

GAUGE DANCE THEATRE
Katrin Riedel-Kelly (London - Berlin)

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Approach

“The work of the German born artistic director of Gauge Dance Theatre, is marked by deeply reflective, sensitively structured and philosophical thought-through concepts: she exposes traces of experiences in the body; may it be related to personal themes such as loss of self, dysfunctional relationships or societal and individual issues concerning collective memory – a view behind social masks and beyond postmodern views of the world. She creates body narratives: perceptions of sensations, moments and space.”

My work NIGHT dealt with issues concerning the loss of self and loss of relationship(s) in the repetitive and functional motions of everyday life; Memories lost, a fragile bridge of togetherness. My intention was to show how subjective and selective memory is for each individual: what is important for one person, isn't of significance for the other. Separate Worlds come into being.

Stylistically, I find it important to find choreographic ways to transform memories or emotions into a physical narrative and in the end into a total language of the stage; so that the word as a form of communication is still significant, but yet equal with the other elements of the medium.

A further aspect that is of interest for me is to work with the aging body, which speaks its own language and is thus meaningful in itself.

I am interested in the traces that life imprints on the body: what kind of (body-) stories can I tease out. How many ways are there in which an experience can be perceived; such as the experience of time and loss of time.

The body, the creation of a movement language is of course at the centre of our work in the studio: what and how does something move us. Development, manipulation and variation of the movement elements, which emerge from the theme, conversations and further research, form part of this process.

The translations of emotions and stories into a moving language: from lived experience into artistic form; the search for authenticity in movement: the form is not imposed on the body, but develops organically from the body; The content shapes the form.

I work with a variety of approaches to movement and choreography, such as Butoh and further forms that deal with the tension of being vs. functioning on a physical level. Other than that my approach is deeply rooted in the philosophy of Rudolf Laban as well as its contemporary research.

The audience plays a significant role in my work, because I feel very strongly that a lot of artistic practice is too contained and not accessible enough. Of course this type of art also has its place, but yet communication and engagement is something that is a personal desire of mine: to evoke, to touch, to induce reflection- that is my aim.

In this context I have developed a method which is based on reception aesthetics, semiotics and dance theories and which allows the choreographer to ,control' the level of engagement right from the beginning of the process.

Thus it is also essential for to see the work as a whole – to see how the elements of the stage (costume/set/ sound..) come together and interact with each other. How can I create a sense space and a language that is meaningful through experience rather than through intellect alone.

BORDERS + PASSAGES

Language and time – structures which bind us, but at the same time deliver our identity. The borders between an existential necessity for these structures and an inscape or the manifestation of an outer persona are invisible and rather blurry. Time and language are coterminous: "to be in the one is to be in the other" (Derrida 1982)

Breathlessly enclosed in a world alienated by time as the 'master and measure of social existence, which appears more and more mechanical and empty. We can break out, but do we have enough courage for freedom; for the leap into the unknown, into a liminal space, which doesn't host our usual points of reference including our own fears, to which we cling despite all contrary statements?

Concept/Choreography: Katrin Riedel-Kelly

Performed by: Raisa Kröger, Saskia Oidtmann + Anja Richter

Costume/Set: Susanne Bachmann (K. Riedel-Kelly)

Lighting Design: Roth 01

Music: Ipso Schaltwerk, Quid in Shrapnel Prod.

Texts: Tänzerinnen + K. Riedel-Kelly

PR: Silke Wiethe



NIGHT - A Physical Theatre Piece

„(...) in our silence, in what is unsaid, and that what takes place is a continual evasion, desperate rearguard attempts to keep ourselves to ourselves. Communication is too alarming. To enter someone else's life too frightening. To disclose to others the poverty within us is too fearsome a possibility.“ (H. Pinter, 1998)

Night is a physical theatre piece, which is inspired by a short play written by H. Pinter. It questions our efficiency to communicate with each other. For *Night*, the aim was to create a physical narrative by re-discovering and translating these often contradictory intentions and complexities of human interaction and thought into a 'total language' of the stage.

One room, two people, one past, two memories. Two people that have lost themselves and their relationship in the years of functioning.

A desperate attempt to rescue what lies in the past and seems forever lost in the present.



Premiered in London at the Bonnie Bird Theatre in 2004. 2007: Electric Theatre Guildford, UK

Cast: Tracy Collier and Anthony Straeger // Sound: Sound effects Quid & Shrapnel; Tori Amos: 'Smells like Teen Spirit' / Costume + Set: Katrin Riedel-Kelly // Length: -30 min.

Previous productions Selection

BLUE: Performance Installation + Film Production

A Co-Production with Backlight Dance Project.

