

Bob Dylan at every Step and Turn

**Can you dance the Bob Dylan? Oh yes! Flemish performer Lisbeth Gruwez pays homage to the Nobel Prize winner for literature at the “Tanz in Bern” festival.**

Everybody has been talking about Bob Dylan. In mid-October, the singer-songwriter icon was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. But not only is he an inspiration in literature but also in dance: With “Lisbeth Gruwez dances Bob Dylan”, Flemish choreographer Lisbeth Gruwez dedicates a five-minute dance piece to the folk-rock legend.

**Gruwez picks up speed**

Does it work? Oh yes! We hear a creaking and a rustling, then Dylan’s husky voice sings out for the first time. Lisbeth Gruwez opens her pieces with a simple “Good Evening”. Dressed in black trousers and a white silk blouse, she stands barefoot in the middle of the black box-like stage.

The glistening dancefloor, which absorbs the little light there is in the room and reflects Gruwez’s silhouette, is eye-catching. Gruwez’s partner, Maarten Van Cauwenberghe, has set up on the left edge of the stage, behind a counter with two record players.

Eye-catching: Lisbeth Gruwez becomes one with the songs of Bob Dylan. Image: zvg

“Blind Willie McTell” is played. Gruwez moves slowly. With her hands on her knees, gentle waves go through her body. Following the rhythm of the song, Gruwez’s body movements gradually pick up speed.

Her left hand repeatedly glides from her knee, over her shin down to the floor and back up again; her curly hair follows this smooth movement. The music stops. Gruwez stands still.

The second Bob Dylan song, “Simple Twist of Fate”, starts. Gruwez’s body movements become more vibrant and relaxed. Constantly turning, she immerses herself deeper into Dylan’s universe.

Her body finds words for Dylan’s melodies and translates them into a sort of physical presence. At the beginning of the fifth song, “It’s Alright, Ma (I’m Only Bleeding)”, she takes off her black trousers and dances another haunting duet with Dylan in white knickers and her silk blouse.

**In no way artificial**

The audience is now totally captivated by her ecstatic spell and responds with spontaneous applause. However, the highlight of the evening is the sixth dance performance to “Sad-eyed Lady of the Lowlands”.

Here, in the dark room lit by Van Cauwenberghe’s single spotlight, Gruwez once again finds physical language for Dylan’s poetry, on the floor lying on her back and lying face down.

Gruwez’s movements are in no way artificial this evening. She becomes one with the songs of Dylan, becoming completely absorbed in them and at times forgetting all about herself – with an intensity that enthralls the audience.

Those who don’t like Bob Dylan will definitely feel out of place in this intense physical experience – his bluesy songs are played one after another late into the night. Gruwez’s physicality leaves everyone wanting to go home and dance with their speakers at full blast. (Berner Zeitung)

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