

It's not easy beeing a "Hero%!"

First a lone hand appears. Followed by an arm and a head. With eyes hidden behind an obligatory black mask, the hero appears at the top of the wall. Like spider-man, he is glued to the wall, striding along it every which way with confounding agility...

Thus commences Karine Ponties' latest creation, *HERO%*, performed by Eric Domeneghetty. We discover a man alone in a small space, a sort of cube with outwardly sweeping walls. In this contained universe, the man attempts to embody one of those superheroes we are constantly sold in films, games and advertisements. To achieve this, he employs certain classic elements: brightly-coloured tights, a black mask, a large belt... But not only that. The man has done his research and is attempting to comply with instructions from an array of varyingly bad tutorials the Internet has to offer on the subject.

Eric Domeneghetty is astounding in this silent portrayal of an everyday man attempting to come to terms with our dreams of glory. Who amongst us has not, at least once, dreamed of being able to fly, to run faster than the speed of light, lift ten times our weight in order to free someone from an evil trap, possess supernatural powers to reap revenge on all the wicked on earth (or at least that irritating neighbour who has been a thorn in our side for too long)? Eric Domeneghetty plays the part to perfection: that of an ordinary man dreaming of a sublimated version of himself. Once again, he manages to use his incredible suppleness to create strong, strange, funny, and even at times touching images.

Alone on stage, he must play every role. He attempts to fly (or at least creates this illusion) by teetering on the back of a chair, by lying on it, by launching himself across the stage. He climbs, falls, slithers, jumps, and sweats, continually switching between his everyday clothes and his superhero uniform. He even goes so far as to take himself hostage, tying himself to a chair in order to easily liberate himself later.

Playing magnificently with lighting effects (Guillaume Toussaint Fromentin) and sound (David Monceau, who co-created the piece with the choreographer), this short production (just under an hour) is a regaling expedition into human absurdity. And when, at the end of his journey, our aspiring hero is confronted with Ben Hur, Indiana Jones, Steve McQueen, Bruce Lee and even *The Magnificent Seven*, he is swept away in a whirlwind of ghostly images.

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