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David Bazemore

Yes is a long time at UCSB's Hatlen Theater

***Yes is a long time* at UCSB's Hatlen Theater**

**Dance-Theater Production Blended Drama and Comedy on
Friday, September 30**

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by ELIZABETH SCHWYZER

“We were sure,” a wife pleads with her husband. “We

wanted to be sure,” he replies, backing away, wringing his hands. “We wanted to be sure about something.”

This struggle for certainty in the face of creeping doubt is at the core of Mira Kingsley’s original dance-theater production, *Yes is a long time*. The show is based on a 2007 news story involving a meteorite that crashed through the roof of a suburban New Jersey house. In Kingsley and playwright Sibyl O’Malley’s retelling, the arrival of the small metal object in the family’s guest bathroom represents far more than a random celestial misfire; it’s destiny — and proof that they are part of “something much bigger.”

It’s an interpretation that verges on melodrama, and in this low-tech, three-person production, humor is crucial to diffusing the intensity. Kingsley herself plays the couple’s 7-year-old son, for whom a meteorite from outer space is perfectly in keeping with his superhuman status. While his parents wrestle with existential questions, he’s happily exploring the limits of his powers (“I can turn my feet into grass!” he announces. “I can go into the basement with the lights out! I can hold the floor down!”).

Part of the magic of this show is the way the performers slip from realism to fantasy and back again. At one point, the three whiz past each other like planetary bodies, reenacting the events that brought this small chunk of metal to collide with their lives on Earth. As the father, Antonio Anagaran Jr. grips the bathroom sink and stares at his reflection in the mirror. The next moment, he’s crouching low, using his hands to paint a picture of his neighborhood — “house, door, streetlamp, cloud” — and suddenly, he’s more god than man.

The set for this show is minimal: a doll-sized house that helps with shifts in scale, and a video screen upstage. At one point, all three performers don lab coats, goggles, and rubber

gloves for a “heavy metal” concert — particularly delightful is Jacqueline Kim’s transformation from straight-laced housewife to mad scientist/rocker.

There is no physical object to represent the meteorite. Instead, the performers dip their hands and forearms in shimmering gold dust. Every moment of contact, every vigorous movement smears glitter across a body or sends puffs of it into the air. Even in the end, when scientific tests reveal that the object is simply space junk, the family is left with traces of stardust in their hair.