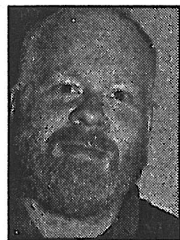


E runs gamut from quiet to abrasive

The Emergency programs in March led to last night's Repeat Offenders Program E performances at Market Hall by those veterans who have trod these boards in earlier editions.



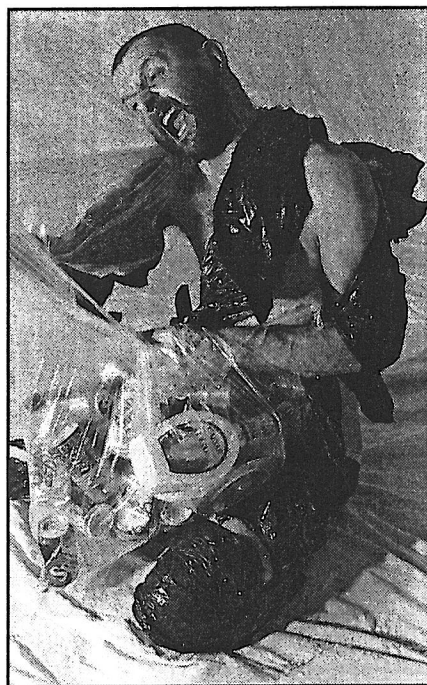
**DANCE
REVIEW
JONOTHAN
FIDDLER**

Running the gamut from the quiet and contemplative to raucous and abrasive, with some sweetness thrown in for good measure, Emergency X provides an intriguing showcase for our local practitioners of dance and performance art.

Program E opens with a remount of Scooter's 1994 piece *Kitten on a String*. This piece uses movement and text to take a look at an abusive relationship. A child in pyjamas approaches the audience and begins to read from a script.

The tale is about a cat and the sorts of cat things that he does, but in actuality it is the story of his parents' dysfunctional relationship.

Behind Cameron Conquer, Scooter and Anya Gwynne portray the tormented couple, complete with all their obsession, fear and memories of past tenderness. The combina-



Anabiosis by Michael Hermiston

tion of text and movement is aggressive and sweet, sensual and violent and ultimately chilling.

Anabiosis created and performed by Michael Hermiston for this year's Emergency, is a visually striking piece, which initially makes one eerily uncomfortable. On a stage strewn with refuse, a figure emerges from a garbage bag,

encapsulated in clear plastic, looking much like a new born calf.

Hermiston then proceeds to develop as a character newly discovering his extremities and his environment, all within the bag, and then finally the bag itself. Realizing he is confined and artificially separated from his world, he finally rebels and seeks to discover the world beyond what he has known. This allegorical piece succeeds by depicting a myriad of ideas about humans and human nature.

Penelope Thomas's *Scratching the Surface* opens with a young woman with metallic blue hair and utilitarian dress at centre stage in a harsh, low light. Lithely moving about the stage in a style alternately rigid and constrained, punctuated by moments of lyrical fluidity, Thomas's expression remains impassive throughout the performance. It is her movement which relates the dichotomy between the public and private face.

Anne Ryan's 1996 work *When a Happy Thing Falls* was performed with great subtlety by Janette Froncz to live musical accompaniment by Hermiston on piano.

Besides its beauty and tenderness, this piece is notable for its use of a repeated series of movements each depicting a varying overriding theme. Passing from playful and

innocent, through to confident and joyous and then to leaden and sombre, this work is a showcase for a seasoned performer to display her ability in all its refinement.

Anne Ryan's *Stones in the River* is a quiet and deliberate piece allowing the performer to display control and sensitivity in a piece that looks deceptively undemanding. Being able to exude that calm and serenity, while standing on stones or sitting has about it a mesmerizing quality.

Closing Program E is a remount of 1993's *Protuberant Metal Test*. Created by Phillip Kummel and Dy Gallagher, this piece appears to have been designed to create dishrags out of six young and exuberant dancers. Often looking like a square dance for street punks and young toughs set to the dissonant and deafening strains of thrash metal, this work succeeds in presenting the audience with powerful movement, brash in its physicality. This favourite from the early years of Emergency will leave the audience breathless.

Tonight, Program E will run again at the Market Hall at 9:30 pm. Program F, consisting of Kate Story's *Crazy...Crazy like a Fish*, will premiere at 8 p.m.

Jonathan Fiddler is a freelance theatre and dance critic for The Examiner.