

KAAI
THEATER

CULLBERG BALLET & DEBORAH HAY
FIGURE A SEA

15 > 16/02/2019 20:30 | KAAITHEATER
DANCE | 60 MIN.

BRUSSELS
DANCE



CULLBERG BALLET & DEBORAH HAY

FIGURE A SEA

NL Een golvende constellatie van lichamen deint onophoudelijk. Laat je meevoeren door *Figure a Sea*: een zee van mogelijkheden en een meditatie over kijken naar muziek, naar vluchtigheden, naar synchrone en onverwachte momenten. De choreografie voor 21 dansers* is tegelijk technisch virtuoos en uitgesproken minimalistisch. Dansicoon Deborah Hay daagt de intelligentie, schoonheid én humor van de Cullbergdansers uit. Het resultaat is 60 minuten sublieme puurheid, schoonheid en lichamelijkheid.

- *Figure a Sea* is een ontmoeting tussen Cullberg Ballet – het belangrijkste hedendaagse dansgezelschap in Zweden – en twee pioniers uit de kunstwereld. Deborah Hay, die de postmoderne dans van de jaren 60 mee bepaalde, tekent voor de choreografie. Ze heeft haar wortels in het experimentele Judson Dance Theatre en was één van de eersten om alledaagse bewegingen te introduceren in dans. De Amerikaanse componiste en muzikante Laurie Anderson (*O Superman*) creëert een soundscape. Ze begon haar carrière als beeldhouwer en performancekunstenaar en ontpopte zich tot een grote vernieuwer binnen de elektronische muziek. Cullberg Ballet stond al eerder in het Kaaitheater met *Plateau Effect* (2015).

FR Une constellation ondoyante de corps remue en permanence. Laissez-vous emporter par *Figure a Sea* : une mer de possibilités et une méditation sur le fait de regarder de la musique, des moments fugaces, synchrones et inattendus. La chorégraphie est à la fois virtuose sur le plan technique et résolument minimaliste. L'icône de la danse, Deborah Hay, lance un défi à l'intelligence, la beauté et l'humour des danseurs du Cullberg Ballet. Le résultat ? Une heure de sublimes pureté, beauté et corporalité.

- *Figure a Sea* est une rencontre entre le Cullberg Ballet – la plus éminente compagnie de danse contemporaine du pays – et deux pionnières du monde de l'art. Deborah Hay, qui a contribué à définir la danse post-moderne dans les années 60, assure la chorégraphie. Son travail tire son origine du contexte expérimental du Judson Dance Theatre et elle fut l'une des premières à introduire des gestes du quotidien dans la danse. Laurie Anderson, la musicienne et compositrice états-unienne (*O Superman*) crée le paysage sonore. Elle a entamé sa carrière en tant que sculptrice et artiste de la performance, pour ensuite se révéler comme grande novatrice de la musique électronique. Le Cullberg Ballet était précédemment au programme du Kaaitheater avec le spectacle *Plateau Effect* (2015).

EN A fluctuating constellation of bodies heaves incessantly. Be swept away by *Figure a Sea*: a sea of possibilities and a meditation about looking at music, at volatility, at synchronous and unexpected moments. The choreography for 21 dancers* is both technically immaculate and distinctly minimalist. Dance icon Deborah Hay challenges the intelligence, beauty, and humour of the Cullberg dancers. The result is 60 minutes of sublime purity, beauty, and physicality.

• *Figure a Sea* is an encounter between Cullberg Ballet – the most important contemporary dance company in Sweden – and two pioneers from the art world. Deborah Hay, who was one of the founders of post-modern dance in the 1960s, provided the choreography. She started out with the experimental Judson Dance Theatre and she was one of the first to introduce everyday movements in dance. The American composer and musician Laurie Anderson (*O Superman*) has created a soundscape. She started her career as a sculptor and performance artist, and she has been one of the great innovators in electronic music. Cullberg Ballet has performed at Kaaitheter before with *Plateau Effect* (2015).

* De voorstellingen in het Kaaitheter worden door 17 dansers uitgevoerd.
The performances at Kaaitheter will be executed by 17 dancers.

