

## REVIEW: ReVision Dance Company's 'Garage Sale' at Dance Place

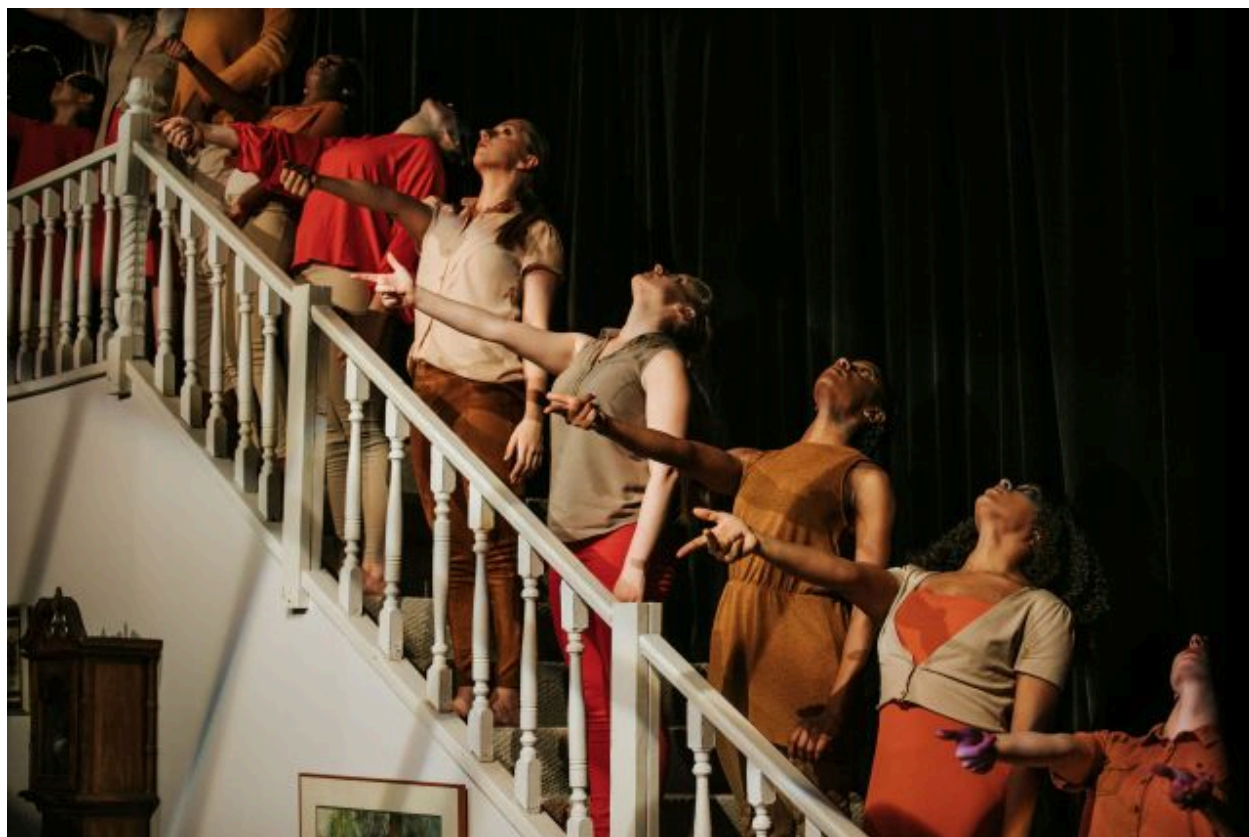
### *Garage Sale*

ReVision Dance Company

Dance Place

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By Morgan Pravato



In a world full of people hypnotized by screens, it is easy to notice a trend of lacking sentimentality. Attention is quickly drawn to the newest technological innovation or the latest tweet. This obsession has combined with growing societal materialism, strongly affecting how we experience life.

November 17-18, dancer and choreographer Shannon Quinn and the performers of Dance Place resident company ReVision Dance comment on this phenomenon in *Garage Sale*, a 50-minute contemporary modern work that demonstrates the power of “stuff.” The dancers prove how seemingly simple objects can evoke strong emotions and hold deep memories, from small knick-knacks to family heirlooms.

*Garage Sale* takes place in Ben Levine’s expertly crafted set. The onstage “home” features antique-like fixtures including a wood table and chairs, a bed with worn blankets and pillows, a grandfather clock and a green couch among other décor. Quirky colors and floral prints combine with bright art that hangs on the walls around the performance space to create a vintage appearance. Each object on the set has its own story to tell, which the dancers explore.

As the audience files in, dancers — 13 in all, eight from ReVision and five from the community — are scattered and seated throughout their home. Some read letters or books while others fiddle with smaller objects. The colors of the set are livelier than the muted browns and bright corals of the dancers' fitted pants and flowing skirts.



The piece begins with performer Hermione Rhones reciting an original poem that describes how objects like a “Cyclops teddy” or a “Malibu Barbie” can act as a “life preserver.” An interview sound score fades in with voices overlaying peaceful, classical music. The interviewees share their tendencies to keep objects or throw them away and describe their relationships to personal mementos.

Quinn and the dancers' choreography balance each performer's personal, internal reflection with presentational movement. Much of *Garage Sale* includes repeated gestural phrases, usually performed with pairs of dancers. Sometimes the dancers thrash each other about, one jerking another's head or rebounding off of the other's body. However, most of the partnering feels gentle, as the dancers hold and support each other.

The dancers maneuver about their crowded space easily and clearly. At times, the set appears slightly overwhelming with furniture and small items packing the space, but they manage to hold focus regardless of potential distractions. They interact with their surroundings in straightforward, pedestrian ways, usually doing nothing more than sitting on the bed or gently holding a book. They appear to be carefully preserving memories each piece holds. However, the gentleness and everyday use of the countless props makes one long for the dancers to interact with these prosaic objects a bit more frequently and creatively.

One of the many striking visual moments happens when the dancers crowd around the wooden table. Some sit and others stand while they spoke their arms in and outside the circle, creating intricate group shapes. They move about the table after each phrase concludes to take the place of the person next to them and continue dancing.



Moments of unison with the full cast are rare, yet the group appears strongest when moving together when they create striking, whole-body lines amplified by the group. Their technical strength and beautiful ease become even more pleasing.

One of the final moments of *Garage Sale* is among the most satisfying. As all the performers stand on a towering staircase in the back, they return to the piece's earlier movement motifs remaining mostly in unison, but with small variances placed expertly in the choreography.

To conclude, the dancers take objects they toyed with in the beginning and place them in the middle of the stage, then exit. Rhones, left alone, recites Rev. Safire Rose's poem *She Let Go*. As the lights dim Rhones stands over the pile of objects, which may appear useless to some, but hold meaningful memories for their owners.

Photos by Mariah Miranda, courtesy ReVision Dance: top, *Garage Sale*, ReVision Dance Company  
middle, poet and community dancer Hermione Rhones

ReVision dancers Elizabeth Zinni and Katherine Li Puma

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