

MEANWHILE, A BUILDING

Gaëtan Rusquet: Meanwhile, MDT

Architecture has sometimes been called frozen music. Why not stilled movement? The intersections between bodies, room and form – in other words dance – and the rhythmical and spatial design known as architecture, are obvious. Often, site specific dance succeeds in such an encounter: one discovers a place anew when it is filled with bodies in movement.

It is not really dance as we know it that we are invited to when we watch Meanwhile by the French Gaëtan Rusquet. He is actually an educated scenographer that has dedicated himself to performance art, and is currently active in Brussels. Of course, one wants to add this detail about the performance mecca.

On approximately ten large tables and the floor lie Styrofoam blocks with the same measurements as bricks. Rusquet and two female performers (one of them, I guess, is a dancer “for real”) construct and construct, carry and construct. The tables are dragged together to form a solid scenic platform and gradually one can see that the bricks have been placed cleverly so as to hold each other in place. After a half hour of initial construction, discrete vibrations from under the tables begin, and slowly the meter-high construction trembles, collapsing from the inside. Holes appear and fragility follows. Highest up on each construction stands a performer, and when the blocks eventually crash down, so too do both performance artists.

Headfirst and tumbling down. End. It is more interesting than it sounds and can obviously be read on many levels. A critique of civilization is the closest at hand.

Dance stages are nearly alone in sheltering performance art. This is good, of course, but would be even better if this “ongoing thing” could be closer to the battle grounds of city planning and architecture, and all of the many, we, that live in the midst of this societal construction. This is absolutely nothing to reproach MDT and the other co-producers Workspacebrussels and Impulstanz Festival in Vienna for, quite the contrary. But we were not so many people that came to watch this Saturday evening.

I imagine a different European map where high atmospheric pressure wanders between Brussels, Berlin and Vienna and creates rainfall all around. And that more than just a few should like to know how the wind blows in the time of climate change.

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