

## Dance

By Tobi Tobias  
February 15, 2005

Impelled by her unabashedly maverick imagination, Cathy Weis melds dance, video, and the fact that she has multiple sclerosis into haunting theater pieces. Her new *Electric Haiku: Calm as Custard* continues her creation of vignettes in which movement by live performers "partners" with simultaneous video images of the action. The camera work often doubles the number of bodies and, at the same time, fragments their motion into staccato freeze-frames so that the anatomy becomes brilliantly spastic. When it's the mover who holds the camera, the body appears to careen wildly through space. Weis uses these techno tactics so intuitively that they pose unnerving questions— about how and what we see, and about the nature of physical control, a subject central to dancers and people coping with the body's failure (which means, at one point or another, all of us). Despite its serious issues, Weis disarms her audience through an ingenious homemade aesthetic that allows room for both funk and fairy tale. The fanciful costumes help, too, as does Jennifer Tipton's first-day-on-earth light.

