

Akemi Takeya - ZZ - Reviews

Dissipation of the self

The Japanese choreographer Akemi Takeya in "ZZ" plays with her body and the illusion of self. She stands alone in the middle of a large puddle of light, holding a half-empty glass in her hand. With circling movements of one finger she makes the glass sing, draws a fragile note from it which like a coil of sound winds through the theatre space, persisting although the dancer already is moving her finger some inches away from the glass. In her youngest solo work ZZ in dietheater Künstlerhaus, the Japanese-Austrian choreographer Akemi Takeya plays fluently on the keyboard of illusions. The theme of her piece is the tricky self, the lust and load of a – dissolving – ego. The self is a trick. The impression of self for its bearer mirrors a self she carries around with her. "She feels dizzy", Takeya whispers into her microphone. From this point on, her presence starts falling apart. The parts, her appearance, her action mix up with the dramaturgy of light, sound and composition. This tissue of dissolution is further expanded by the performer until she veils herself in darkness, beginning to yell. Abruptly, she stops, puts a dictaphone onto the floor and replays the vocal eruption. In ZZ, Akemi Takeya – with creative support by Ong Keng Sen, Armin Anders, Jan Wagner, and others – brings into play those capacities of dance which formulate the unspeakable, which excavate texts between and under the words, so that the body stories are sculpted beneath the skin of verbal narration. The rhizome of discourse thus unleashed she interprets through the subject in a strict form which even its decay submits to: when the word is dissolved in smoke and trashy balloon twirls. When a body with a formulating power like Takeya's is put into a host of impersonations, it becomes clear how dance at its best functions. The narration disappears before the all too literary-schooled glance. Then, after one has wiped the scales of words from one's eyes, a fascinating parallel world unfolds.

Helmut Ploebst (DER STANDARD, 20/21-12-2003)

The dancer dazzles

[...] "ZZ", that is the dancer's breath as much as the hissing of the fog machine. And it is the sound of illusions leaking into scattered stage spheres. The subtle irony of this work reminds of Erna Ómarsdóttir's solo "IBM 1401 – A User's Manual" which deals with the absurd stage existence of the performer rather than with the computer. Takeya as well as Ómarsdóttir present the stage pathos of dance, leading the onlooker into a trap: pathos works where there is belief in it. At first glance, both works appear nearly harmless – but they contain dynamite. When the onlooker runs into the dazzling trap, he/she finds himself/herself again in the sentimental illusion space of his/her own ego. And as a state of mind this self falls prey to the glowing touch the easier since the shrewd artists Takeya and Ómarsdóttir are masterly dancers, too. That dazzles magnificently.

Helmut Ploebst, ballettanz international, February 2004

Plentiness in frugality

It seems as if thoughts find their way by means of the body. Akemi Takeya presents her performance "ZZ", which was co-supervised by director die Ong Keng Sen, on many levels. While the audience enters the Künstlerhaus, the slender figure defines the stage. At the beginning of her journey in 15 parts through past, present, and with a glance at the future she draws her finger over the rim of a glass. The intensely audible tone is further enhanced and subtly placed in many shapes by the electronic musicians Arnold Haberl and Bernhard Gál. As if Takeya always were the cause of these subtle soundscapes, manifesting her solistic act of artistic self-assertion through acoustic waves. In precise walks, brilliantly accompanied by light technician Jan Wagner, Akemi Takeya develops the compass of a life, from the smallest movement in silence to the shaking "letter" to the mother. Plentiness lies in frugality.

Andrea Amort, Kurier, 19.12.2003