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the village

VOICE

Spring Fever Dreams

IT'S BEEN STRANGE

BY DEBORAH JOWITT

If Scott Heron and Chris Cochrane were 14 years old, you'd say, "These guys may really make it someday!" But of course, what's endearing about them is that they're grown-up and savvy. In their let's-put-on-a-show recital (at Dixon Place through April 28), climaxes deflate, cards up the sleeve hide in plain sight, and mysteries rain down if someone pulls the right cord. Cochrane sings his own compositions with a stoically morose air, while playing guitar (acoustic and electric) from a little wheeled platform that boasts a lamp, an amp, and a maze of wires.

Heron does almost everything else. He executes passages of dancing that his skinny body translates into knife-sharp angularity. He catches and devours an invisible fish, wearing little but a black jacket and a hat decorated with a vacuum-cleaner tube into which he sings, joining Cochrane on "Teach Me How to Breathe." He repeatedly tosses an umbrella behind him and tries to catch it; it becomes a fantail. He enters as a cranky old man pushing a table (tin cans fall from above, "Love Me or Leave Me" is heard), then turns into a jerky hooper who is also a hilariously incompetent magician. A trick knife, a fake mustache, surprising costume changes, a lip-synching dinosaur puppet, and taped counsel on fisting are some of the evening's features. Kleenex is big.

Transitions can be casual—OK, what next?—or circuitous. Why not walk over the backs of the audience's couches (Dixon Place seating is funky) to get to the piano and play some Grieg? But, at the end, Cochrane makes music so Heron, bearing knives, can make an Entrance in heels and red ruffles and have a sort of flamenco hissy fit to end the evening. Inspiration and foolishness, method and madness race neck and neck.