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Physical uncertainties

Karine Ponties creates *Luciola* at the Briggittines
A bestiary seeking hilarity in the midst of horror

Sub-titled *Fantasmagories organiques*, the latest production from the Dame de Pic dance company interrogates the body, its uncertainties, and the fantasy of creating another: More beautiful? Stronger? Not necessarily. But a body freed from the constraints of anatomy.

One of the starting points for this piece for four performers can be found in the solo *Brutalis* in which the body – that of Karine Ponties – became a changing and brutal landscape, a cosmology of skin, flesh and bones in mutation. For *Luciola*, “the challenge was to create a fantastic bestiary and to organize it according to an apparently normal social code,” explains the choreographer. Here the artist did not want to work on deformity but on the capacity for metamorphosis, “a long process to try and invent other bodies, principally by using lit objects”, she explains. The battery-powered light boxes manipulated by the performers are used to isolate or highlight parts of the body, limbs, muscles, curves “which become abstract due to the absence of any reference to human anatomy”. In other words: “Touching dimensions of a being to confront in the same instance the question of perspective, whether it be pictorial or philosophical.”

Thus, in *Luciola*, it is the monster in man that attempts to break cover, “by pushing the limits of the body in its most uncertain zones”, by “revealing the animal where we least expect it”. It is also, therefore, a sense of otherness that is questioned in this “ironic ancestral ritual ballet of eight legs.” Thus, the choreographer explores “through the dancer’s body a chaotic and primitive universe, far removed from the known centre of the world, where we encounter hybrids”. In order to “stalk the fantasy emerging from the depths of the imagination” and to “attempt to unearth the joy buried in disturbed bodies”.

The performers are Ares D’Angelo, Eric Domeneghetty, Shantala Pèpe and Vilma Pitrinaite, with Guillaume Fromentin (lighting), David Monceau (music) and Wilfrid Roche (scenography and lit objects).
