

The body of the bodies

"Début" by Jenny Beyer at Kampnagel Hamburg

Veröffentlicht am 18.01.2019, von Gastbeitrag

Hamburg - Von Anna Semenova-Ganz

In her new piece Jenny Beyer explores the autonomy, intimacy and closeness which happens between a dancer and the audience in the format of the solo. Although that is not a real solo, because the choreographer works in the group of four dancers and each of them appears on the stage to perform his or her solo. Together they form the whole performance "Début". Although it is not a real debut ... more like a debut of debuts of the solos, if you understand what I mean.

The group of four dancers is intertwining with each other outside of the stage; one body disconnects from the crew and moves to the stage. It is a female body and her repetitive energetic movements of the head make the edges of her curly hair move with the delay, for a moment the feeling of physical impossibility in distribution of the speed emerges. A small gap in reality. Dancer Nina Wollny is pregnant, but as she starts her solo with the back to the audience this becomes clear only after a while. The transformation of the female body was not in focus of the research, it came together with the body, constructing a new attitude and a new quality of the spectator's attention.

After Wollny finishes by hiding between the spectators, Chris Leuenberger replaces her on the stage. Again, we see a single body, but it comes unavoidably in the relation with the previous one, revealing the difference in the material and in quality. Leuenberger works with his breath as a sound scape and includes the sound deconstruction in his work, while Nina used electronic music for her part.

All four dancers have been working together for a few years and know each other very well: creating an independent solo inside of such group seems like a real challenge. Sometimes one may notice the references between the movements, but, as dramaturg Igor Dobrišić noticed: „These are the traces of the common group memory and there was no intention to create any relation between the solos.“ They are just unrelated elements put together, what can be described through a difference between collage (a combination of suiting elements) and assemblage (bringing together the things which are not meant to suit). Four solos in one "Début" are the assemblage.

After Leuenberger leaves the scene with literally slamming the door, Matthew Rogers shows his work, where he is almost naked, vulnerable and dependent on the object he interacts with, treating it like the burden and his precious at the same time. Jenny Beyer is the last one presenting her solo - a different story without any attempt of concluding or summarizing the piece. She also starts with the back facing the audience and also brings the spectator to the state of uncanny through her movements, mimic and, last but not least, because she is also pregnant.

Beyer sees all her projects at the timeline, she knows where she came from and is aware of where she intends to go. She has started this project as a research about intimate relations between performer and the audience, but the transformation of her own body and the moment of the spectator's recognition turns the vector of communication in another direction. Her body surprises with its state of transformation and brings the perception of the openness to a new level.

All four bodies are different and have their own qualities, in the end all of these bodies, male and female, pregnant and not, merge into one. Because everything you saw during the whole work was a single body on stage, the body of the bodies. It has female features, male features, it transforms, but it always stays open for the spectator.



"Début" von Jenny Beyer



"Début" von Jenny Beyer



"Début" von Jenny Beyer