'Ourself behind ourself concealed should startle most' E. Dickinson

The effects of postmodern architecture and industrial citylife on the (female) body and psyche. The inescapability of the surveillance systems, open spaces and density of human life allows for no intimacy/privacy. Being watched, learning to permanently examine and watch ourselves. The social persona or mask, behind which the inner landscape of fear and dreams lies bare. A fake shell beneath which more isolation and alienation to ourselves and our environment rather than a feeling of openness, togetherness and closeness that is continually promoted in postmodern society, is growing. The longings, needs, fears - in short: the values of the soul, of what can be defined as natural as well as our relationship to nature including our own nature (body + self) - remain inevitably trapped inside. The theme was translated into movement, soundscape and determined the editing process.

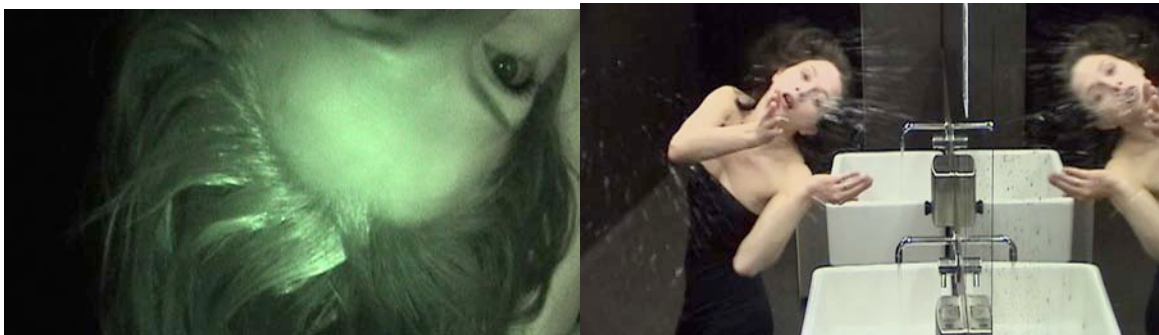
Performed and conceived by: U. Marthe, Katrin Riedel-Kelly + C. Teague-Mann

Video Direction: C. Teague-Mann

Edit: C. Teague-Mann and A. Straeger

Length Film: 12.51 Min. Length Live Performance: 25 min.

Premiered in London in September 2004. In 2008 to be seen at the following film-festivals for dance on film: 'Shoot' Stockholm, Sweden; Pool '08, Dock 11 Berlin + Motion 3, ADA Berlin



Previous Productions Selection

L FT: A Dance Theatre Piece - Solo + Duett

Research Theme: From lived experience to artistic form – how to translate the original experience into a work and thus create an experience for the spectator.

Drawing ideas out of a personal object: a meditative process, the performer identifies ideas, situations, actions, smells etc. associated with the object and subsequently responds to those associations without the object. Shaping the material considering how Laban's effort phrasing corresponds with Jung's 4 emotion factors/attitudes.

Content: Loss – the absent presence of people that shape our own identity. We embody them as well as our own self.

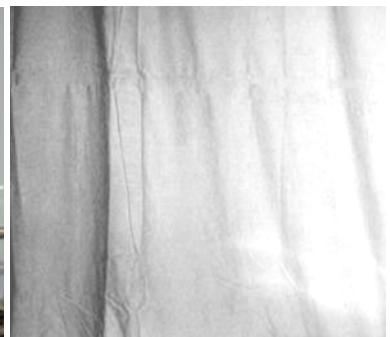
Performer Solo: Tracy Collier

Performer Duo: Tracy Collier + Katrin Riedel-Kelly

Sound: BBC Soundeffects + Soundscape by Quid+Shrapnel Productions

Length: solo:10 min. – duett version: 12 min.

Shown at the Studio Theatre, Laban Centre, London 2004





BIO KATRIN RIEDEL-KELLY:

Katrin Riedel-Kelly was born in Germany and is again resident there after having completed her training at the Laban Centre in London, where she completed her BA (Hons) studies in Dance Theatre in 1999 followed by MA studies in European Dance Theatre Practice in 2004 that she completed with distinction. From 2001-2002 she spent some time in Los Angeles, where she studied acting and movement for actors at the Tom Todoroff Studios and voice with Edward Sayegh.

Katrin is an actress, dancer and a dance theatre maker in her own right. Her work has spanned both film and theatre. Films include for example: *Das Herz ist ein dunkler Wald* produced by X-Filme, and more recently the English Independent Feature 'Call of the Hunter', in both the UK and Germany. As a dancer/performer she has performed all over the world: Germany, France, Italy and the UK.

