



Dance Review: Elfi Schaefer-Schafroth, Swiss Solo Show is Super-Inspirational

Posted On 02/24/2010 14:20:58 by iDANZCritixCorner

The Joyce SoHo often presents unique, even avant-garde artists, and Elfi Schaefer-Schafroth exemplifies this fact. As a soloist choreographer and dancer, she has created more than five full-length solo works and toured the world performing them. In her work, she may incorporate movement phrases given to her by an international group of her friends and colleagues, which contributes diversity and greater depth. Her work successfully incorporates several points of view, as she works with a team



to create each performance. Jochen Heinrich directs many of her solo works, having studied biochemistry and working as an author and dramatist, his skills certainly aid in pulling all the different elements of the production together. In this performance of *Lichtungen*, Martin Schäfer creates the stage design, Beat Escher and Daniel Mouthon the musical composition with Lara Stanic aiding in sound design, Kathy Kaufman designing the lighting and Bea Bögli as costume designer. When all these elements come together, the effect is a magnificent performance that transcends through dimensions of space and time.

Part of the stage craft transforms from quilt to hanging laundry to ocean waves, and simple alterations in costuming along with dynamic changes in lighting, and the use of projections all create setting. Elfi insists that her show would not be possible without the assistance of her team, who she introduces with warmth and admiration.

The dancing blends in with the other elements to create a seamless production. The experience is like a drug-induced trip, as four varying scenes are juxtaposed, leaving the dancer to reflect on them. Thematically, this work plays with the collective unconscious, stretching to manipulate different scenes from different times and involving different women. Elfi's dance connects and expresses aspects of these various characterizations through her clever choreography. Blending dance with everyday movements, Elfi seamlessly tells a fascinating tale through poetic choreography and specific subtle expressions. Some moments are ecstatically happy, others dark and brooding. In the course of one show, multiple surprises occur as stage elements shift, further broadening the minds of the audience.

Elfi is an inspiration to watch, a woman that didn't dance professionally till after some dancers retire, she continually flows with fresh energy and ideas. Her art is defined by the abstract, her dance an evolution of gesture. This mesmerizing production is a unique experience, fueling dance as an essential art form and tool for communicating aspects of life experience that cannot be put into words. In one word: beautiful.

iDANZ Critix Corner

Official Dance Review by Lea McGowan

Performance: *Lichtungen*

Choreography: Elfi Schäfer-Schafroth

Venue: Joyce SoHo, New York City

Performance Date: Friday February 12, 2010