

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation

Letter to the Editor: Polish Solos Reconsidered by Eva Karczag

i've been wanting to respond to your writing about the polish performances. i do understand what you say, and it is often boring to have to watch work that revisits ideas from the past (hence my reaction to parodies, re-workings, or other distortions of ballet, for instance), however, i see, what i imagine these performances did, somewhat differently. it's difficult to understand the full value and power of a process without actually experiencing it. we all did so many experiments of playing with and performing pedestrian activities that were often exceedingly boring, that we've internalized the effects. these young dance makers probably have to feel these feelings, and they have to feel them with an audience present. just the other day, paxton said 'you can't rehearse an audience'.

reading your review made me remember a friend from budapest, a sensitive, intelligent, courageous individual, who, when i told her the negative reaction a couple of slovak students had to the offer of certain freedoms within the creative process of a piece i was making, told me about her first experience in a workshop with a french theater director. she was unable to embrace the freedoms she was given, firstly, because she didn't have practice in dealing with freedom, and secondly, because she had a deep fear that if she did embrace what was being given, and then she lost it, it would be almost more than she felt she could bear. this, and the fact that i often teach, and see work in budapest, got me thinking. what we take for granted is not so easily found in places that have experienced repression and the resonances of repression for so long; what we've practiced and have internalized is still often being explored and discovered there; what i now find boring, they still need to play through their bodies, so that they, too, have the experiential, embodied knowledge that will allow them to go deeper and ask the further questions you were missing. so whereas i am bored by experiments done with ballet and modern dance, i can still sit and watch someone vacuuming the stage for a long time and see it as necessary and valuable.

eva karczag

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