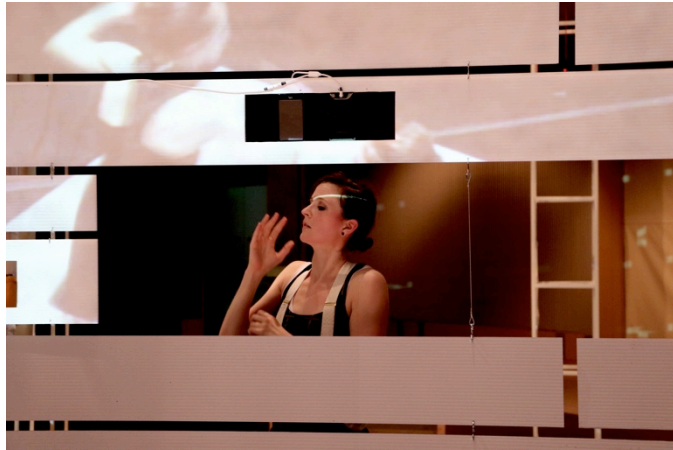


FRIDAY, MAY 06, 2016

"Tacit Consent"

Liss Fain Dance presents
in association with Yerba Buena
Center for the Arts
Tacit Consent
YBCA Forum, San Francisco
May 5th, 2016

I love the decision-making aspect of mobile dance performance. The notion of moving around a space. Deciding how long to sit with one idea or one scene. Happening upon a movement phrase in process.



Pictured: Katharine Hawthorne in
Tacit Consent
Photo: Benjamin Hersh

Liss Fain Dance provides that opportunity with their newest world premiere, *Tacit Consent*, music by Dan Wool, design by Matthew Antaky, projection/sound installation by Frédéric Boulay. A mobile immersive performance in YBCA's Forum, the sextet (for six women) unfolds simultaneously in multiple spaces over forty-five minutes. Antaky constructed these spaces as four attached squares with a central hub. Each quadrant had a designated middle performance area and semi-porous dividing walls, made of either envelopes or panels. The audience was invited and encouraged to traverse the space both prior to and during the entire performance.

Yet even with my affection for mobile performance, as an audience member, I'm not always sure how to approach it. So this time, I decided to set some specific parameters. I knew that *Tacit Consent* was approximately forty-five minutes and that there were four performance spaces. So I decided to stay in each one for around twelve minutes, no matter what may or may not have been happening in the work. Sometimes that meant I wasn't seeing any dance; instead, having the opportunity to wait and take in the stimulating installation (which even included mannequins on the ceiling). Sometimes I was seeing partially obscured movement through the walls – a glimpse of an arm or swirling shadows. I definitely missed some phrases. I caught some at mid-point. And, others, I saw from start to finish.

Square #1 – The dancers entered the space and congregated in the center hub. Their hands began shaking and then they dispersed into various squares. In the first solos that I saw (by Shannon Kurashige and Cassie Martin), Fain combined stretchy elastic extensions with specific

pedestrian tasks, all underscored with geometrical linearity. The meshing of this highly technical ballet/contemporary dance with careful pedestrianism was both surprising and entrancing.

Square #2 – This second section was a bit sparse in the time I spent there, most of the action being far away and visible through the walls. But not entirely. Near the end of my ‘twelve minutes’, the entire cast descended into the square and arms flailed wildly (a development and building on the initial shaking motif). This high-energy ensemble sequence dispersed with purpose, unearthing a beautiful (mostly unison) duet by Kurashige and Sarah Dionne Woods-LaDue.

Square #3 – On my way to the third quadrant, I was able to catch some stunning balances by Katharine Hawthorne and when I arrived, a duet was just ending. A magnificent trio (Woods-LaDue, Megan Kurashige and Sonja Dale) took over, sculptural shapes and physical pictures moving slowly along the perimeter. A second pas de trois emerged, this time with a more urgent and forward moving pulse. Then the lights changed drastically, fluorescent beams raged and each dancer cycled through the square, offering a brief solo phrase – this was an exciting display of constant motion, constant change in circumstance and constant shift of physical paradigm.

Square #4 – This quad was mostly empty at first, again affording the opportunity to witness dance happening elsewhere and from a distance. Eventually, Dale joined the space with a solo of long arabesques and attitudes. In a breathtaking choreographic display, these positions touched down on the floor, just for a moment, and then rebounded into the air. Definitely a noteworthy moment from Fain’s *Tacit Consent*.

So, was this the best way to view *Tacit Consent*? I don’t know, but it certainly was worth the experiment. Because it led to some interesting observations, particularly about viewership, and how perspective and attention shifts depending on whether you are close to the action, far away or in a partial sightline.

And though the setting, costumes and multi-media were different, the concept of *Tacit Consent* was very similar to last year’s *A Space Divided*. To the point that I wonder if the two works are intended to feel like related chapters from a larger series.