

## REVIEW: ANGELA WOODHOUSE AND CAROLINE BROADHEAD - BETWEEN - PLATFORM THEATRE

PERFORMANCE: 6 &amp; 7 NOVEMBER 2013

REVIEWED BY JOSEPHINE LEASK - FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2013



### Performance reviewed: 7 November 2013

Walking into the blacked out **Platform Studio Theatre** at Granary Building we are a small and intrepid group of people, unsure of what we are about to see or do. I can sense the three performers in **Angela Woodhouse's *Between*** standing amongst us, strong but gentle presences in the darkened space. Everyone looks expectantly at one another. **David McCormick** shines a torch on **Martina Conti** who is tussling with a reflective coat. The bright glare focuses our attention and from this point a series of intimate and visually arresting interactions unfold organically before our eyes.

There's no predictability about the dancers' solos, duets or exchanges with audience members. Rather an element of surprise, of the discovery of new connections, surfaces to explore and spontaneous reactions from spectators each time they perform *Between*. What Woodhouse, collaborator **Caroline Broadhead** and dancers share with us is a collage of intimate physical and visual happenings which quietly charge the space

**Stine Nilsen** and Conti ingeniously play around with a chiffon coat which Nilsen wears, putting it on and taking it off seamlessly so that it seems to be inhabited by both of them. In a caressing duet, they graze the surfaces of each other's arms and shoulders, shadowing each other's movements, morphing into one body.

Another visually striking moment is when Nilsen who appears with a set of pearls round her neck, an unusual adornment for her neutral rehearsal clothing, abruptly rips it off. As the white beady pearls scatter across the floor they catch the light, like a shoal of exotic fish. A silent conversation between Conti and McCormick in which they stretch out a huge string of pearls, extends the

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metaphor of precious objects further.

When Nilson appears with gold leaf painted on her inner arm, it sends a thrill of delight through me, even though I can't touch it. It is tantalising only being able to catch glimpses of the gold as she twists and turns. Likewise McCormick, also with the Midas touch on his hand, glints provocatively as he catches the light. What works so well are the sumptuous flashes of gold and pearls, and the use of light on fabric and skin which Caroline Broadhead weaves into the fabric of the choreography.

The dancers approach members of the audience as inquisitively and gently as they do each other, slowly caressing someone's arm or placing hands on a face or shoulder. Actions are grounded and soft, considered yet spontaneous. Performing with subtlety and slow pacing, they create a meditative environment, a safe yet experimental place for both themselves and us.

An extraordinary duet occurs between Nilson and one audience member who sways and reacts to her touch, totally in the moment, inhibitions cast aside. *Between* contains so many delights, gems and nuances, that it's not such an unwanted prospect to be immersed in its process.

<http://angelawoodhouse.co.uk>

**Photo: Hugo Glendinning**

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