

The Gazette

MONTREAL | FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2008

REVIEW

aKabi tests physical limits of dancers

It's 60 minutes of teetering, hobbling

KATHRYN GREENAWAY
THE GAZETTE

The dancing going on at Salle Pierre Mercure last night was downright precarious.

Turkish choreographer Aydin Teker tested the physical limits of her dancers by placing them in towering platform shoes.

The piece is called aKabi, a play on the Turkish word for shoe, and it's visiting Montreal as part of the ongoing Festival TransAmériques.

Perhaps using the word dance in this context is a bit misleading. Physical experimentation would be more to the point.

Teker wanted to know what could be accomplished by four physically-fit human

beings while wearing the platform-shoe equivalent of black briefcases on their feet.

The results of her experiment unfolded in a series of vignettes featuring solos, duos, trios and quartets.

The skillful Serap Meriç, Emre Olcay, Ayse Orhon and Sebnem Yüksel performed in absolute silence or to discordant string noise and industrial hum designed by Manuel Mota and Margarida Garcia.

Oddly clinical, the 60 minutes of teetering, hobbling, collapsing onto the inside of ankles, flapping cumbersome foot gear, towering tall like pale-skinned golems and lowering into inelegant crouches was either too

much for some or not enough for others.

A steady trickle of ticket-holders slipped out during the performance and the applause was polite but restrained during the curtain call.

It must have been a fascinating process to tinker with the idea of hobbling the body in new and challenging ways during the creation process in the studio. (Even if the wear and tear on the dancers' ankles, knees and hip joints must have been significant.)

Unfortunately the outcome of a movement-laboratory does not automatically translate into an engaging performance piece.

aKabi is at Salle Pierre Mercure, 300 de Maisonneuve Blvd. E., tonight at 8 p.m. Meet the artists after the show. Tickets cost \$38.

Today's dance at FTA:

Last chance to catch *Chambre Blanche* — Michèle Noiret's moving look at the feminine psyche — at Agora de la Danse tonight at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$38.

Choreographer Paul-André Fortier, artist/writer/musician Rober Racine and filmmaker Robert Morin collaborate on *Cabane*, a work that changes venues four times over the course of its five-show run. Tonight it plays at Espace Go, 4890 St. Laurent Blvd., at 9 p.m. Meet the artists after the show. Tickets go for \$38.

For Festival TransAmériques info, 514-844-3822 or www.fta.qc.ca.

kgreenaway@thegazette.canwest.com