

*Emergence* was not a typical Off Broadway show. There was no plot. There were no characters other than the real personas of the people on stage, namely Patrick Olson, whose music was being displayed.

Though I liked the show overall, I had some issues with the presentation. Before each song, Olson gave a monologue about the ideas that inspired it. The monologues themselves were lovely and thought-provoking, but the transitions were abrupt and broke my immersion. The songs did not appeal to my stylistic tastes, but I found them enjoyable nonetheless. The backup singers had gorgeous voices and I loved the way they each got a moment to shine. I wish they got showcased in the Spotify recordings as much as they did in the live show!

My main issue with the show was that it seemed a little under rehearsed. There were many aspects that could have been tweaked just a bit to make the whole experience much more cohesive. For example, the dancers had an expressive, fluid style, but their movements seemed to be choreographed just slightly out of sync at times. The lights also could have used just a little adjustment so they didn't shine directly into the audience's eyes. I found that the technical aspects detracted from what was otherwise a great show.

At first, I worried that *Emergence* would slip into faux-philosophical one-liners and misunderstandings of scientific concepts. In actuality, it did the opposite. Olson weaves together science with human emotions, using concepts from astronomy to illustrate the wonder of life. He spoke of the sheer size of the universe without making the audience feel insignificant, which is not an easy task.

Although I had some criticisms of the technical aspects of the show, the actual content of *Emergence* went above and beyond my expectations while showcasing some absolutely stunning performances.