

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Stephan Takacs

"...not a fucking swan..."

by Zornitsa Stoyanova

A pair of dancers (Margot Electra Steinberg and Mary-Carmen Webb), anonymous and unmoving with foreheads on the wall and one hip relaxed, are positioned in the far-left corner. Across from them a black clad body (Celine McBride) enters. Her legs bare, she moves forward in an illusion of over stretched “Barbie” strides wearing a silver party wig. The fake hair obstructs her face and she becomes a sexy poodle, moving into forward bends, long lunges and shakes.

As rhythmic beats (music by Liam O'Connor) start to pump, the unmoving pair animates. All three come together to giggle and hiss in a caricature of girlishness, every facial expression contrived. Their arms reach through the waist of their skirts to pull out glitter and I laugh out loud — a “pussy” party in full swing.

A pillow fight spills white feathers and trash everywhere. “I’m not a fucking swan” one screams, and a trio version of Swan Lake’s four cygnets proceeds. In formation they embrace, fake laugh, hold hands, and pet each other. Screams and screeches, a face of anger, displeasure, giggling and cackling color the constant angular movements and high kicks designed to show legs and buttocks.

All their emotions are too stylized and fast fleeting, I wonder who these young women are. Denied their real affect by the design of choreographer Paige Phillips, I am all too aware of the limited pop culture archetypes we as women are often stuck with.

[Après moi, l'obscurité](#) (*After me, the darkness*) by choreographer Paige Phillips, Mascher Space Cooperative, Jan. 26-27.

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