

Phenomena

The dance of things ****

Thursday 28 March 2013, 03:00

Author: Sarah Vankersschaever

LEUVEN –

I never thought I would need a dictionary to write about a dance performance. But Greek choreographer Georgia Vardarou's Phenomena was influenced by 'phenomenology'.

So here goes: 'Phenomenology is a philosophical method (developed by Husserl) that attempts to describe the constitution of the world in the mind and the essence of things by means of the mental-intuitive consideration of things, not by rational knowledge'. (Yes, I also read it twice.)

In Vardarou's practice, this takes the form of a choreography in which each movement, each detail becomes a phenomenon that takes place before the eyes of the audience. A look at the spectators, a dancer touching the elbow of another, a hand on a stomach: a lot of small gestures, and yet there is nothing trivial in *Phenomena*.

Three female dancers move almost noiselessly across the white stage. On the floor, three coloured areas that light up. The dance they perform is charmingly absurd: like a being that has hatched on the spot, they patter across the stage with tiny steps. And fall over when another dancer throws herself at their feet.

But nonetheless arms and legs sway in wide arcs through the air: with such incredible suppleness and elasticity that we wonder whether the dancers would bounce back like a big kangaroo ball if we let them drop from the air.

Georgia Vardarou has created a highly personal language with an apparently simple vocabulary. She places it with *Phenomena* in a range of contexts, from silence to funkier or ambient-influenced soundscapes. In doing so she demonstrates the versatility of her idiom as a choreographer and dancer.

We were hypnotized by the hour-long performance.

Georgia Vardarou is well on the way to becoming a phenomenon.