Her most recent choreographic work entitled 'Borders+Passages' premiered in July 2008 in Berlin and was very well received by audience and critics alike.

Katrin has in the past been a guest-lecturer at the Laban Centre London and at The Abbey, Pontlevoy, France; Universidad des Americas, Mexico and Jacksonville University, Florida, for which she co-organised a study abroad programme for dance and drama students from universities in the United States. This programme, which took place in June 2007 ran in conjunction with Jacksonville University, Florida. Details for this programme and further teaching can be viewed at: www.artshouseproject.org.

Besides continuing her choreographic research, she is teaching acting and movement for actors. Research includes topics such as: presentness in the performative frame, emotional flow through body movement, Laban's choreology as tool for actors and directors.

For a full CV or more information regarding company projects and/or her workshops/lectures and how to book her as guest lecturer/choreographer, please contact Katrin at: katrin@gaugedancetheatre.de



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EDUCATION:

1995-1996	Studio Beer's	Vienna	PPDE (Prep. For Prof. Dance Education)
1996-1999	Laban Centre	London	BA(hons) Dance Theatre (2:1)
2001-2002	Tom Todoroff Studios	Los Angeles	Acting Studies
2001-2002	Edward Sayegh	Los Angeles	Voice
2003-2004	Laban Centre	London	MA European Dance Theatre Practice

DISTINCTIONS:

- Distinction for choreographic work "Night".
- Distinction for overall achievement in MA programme.
- Distinction for dissertations.(BA+ MA)

DISSERTATIONS:

- Dance History/Dance Criticism:Who writes history? An examination of dance criticism for dance history on the particular example of dance criticism in the third Reich.
- Untying the Text, Revealing the Unspoken.

GUEST ARTIST/LECTURER (past and present):

Jacksonville University, Florida, USA.

Laban Centre, London, UK.

JU Study Abroad Programme, The Abbey, Pontlevoy, France.

Universidad des Americas, Puebla, Mexico.

OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

1994-1995 Ballet and Choreography/Community +Youth programme/ Espelkamp, Germany

LECTURES/WORKSHOPS:

- Laban for Actors/Performers. Exploring the effort system to work with language, text and to create characters.
- New Subjectivity and Forms of Alienation. The Absurd Theatre of Beckett, Pinter & Co. Language and psychological reality in dance theatre.
- The Importance for Choreographer, Performer and Critic to understand how Meaning is created in Performance.
(Literary Theory applied to the performance medium)
- European Dance Theatre: The Body Personal, the Body Political.
- Gelling out an image. Dance Theatre in the making. From lived experience to artistic form.
- Devising Physical Theatre: creating – performing – perceiving. Choreographing Perception.
- Bertolt Brecht's work and its relationship to *Neue Sachlichkeit*.

TEACHING MOTTO:

To integrate the theoretical inquiry with a more practice-based approach. Promoting understanding through embodiment and thus being more honest to the nature of the craft.

My work has a very definite theoretical underpinning, because I believe that it makes the work in the studio to be more specific and allows the student to locate one's artistic practice within the broader framework of a historical, socio-political and cultural context.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND INTEREST:

- Presentness in Performance: Being versus re-presenting. A study for Actors and Dancers. Phenomenology: understanding and knowing through being and experience.
- Somatizing the Text/ Physicalizing the subtext
- Reception theory as a method for the choreographic process.
- *Plastikwörter*. Knowing what we say. The reality of words versus the reality of being.
- Performance through perception: issues of performativity and identity in the everyday.
„...Bodies are made of ideas as much as they are made of flesh“

OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND INTEREST :

- Yoga + Bodywork (based on Grotowski, Laban, Butoh)
- Listen to your body: movement inquiry workshops - finding your own form, through which each individual becomes more present and thus more able to express themselves. This workshop is useful for artists and actors as well as for the general public.

PERFORMANCE CREDITS/EXPERIENCE (selection-please request full theatrical CV):

- Time4Change Theatre Company, London
- Backlight Dance Company, Florida/London
- Show Stop Italia, Genua, Italy
- Series of Showcase works by O.Fishof (Israel), Retina Dance Company(London) and others.
- Ballett der Stadt Espelkamp/Minden

OWN PRODUCTIONS:

Borders+Passages

Night

Blue, an interactive video performance installation. Co-production with C.Teague-Mann/Backlight Dance

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Solo I

CURRENTLY:

In 2006/2007 Katrin functioned as Co-director for a study abroad programme run by the dance and drama department of Jacksonville University, Florida. So far the programme has been taking place in France. In 2007 it ran successfully for the first time in Berlin. Further, she is currently curating a book about performative writing and women's issues. Her new dance theatre production entitled 'Borders+Passages' premiered on July 18th in the Pumpwerk Berlin.

