

## REVIEWS

### **American Dance Festival 2008 - Kahdija Marcia Radin, Aydin Teker, Compagnie Maguy Marin**

2008-06-25

---

Someone Else's Shoes: A compelling trio of companies takes ADF by storm

The American Dance Festival presented three distinctively original companies June 24th-25th in Duke University's Reynolds Industries Theatre, in a display of cultural uniqueness and dynamic variance that captivated some and drove others to storm out. Kahdija Marcia Radin, Turkish choreographer Aydin Teker, and France's Compagnie Maguy Marin featured works of astounding depth and thoughtful presence.

"Rapture," a solo performed by Khadija Marcia Radin herself incorporated constant whirling movement syncopated with slight variations in her arms and hands which added flavor to the monotonous circles made with the rest of her body. Dressed in airy shades of blue and a white head scarf, she moved to the sounds of traditional Persian music and the soothing voice of a poet who accompanied her onstage. At times hypnotic, he told in his poetry the benefits of his faith, which was assumed to be Muslim. Simple and joyful, the work extolled the silent virtues of a religion mostly interpreted in Western society as mysterious and dangerous.

Aydin Teker's "aKabi" tested the physical abilities of a quartet of dancers wearing black shoes outfitted with enormous rubber soles. Before lights rose on them, only clunky thudding sounds were audible as the dancers rolled across the space in their cartoon shoes designed by Ahmet Inceel. The human form became suddenly altered with the addition of these quirky limb extensions as the dancers experimented with the limits of movement with and despite them. Like aliens experiencing gravity for the first time, the four awkwardly crept forward in a suspended walk to the low rumbling hum of a cello. At first careful not to fall off the platforms, they became more daring as the piece progressed, rolling over to the side of the shoes which alternately resembled bricks and flippers. They used the shoes as leverage in partnering phrases and found several contorted ways of putting weight on the shoes. In homage to the costumes, which were the stars of the piece, it was fittingly only the shoes that remained for a charming spin on the curtain call.

"Umwelt," created in 2004 by Maguy Marin slapped the audience awake with wind gusts and decibel levels capable of piercing eardrums. Three guitars lined the downstage corner and were played by a rope that slid across them connected on both sides of the stage by two spindles that spun it. The sound coming from these instruments occasionally reached unbearable crescendo not unlike labor contractions, racking my attempts at pleasant thought and sending shivers down my spine. Several rows of plastic mirrors lined the space and rippled in strobe-like waves behind a wind machine that blew across the space.

The cast of four women and four men began a series of nonstop everyday moments in life, shifting out from behind mirrors in pedestrian clothing and sometimes carrying items that represent certain aspects of our lives. Methodically and randomly, two people would appear and disappear behind another mirror, then four others came into focus and out again, hair blown back, clothes flapping in the wind tunnel created by offstage equipment. They wore prom dresses, crowns, dresses, lingerie, handcuffs, and sometimes nothing, becoming odd characters in odd moments of time. They carried babies, books, trees, ate apples, shone flashlights, took pictures, kissed passionately, and fought with each other in fleeting moments of daily routine. As the piece wore on...and on...and on, performers started to disregard objects, tossing them out into the space, rocks and chicken wings and baby dolls strewn about before the action.

At minute 45, people began to lose interest and patience, walking out of the performance in exasperation. "Umwelt" can be accused of being many things: too involved, too long, too pretentious, too loud, too much. What all of these accusations have in common is that they are reactions to a work of art that traverses the limits of comfort and normalcy. What I hated about this dance is also what I loved about it.

The Martha Graham and Lar Lubovitch Companies are next in the lineup of ADF's exciting season. Watch for them June 26th-28th at Duke's Page Auditorium.

Ali Duffy MFA [abduffy@worlddancereviews.com](mailto:abduffy@worlddancereviews.com)

© Copyright World Dance Reviews 2008