CREDITS

CHOREOGRAPHY AND DIRECTION Deborah Hay | PERFORMERS Adam Schütt, Anand Bolder, Agnieszka Sjökvist Dlugoszewska, Camille Prieux, Daniel Sjökvist, Eleanor Campbell, Eszter Czédulás, Eva Mohn, Giacomo Citton, Heather Birley (guest), Katie Jacobson, Suelem de Oliveira da Silva, Tilman O'Donnell (guest), Ulrika Berg (guest), Unn Faleide, Vera Nevanlinna (guest), Vincent Van der Plas | COMPOSER Laurie Anderson | SOUND DESIGN Martin Ekman | LIGHTING DESIGN Minna Tiikkainen | ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGN Heikki Paasonen | COSTUME Marita Tjärnström | CHOREOGRAPHIC ASSISTANTS Mira Mutka, Laurent Pichaud | REHEARSAL DIRECTOR Lisa Drake | CO-COMMISSIONED BY Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Peak Performances, Balletto di Roma, Centro per la Scena Contemporanea, CCAP | WORLD PREMIERE AT Dansens Hus, Stockholm 24 September 2015 | Cullbergbaletten IS DISTRIBUTED BY Koen Vanhove, Key Performance

NOTES ON BARKING DANCING DEBORAH HAY'S WORK

BY CHRYSA PARKINSON
EDITED BY REBECCA HILTON

New York:

I went to see Deborah Hay dance a solo. She never hesitated. She resolved nothing. Her virtuosity stayed outside of her. She could move through it, move it, or let it sit there in the space next to her. I saw her dancing tiny, vivid choices that seemed to make choreography appear but how did she know which choices to make? I smelled rules but couldn't see them. I left the theater quickly. I barked a little to myself on the way home.

Brussels, Amsterdam, New York:

I started barking a lot.

Texas:

I showered, got dressed and stepped out onto the theater's hot, wooden front porch, barking.

Deborah: What're you barking at?

Me: I'm a dancer. I bark at choreography. I can smell it.

Deborah: Don't you like choreography?

Me: I love choreography. I love dance.

Deborah: So why are you barking?

Me: I don't know. Outraged pleasure? I can't stop.

Deborah watched me and listened. It felt good to be near her while I barked.

Brussels, Amsterdam, New York:

I found as many different ways as I could to refine and sharpen my bark. I imitated. I synthesized. I studied. I barked up and down. I barked at one side and then hurried around to bark at the other. I got right up close and barked loudly. I stepped down and stood a bit farther away and barked softly: muffled, breathy speech-barks.

Brussels, New York:

Deborah asked me to come dance a new piece of hers. She taught me, Mark Lorimer, Ros Warby and Wally Cardona 'The Match'.

New York, Montpellier, Melbourne, Berlin, Stockholm:

Me: Bark, bark, bark.

Deborah: Chrysa, Lighten Up.

Me: Bark.

Deborah: What If...

Me (snappily): I need to bark. Barking is work. Barking is trying. Barking is working on trying.

Deborah: Turn Your F*^king Head.

Me (growling): Other people bark. I love them. I want to be like them. I want to get better at barking.

Deborah: Okay, but there's bark there, already.

Me: Bark?

Deborah: You're not wrong to bark. You're not barking up the wrong tree.

But you're barking at bark.

Me: Grrmffshhrk.

Deborah: Here, just take this choreography. Your job is to leave room for the bark back.

Everywhere, Ever Since:

Things bark. Places bark. Entitlement barks. Trouble barks. Esthetics bark. A lost bark returns days later. There are barks of dismay, and ancient, lazy yawpbarks. A bark can forget how embarrassed it was and jump up to land again, this time as empathy. I bark at coordination, at paradox, at ethics. Something like the weather barks back. I bark at patience and listening. Detail barks back. Light barks. There are dances within dances within dances there. The audience barks. Choreography barks. I listen for room.

Chrysa Parkinson is Professor of Dance, Director of New Performative Practices DOCH, School of Dance and Circus Stockholm University of the Arts.

TO LOOK IN ORDER TO SEE

BY SUSAN LEIGH FOSTER (SUSAN LEIGH FOSTER, CHOREOGRAPHER, SCHOLAR, DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF WORLD ARTS AND CULTURES/DANCE AT UCLA, USA.)

As a tool for how to generate and also practice dance movement, Deborah Hay has recently proposed the directive “turn your fucking head.” This phrase crystallizes Hay’s ongoing inquiry into the relationship between perception and consciousness. The directive is first and foremost an invitation simply to look in a different direction in order to see. Over the years of her work with trained and untrained performers, Hay witnessed dancers succumbing to a fixedness in terms of their experience of movement and their motivation for dancing. Habitualized through years of technical training as well as the socialization entailed in subject formation, this fixedness manifests as a repertoire of standard responses to the world and also as a perceptual dullness, an inability to see what is in front of one while one is dancing. Turning one’s head literally affords an opportunity to look at the world anew. It invites a rich inpouring of information, an energizing of one’s physicality, and the possibility to re-make one’s world.

