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Disrupting dance in *We're pretty fuckin' far from okay*

★★★★☆ ?

By Isabella Zijp, 13 February 2017

The Brussels Dance! festival brings a lot of contemporary dance performances to the stages of the European capital. [Lisbeth Gruwez](#) presents the third and last instalment of her 'triptych on the ecstatic body' during this festival. *We're pretty fuckin' far from okay* explores our anxiety and fears. Dancers Lisbeth Gruwez and Nicolas Vladyslav zoom in on what fear does with the body: shallow breathing, accelerated heart beat and tightened muscles are the stimuli for an interesting and disrupting choreography.



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In the first part of the performance Gruwez and Vladyslav are already on stage while the audience is still looking for their seats in the dim-lit and intimate auditorium of the Royal Flemish Theatre.

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“gradually merges into a smooth choreography in which the dancers display perfect body control”

Reviewed at KVS, Brussels on 9 February 2017

PROGRAMME

We're pretty fuckin' far from okay
(Lisbeth Gruwez)

PERFORMERS

Lisbeth Gruwez, *Dancer*

Nicolas Vladyslav, *Dancer*

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As soon as the music – a soundscape by Maarten Van Cauwenberghe with the sound of breathing patterns as the foundation – starts the two dancers get absorbed by their increasing fear. They freeze, raise their shoulders, wipe the sweat from their forehead and reach for their heart. The movements are small but have a huge impact. As an audience member you become aware of your own body and feel so nervous that you get uncomfortable in your seat. As the choreography develops, so does the experience. The dance carefully grows into some kind of trance in which the whole body gets restless and movements melt into fast paced dance. By the time it reaches its finale and the lights grow bright the tension releases in both the dancers bodies and in the audience.

In the second part Gruwez takes this performance further and examines the relationship between two people in a fearful situation. Will they be attracted to each other in their search for comfort or will they drag each other along in their fears? The dancers lean on each other to keep themselves in balance, but at some point one of them leans too heavily on the other almost making them both collapse. Meanwhile two panels in the backdrop slowly move together, almost unnoticeable. They cleverly represent the changing environment of the

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CCN Ballet de Lorraine on tour in NY

Andrew Blackmore-Dobbyn, 8th February

The ability of CCN - Ballet de Lorraine's dancers to rise to the occasion given superior material like Cunningham's *Sounddance* demonstrates that they are capable of fine dancing but it was not sufficiently on display in this program.

★★☆☆☆

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Jaime Robles, 5th February

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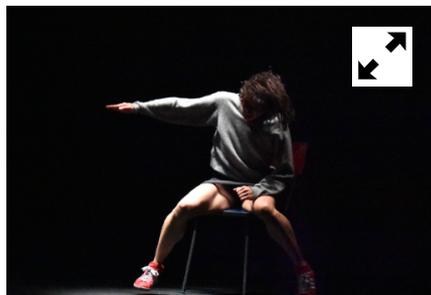
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dancers.



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Zooming in on the body in fear could easily become repetitive and predictable, but the choreography is carefully built up and gradually intensifies so to keep up the tension. And while it does so, the convulsion-like movements gradually merge into a smooth choreography in which the dancers display perfect body control. Perhaps the only criticism I have of the performance is that the second part, despite being an interesting take on the theme of fear, doesn't quite live up to the very strong, loud and exciting experience of the first part.



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