As a performer she last shot for the Independent feature Film 'Call of the Hunter' in the UK, in a lead role.

MISC.:

'Research about 'transgenerational transference' – what are children/grandchildren 'inheriting' from their parents and ancestors. With particular focus on WWII and the forced 'displacement' of people by the Red Army.

In 2006 she has been invited to speak at a panel discussion entitled "„Lange Schatten – Folgen der Vertreibungserlebnisse bis heute“ (Long shadows - consequences of displacement up to today") about the personal story of her grandmother, who fled Silesia in 1945, as well as about her artistic work related to this particular subject: how the body enables to break the silence.

In April 2009 she was invited as a panel speaker to the political talkshow 'FAKT IST....' The show is broadcast by the MDR/Germany.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Equity UK, The Spotlight.

OTHER:

Languages: German (Mother-tongue), English (excellent), French (very basic)

Skills: IT literacy, Design programmes: Photoshop, QuarkXPress.

Interests: Literature, Painting, Yoga, Swimming, Photography

Other: Publication of Poetry

Silence, A Language, Electric Theatre Guildford



K. Napier - Guardian (online)
Thursday, March 8th, 2007

It is acknowledged that we are often betrayed by our body language. It is also acknowledged that Pinter is a master of exposing the anguish that lies beyond the ordinary language of day to day existence.

Night, the first piece in Time4Change's programme (**directed by Katrin Riedel-Kelly**) at the Electric Theatre last Wednesday appropriately electrified both of these factors, galvanising from them *a poignant piece of physical theatre* depicting the decay of a relationship. Tracy Collier and Anthony Straeger searched desperately through the detritus of routine and repetition for what had once connected, but now bound them.

The other three pieces of the evening, a trilogy under the title *Silence: A Language*, did similar work for the kind of silences which Beckett so eloquently explores between and within his characters. Arresting images remain in the mind following this series of pieces: Satya Dunning searching desperately through a mound of jigsaw pieces for the pieces of her life to give herself shape; Sarah Mardel sweeping her enormous crinoline majestically but with increasing desperation over the selfhood of **Katrin Riedel** and Satya Dunning until finally a small act of subversion released the strings of a straight-jacket and the possibility of personal revolution.

Finally, four men engaged in a manically beautiful – or beautifully manic – dance of avoidance and game-playing. Andrew Hodson as the dreamer was surrounded, invaded, bewildered by the patterned repetitions of Christopher Hawes, Samuel Davies and Anthony Straeger in a juggling, bowler-hatted kaleidoscope of eloquent failure to connect. It was an astonishing, funny, moving evening. Tracy Collier's new company is clearly one to watch for.

BORDERS + PASSAGES - GAUGE DANCE THEATRE

Reviewed by Dr. Karin Schmidt-Feister

Time, heavy like lead. Three women. One body without a soul. Imprisoned by ropes. Wondering and searching the space. They crawl, rising with immense effort, only to be shaken by small eruptive jumps, they fall to the floor. Pulsating and knocking, the dull ticking of clocks and bells, metallic noise.



Sharp, eruptive arm and leg movements, shoulders squeezed up high.

Movement patterns, which burn themselves deeply into one's skin. It is only much later that a hand caresses another's face, a head searches for a shoulder to lean on and a hand is placed upon the heart.



The crisp movement language of Katrin Riedel-Kelly (born 1976, London-Berlin) that defies anything that could be defined as decorative turns this 60 minute production into an intense female monologue about the fear to lose oneself. Movement and language fragments collide. „I am the woman, of a woman, of a woman“. Raisa Kröger, Saskia Oidtman und Anja Richter shape these slowly emerging reflections of a broken existence with knife-edge precision. A dance caught between distance and intimacy. Small synchronic movement sequences are montaged into an infinite loop of expectation and resignation. After the slight unprecise direction leading to the distinction of one's own

image in the mirror, the slow walk of the three women towards each other appears like a great romantic vision. But one woman is lost to the world. Accompanied by a melodic piano motive she digs and dives into a large mountain of clothing. „I am the woman, of a woman, of a woman“. A woman, who is desperately searching for a way out of „her bound clothing“. After presenting work abroad, *Borders and Passages* is Katrin Riedel-Kelly's first work shown in Germany. It celebrated a very successful premiere on the 18th of July to a captivated audience in the Pumpwerk Berlin.

Author: Dr. Karin Schmidt-Feister (critic Neues Deutschland// Lecturer Palucca Schule Dresden)