

LE CLOU DE LA PLANCHE

Bibi Ha Bibi

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Face-to-face, standing in the center of a bifrontal stage, the two artists settle themselves as to initiate a gaze fight, after a more peaceful introduction. Suddenly a long, powerful and voluntary growl springs from the two closed mouths. We are in what comes before the voice, we are somewhere in the innards or into the throats of two dancers who have decided to indulge themselves in a strange duel wearing interesting costumes – between a childish bodysuit and a tribal costume.

HAnd-to-HAnd

Their duet is notably inspired by the Inuit vocal play which is a duel of guttural or panting songs - normally opposing women - whose loser is the one who first loses his breath or gets to laugh. Gradually, the intertwining and superposition of the sounds of the two bodies compose a two-part score which ends up getting confused in the ear: we are no longer quite sure of who pronounces which syllable at which moment.

The two performers develop this close-to-trance brawl, including body percussion, fight dance, stutterings ... They wander through all "toys" at their disposal, offering the audience a successive or simultaneous exploration of different human organs responsible for the emission of a sound - mouth, throat, vocal cords, belly, diaphragm ... - combined with a variation of looks, contacts, movements, choreographies that can brighten it up or amplify it. Whether in babbling, hand playing or discovering the body of babies, or in rumbling and gurgling animal, this recourse to pre-language and cry lets appear a return to the primitive, to something deep inside and bestial.

The appeal to the body and to the first instincts are the common point of both seduction and confrontation. Partners or rivals? The border is happily stained at the pace of regular pantings and rocking bodies. And what if the peacock parade was first and foremost intended for the other male? And what if the two big men, by dint of seeking each other, and of getting closer to intimidate one another, were actually appreciating the game more than the victory? We can then begin to see the appropriation of wrestling by the two dancers and the references to haka or capoeira as a kind of parody of a rock solid virility, with its clichés and its paradoxes.

HeAd-to-HeAd

The play is also to be considered, aside from this reading, for the simple delight of the absurd (apparent) and the search for unusual forms. Without fear for their dignity, the bodies of the two young and lively dancers let their complexes apart and assume improbable positions, unglamorous noises, uncomfortable situations

and ridiculous movements.

They look quite alike Jan Švankmajer or Terry Gilliam's cartoon characters ... Depending on the scenes they are playing, the two performers make the audience laugh as much by their comical mimics as by their inexpressive complexion, although one of them is better at the game of the "who laughs last ". However, what makes the situations really funny is - Bergson was right - the exaggerations of the life, the illusions of the natural and the mechanical effects such as repetition, what outdoes everything else ...: sending us back to a not so logical or civilized humanity as they force us to laugh instinctively and sincerely. The uselessness, the insignificance or the purely playful nature of their actions makes them extremely funny.

Beyond that, by dint of repetition, they create unusual motifs that give rise to other images. Then a loophole slots into the motif, or the partner's non-cooperation generates progressively a metamorphosis moving toward an alternative gestural phrase, a new gimmick, or a new paragraph, and a dramaturgy sets in. As it goes along, it may miss a more global and important evolution than the progressive undressing - between mutual stripping and loss of war assets: there is indeed a point of arrival which is nevertheless not so far away from the starting point, after all. On the other hand, the lights provide to the running play some depth and breath, changing the atmosphere, offering our eye the chance to focus on more intimate details when the comical is dropped apart, such as on the sensual tension, on the complicity of a synchronization and the mutual listening between the artists, on the hesitation of the protagonists ...

The technical and semantic exploration (corporal sounds, cultural references) and the clever humor of this absurd duel complement each other as two partners of an obscure ritual.