

# A confusing journey through time

MARCH 19 2015 | Charlotte De Somviele  
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Time is out of joint, Hamlet lamented back in the day. And it still is in *The Middle Ages*. The scenography sets the tone for this alienating journey through time. The audience sits on two stands, facing each other. Five dancers, wearing Renaissance costumes and anachronistic runners, walk this way and that. The light moves unpredictably from one side to the other. It is confusing in its simplicity: as if the eyes of the past pierce back if you look forward.

The choreography, a montage inspired by dance history, refuses to adopt a perspective. The walking makes way for courtly couples dancing to lute music. When the metronome takes over, Zins-Browne leaps into the modern era in which the individual, and no longer social order, defines time. Courtly dancing makes way for asymmetry. After an intermezzo by what are actually Neanderthals, Zins-Browne continues his journey through time into the future, even though it isn't too far from our current voyeuristic visual culture.

However, here it is not so much about what the references show, but how they organize time and how the audience loses itself in the various temporal layers. Like the dancers, we ask ourselves with each historical switch where we have 'now' landed; we look for a context.

But is that now really 'now'? Does that 'now' exist in itself? Via a well-considered choreography, Zins-Browne tells us something about our uprooted temporal experience in this information society, where memory and reality, copy and origin, past and future overlap. What is 'our' time, now that we are more nostalgic than ever about an (artificial) past and simultaneously want to live at a faster pace than ever before? Does a time still exist that we can share or is everyone living at his own pace and in his own reality, depending on the information that defines your world view?

A representation worth seeing again – yes, contrary to the spirit of the day.