

# Eiko, Koma and Soloists Perform in Sacred Space

By Siobhan Burke

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Even if you frequent St. Mark’s Church in the East Village, you’ve probably never been inside the Priest’s Room or walked around the second-floor balcony. You’ve passed the lion statue guarding the entrance, but have you ever really looked at it?

On Saturday night, Danspace Project’s “Platform 2016: A Body in Places,” a series exploring work by the visionary dancer and choreographer Eiko, continued with a three-hour event that let visitors roam the building. “Precarious I: Guest Solos” sent eight soloists, Eiko included, dancing in and among the church’s spaces in thoughtful and mischievous ways. Eiko, whose own work deals vividly, sometimes mournfully, with slowness and stillness, brings out the best in her colleagues.

The unofficial guest of honor was Koma, Eiko’s husband and artistic partner of more than 40 years. (Her solo endeavors are relatively recent.) Audience members huddled outside the front door to watch his delightfully disheveled “Dancing With My Painting and Lion,” which found him staggering through a thin layer of sand in tattered pink satin shoes. A canvas hanging from the churchyard’s fence, lowered at the start and later resurrected, framed his exploits: a tender encounter with the lion by the door; his near escape as he scaled the fence and howled in the direction of 10th Street.

In the sanctuary you could find Beth Gill sliding and slumping along the carpeted risers and altar, as if she were part-riser herself. (Her brilliant costume matched the carpet in color and texture.) This meditative exercise, “Precarious Landscapes,” lasted nearly the entire three hours, allowing viewers to pop in between other, shorter solos, most of which repeated each hour.

In the Parish Hall, the choreographer Donna Uchizono served tea between Jimena Paz’s quietly ravishing showings of a dance she learned 25 years ago in Argentina, or her recollection of it. Its delicate unfurling lured me back for a second viewing. Along a stretch of balcony, Neil Greenberg also looked back with a composite of his previous works — “Not-About-AIDS Dance,” “The Disco Project” and others — by turns boisterous and introspective.

The solos overlapped serendipitously. From the sanctuary, Polly Motley’s voice could be heard wafting through the building. (Her solo was a singing, wandering one.) During Arturo Vidich’s wonderfully bizarre “Alone in the Dark” — which felt like a medieval ritual in the crowded, shadowy Priest’s Room — Eiko, nomadic throughout the night, blew in through the doors. Crouched among Mr. Vidich’s sound and lighting contraptions, barely moving, she lit up the space.

“Platform 2016” continues through March 23 at various East Village locations; [danspaceproject.org](http://danspaceproject.org).

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