

A REVIEW OF AH/HA BY LISBETH GRUWEZ

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A Tableau of 5 motionless dancers, are set on a wave of billiard green carpet, curving up against the wall. The amplified moment of stillness invites us to indulge the framing of their zany postures and abstained facial expressions. Their eclectic combinations of attire are standard to that of a Berlin charity shop ranging from mini skirts to a 90's double denim ensemble. A pulsatile squeaking sound begins to reverberate, prompting a meticulously controlled bounce through the dancers knees on the spot. Imagine a noise and gesture that your joints would do having not 'oiled' them in 15 years.

As the sound ceaselessly continues, the dancers begin to shift their focal point to and away from us whilst minutely distributing the bounce they have so rhythmically harnessed, progress across their whole body.

Outsetting to recognise the bearings between each other, they collectively begin to react to one another and travel the space.

These transcending regroupings echo the absurdist mannerisms of scratched video game interactions between avatars.

The pace and quality of the gestures grow with the sound and as it becomes louder and more rapid, to what now could be compared to a broken mattress springing out, so did their physicality.

The squeaking has come to a close as they start emitting wheezes of air at random, dismembering into a chain reaction of episodes that revisit the whole experience of a laugh through the notion of the voice. Reconfiguring under a gleamingly yellow Belgian street lamp-floating central to the space – "We have travelled from day to night".

The process has a yearning for its pinnacle point of nonsense as they attempt to fully articulate every style of laughter. Only to deconstruct what it is to laugh and juxtapose it with what it is to scream of pain. They regurgitate this motion until an atmosphere of angst has developed and the piece begins to descend.

The mood has straddled us in engagement as we face the exhaustion and hysteria of these two alternate extremities.

Taking the audience as witness, the dancers standing begin to lean into a tight mass caressing and feeling warmth for one another. Making their way toward the floor returning us to what they had familiarised us with at the start, stillness.

We return back to day time after this stalled moment and the sound has began to have a glitch within it, stopping at the pronounced sound–he-he.

With every glitch they lift their heads until they eventually stand up to conclude the song and the glitch follows through with a greeting of ‘Hello’.

The concluding song is Lionel Richie’s – Hello that has embedded in it a history of intimacy and ridiculousness.

Two thematics, I feel that most address the way in which we interact and censor ourselves now. The dancers have become athletes of their emotion and exercised ours by unpicking what it looks like to divide your body and its sound, in order we become aware of that frequency we all possess. The performance and song choice adequately questions thematic of interactions in our present day. Amplifying how we express ourselves at this point in time that is verging on to silent communication just as much as the exploration of how we laugh.

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