

Chicago Reader


Listings for Thursday, June 26, through Wednesday, July 3, 2008

LUCKY PLUSH PRODUCTIONS

Peter Carpenter has pulled off a dance of ideas, inspired by Bertolt Brecht's exploration of unmotivated conflict in *In the Jungle of Cities*. Layering spoken texts, movement, and recorded music, the 75-minute *The Sky Hangs Down Too Close* manages both to suggest Brecht's characters and, more important, wrestle with the unresolved question of which is the prime mover in human struggles: individual psychology or sociological forces. The texts, ranging from deconstructions of Brecht's lines to descriptions of televised mixed martial arts fights, are crucial -- yet sometimes difficult to hear and follow. There's a bigger payoff in several scenes performed either



wordlessly or with redundant narration and devoted to the power of money: dancers shove pennies off tables, lunging as if using body English on a pinball machine, and smell or kiss dollar bills in funny yet horrifying sequences. From a touching/chilling mother-daughter duet to a rough-and-tumble mix of ballroom dance and wrestling for three couples holding tight to each other's wrists, the choreography richly embodies Brecht's complex vision.

 Fri-Sun 6/27-6/29, 7:30 PM, Galaxie Chicago, 2603 W. Barry, luckyplush.com, \$16-\$20. --**Laura Molzahn**