Beginning with her earliest choreographic projects, Hay has experimented with the use of spoken and written instructions designed to guide the dancer’s perceptual activity while dancing. Often times addressing the body as an aggregate of individually conscious cells, Hay asks: “What if every cell in my body at once has the potential to perceive time passing?”; “What if Now is Here is Harmony?”; or “What if every cell in my body has the potential to perceive the uniqueness and originality of space and time of all there is?” These koan-like questions emphasize their own inability to be answered or to be answered in any conclusive or final way. By asking dancers to focus on these questions in rehearsal and in performance, Hay deviates radically from conventional models of performance in which movement is presented as something to execute “well,” “with confidence and clarity,” or “with feeling.” Instead, the practicing of dancing becomes a site of interrogation and reflection, one without resolution.

Although “turn your fucking head” indicates an insistence, even an anger about the need to do something differently, the directive simply to change the visual array of what one can see does not deny old habits but rather steps to the side of them. As dancers both devise and perform the sequences of images that compose Hay’s dance, they are invited to re-perceive what they are doing and thereby make it new. By continually asking oneself to turn one’s fucking head, the dancer becomes aware of the fixedness of perception at the same time that s/he apprehends something unique. For Hay this tool enables the dancer not to deny old habits but rather to keep them at bay, to keep them from functioning in their routinized way.

And “turn your fucking head” serves a further and perhaps most important function: it provides dancers with a focus for the practice of continually renewing their relationship to dancing, which, finally, is what the dance itself is about.

DEBORAH HAY: BIOGRAPHY

Deborah Hay, born 1941 in Brooklyn, has achieved icon status among choreographers. Her work was formulated in 1960s experimental Judson Dance Theatre in New York, one of the most radical and influential post-modern art movements. Hay's dances center on undoing the body's reliance on learned behavior by enlarging the field from which a dancer can resource movement. She spent many years choreographing solo works for notable artists including Mikhail Baryshnikov. The choreographer William Forsythe helped influence her international career after seeing the premiere of her quartet *The Match* in 2005 at the Montpellier Dance Festival. She has been awarded many grants and awards including the inaugural and groundbreaking Doris Duke Artist Award in 2012. On May 5, 2015 France's Minister of Culture and Communication awarded Hay the title of Chevallier de L'Ordre Des Arts et Des Lettres.

In 2015, Deborah Hay created the work *Figure a Sea* directly for Cullbergbaletten with music by Laurie Anderson. The work has been highly acclaimed by audience and critics all over the world, toured in the US and all over Europe and has been presented at prestigious festivals such as Montpellier Danse and the International Festival of Contemporary Dance of the Biennale di Venezia in 2018.

#VISUAL

MORE VISUALLY STUNNING PERFORMANCES

**Laure Prouvost, Sam
Belifante & Pierre Droulers**
WE ARE WAITING FOR YOU

Laure Prouvost's first work for the main stage is rooted in her film *Dit Learn*, in which a quick succession of everyday objects, images and texts encourages you to imbue everything with new meaning. You can expect an 'expanded cinema experience' in which recorded and live images duplicate the actions in the theatre – dance, music, sound, projection.

Kaaithheater | 13>14/03

Jimmy Robert
JOIE NOIRE

In this tribute to artist and curator Ian White (1971 – 2013), Jimmy Robert investigates the worlds of disco and death. Expect a critical meditation on the legacy of the 1980s with a specific focus on AIDS, activism, gender and race.

Kaaistudio's | 14>15/03

Radouan Mriziga
O.KANAL

How can dance, choreography, performance, and architecture create a new kind of space together? During Performatik19, choreographer and Kaaithheater artist-in-residence Radouan Mriziga will install a residency project at Kanal – Centre Pompidou. He is inviting dance and architecture students to share their knowledge and practice.

Kanal – Centre Pompidou
13>17 & 20>23/03

Noé Soulier
PERFORMING ART

Now that bodies are occupying more and more museums, choreographer Noé Soulier is presenting an opposite movement: what if instead of bodies, the artworks themselves adapted to a new space? *Performing Art* presents twenty pieces from the collection of the Centre Pompidou. You do not see them as you walk through a museum, but from your seat in the theatre.

Kaaithheater | 22>23/03