

when it doesn't), it's sublime.

Baker worked with singer **Fides Krucker**, mathematician/playwright **John Mighton**, composer/musician **John Kameel Farah** and five dancers on an investigation inspired by mathematical schematics that express various laws of physics. Its experimental pedigree does not make it rough around the edges. Rather, it is precise and cleanly executed, as elegant as a geometry equation. Even when the sounds the dancers are making are kind of nutty.

**Sarah Fregeau, Sahara Morimoto, Sean Ling, Kate Holden** and **Ric Brown** whisper, growl, squeal and sing, prompted by their own movement, their interactions with each other and the "plot" of each scene. In one section, they utter words such as "centre," "circumference" or "radius" as they use

their bodies to trace patterns on the ground, slowing rising to a joyous jazzy dance full of Baker's familiar lunges, slicing arms and small jumps.

Farah's music score, performed live, veers back and forth between classical keyboard riffs and moments of electronic deep boom and waves. It's a marvel, moving from menace to melody, perfectly tuned to the moving performers, their bodies and voices. Long-time Baker collaborator **Marc Parent's** lighting design carves out space in the darkness for everyone with great sensitivity and beauty. Part of Baker's success is that she works with the best to exactly high standards, and locus plot is no exception.

Within this co-conceived construction there are many fleeting convergences and striking apexes, my favour-



Kate Holden whispers, growls, sings and more in locus plot.

ite the gorgeously golden solo for Holden that closes the performance. She repeats a series of movements, one linked to exhaled breath and a kind of compression to the ground above crossed wrists, another reaching out to her colleagues dancing in the shadows behind her as a single breathing organ-

ism. The number of compressions dwindles, the breath quiets, the light fades.

For all their combinatory interest, these moments also serve to highlight that Baker's deepest research has been into the body and its power to move and be moved.

KATHLEEN SMITH