

Do You Nomi? Tron, Glasgow

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Dance critic

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**New York in the early 1980s and the city's East Village is a haven for creative misfits.**

Nonetheless German-born Klaus Nomi stands out. White face, black lips; an exaggerated widow's peak, its noir intensity morphing a receding hairline into a style statement. Monochrome costumes, one a triangular vinyl tuxedo, help earn Nomi the cachet of looking like an alien – until he opens his mouth. Then he's hailed as singing like a diva. His falsetto octaves embrace arias, disco covers and pop music.

He is the spirit of the times: punk with the added outrage of ecstatic showmanship – and if he becomes the darling of the New York avant-garde, he also reaches out to confused kids from Kansas who find themselves rebelling against the Establishment to the strains of Saint Saens.

In 1983, Nomi died (aged 39) from Aids-related complications. And while some contemporaries and associates – Bowie, Iggy Pop, even Tiny Tim – remain in the global consciousness, Nomi was soon forgotten by all but a loyal few. This affectionate, informative dance-theatre piece – co-created by choreographer Alan Greig and director Grant Smeaton – does more than locate him at the heart of that 1980s cultural crossroads, it succinctly evokes the exhilarating vortex of New Wave art forms and the shockwaves that hit the hedonistic New York gay scene when Aids came on the scene.

Drew Taylor's lookalike Nomi really captures the aura of "otherness" he felt, and cultivated, while Laurie Brown, Jack Webb and Darren Anderson conjure up that febrile context in pithy word and sinuous, sensual movement.

Was Nomi's camp rooted in pop or performance? The question never resolves – it's now attached to Lady Gaga. Plus ca change, and all that.