

Ghost Writer and the Broken Hand Break

Miet Warlop



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CREDITS

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Co-produced by: Arts Centre Vooruit Gent, HAU Hebbel am Ufer - Berlin (DE)

Thanks to: Carl Gydé, Jérôme Dupraz, Ian Gyselinck, Michiel Goedertier (LaRoy NV), Janis Van Heesbeke (ongezien), Maarten Van Cauwenberghe, Brahim Benhaddou (@coachedbybrahim)

With the support of: City of Ghent, Actoral. 17 Marseille (FR)

GHOST WRITER

Raimundas Malasauskas

“What is your true matter of practice?” ghost writer Raimundas Malasauskas asked Miet Warlop once. “Electric jellyfish”, she said. “In transition. From tension to attention, from breathing to singing, from focus to staring, from staring to starrng. Vibrating with the smallest detail in galaxy. And there is no frame to add, only gravity. In obeying its pull I will stick one of my hands to the heaven and the other one to the ground. My voice chords will tremble, but I will stay calm. My right ear will tune to the left, and my left one - to the right. Boundlessness will kick in. Without ever stopping the movement I will start singing songs we wrote about matters of life, death and shapeshifting. I will not be teaching wet plaster how to dry this time. Two or maybe more bodies will be spinning around their axis next to me, but keep in mind - it is not me who is in the center, neither you nor anyone else whose biography you wanted to use. Their speed will be different. They will be in all kinds of futures and pasts, making sounds with their instruments and tongues, all aligned with their feet. No culmination will clap on a horizon – the horizon is in circle too. When a time will come to stop, we will look at our own palms and break the spell of never-ending transition. The truth is always somewhere there.”

“What an odour of suggestions to follow,” the ghost writer thought. The songs turned out to be about illusion, perceptual gags, invisible break ups, self-optimisation, present and now that it all started, nowciousness. Nothing remained true to the cyclical order of things.

Press Quote:

“Every once in a while you can experience a performance reminiscent of a uniqueness often missed by so many others. Ghost Writer & The Broken Hand Break by Miet Warlop is one such anomaly. In experiencing this performance, something in your being is created and triggered, something that makes your heart beat just a bit faster - because you are not just a viewer, but also an active participant in its birth.”

Evelyne Coussens – De Theaterkrant.nl – 26 October 2018

SPINNING, TURNING, SWIRLING

A talk with Miet Warlop

Your title suggests something narrative, is there a story at the base of your performance?

It's more like thinking for a moment. A kind of outcome. If you were to rub through my work, past all those sculptures and sculptures, I am now there at the end, spinning with two others. Not really connected, but not separate either. This simplicity - not one prop, no material trick - is quite exceptional for me.

For me, this spinning is being at rest, being in your own world. I need a break: what is my work at a standstill? What is my life, where does it go? Who are you, what do you stand for?

Ghost Writer And the Broken Hand Break is in fact like a whirlabout that is thrown out of my work and takes its course. Turns out that...

- Suspended resolution

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

I was born in the shadow of my future self

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Suspended in a flight of escape

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Whose pedal is in my head

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Round the sweat

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Round the handrail

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Falling high

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Swinging in desire

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

Falling through

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

I feel unwired

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

In the middle of night

The middle of the middle

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

In the middle of night

The middle of the middle

Like an eyelash in my cocktail

So your work at a standstill is in fact a sustained concentric movement. Your mind at rest remains a whirlwind?

The 'now' means nothing, right. You look at a sequence of now, now, now, now, now, now - until you get some kind of overview. From this, you construct your memory. In the chaos, you keep searching for the middle axis. With big questions, but at the same time like a dog chasing its own tail and biting it. The restlessness in your head and your body and your world is permanent, you just have to chill in the fact that nothing is fixed. And this is exactly is the essence of the whole whirling technique. That's life, basically.

*- Like a house without a door
Or a pimp without a whore
Like a bird without wings
Or a voice that never sings
Like a junk without drugs
Or a soldier without guns
Like a child without a mother
Or a sister without brother*

*I'm a wall without door
I'm a winner without score
I'm running in slow motion
I'm an oily oily lotion
Playing football without feet
Like a hand without a finger*

*Melting ice cube in the heat
Or a gun without a trigger
Absolute
Relativisation
Relative relative
Absolution*

*The ending of eternity
Border in infinity
A mirror without reflection
A talk without connection
A soap without an actor
A sun cream without factor
A desert without oasis
An army without basis*

So the whirling technique is nothing more than a thought?

Your head and body just have to become one with the space that revolves around you. Your head is used to fixed frames, as soon as they disappear, your own head can mow you down. Brain must learn. Caress your brain, everything is fine. You just go: from standing to spinning, from looking at to staring, from breathing to singing.

In fact, when we are spinning, we literally can't see what's happening around us. We are blind in your midst, who are looking at us. We can't see any danger coming. We are open, now. That specific mode of *being there* can only exist within these walls.

When we stop spinning, we use our hand to come back to where you are. Your hand is the fixed frame you always carry with you. Your hand is your brake. *It's you.*

- Well,

Take your moment

Where are you now

Everybody is watching

We are all around

This could be a remedy

We can't see an approaching enemy

Our body is an arrow

Pointing at the inside

You say 'this is an outcome', is it an end point?

Yes, at least for the musical aspect that has crept into my work. That was never there before. With this performance, we throw it all out, to make room for something new.

How did that music enter your work?

I'm always looking for material that I'm not used to, to express something with. How can I make it more dynamic? How can you shake an existing thing and then discard it again, throw it out according to your own logic? In "Mystery Magnet" there was the investigation into painting. In my solo work it were plaster sculptures. In "Fruits of Labor" it was music and (spinning) movement. So great, when you're working with images and suddenly music creeps in... something that goes straight to your soul. I decided I wanted live music, but without hiding the musicians, as so often happens in theatre. If we were to do music, we were really gonna do music. So in this way, the performance has brought itself somewhere else. It makes no sense for me to be the slave of an idea and to continue in a cramped energy. So I let go of the turning. But it was stuck in my head. That's where "Ghost Writer and the Broken Hand Break" came from.

- *I am a message in a bottle*

Oil and numbers, all in water

Latex spirals, slips and slaps

Spilling lies and silent claps

And in the middle of the word

I slip and fall

Besides the world

So what's that word, what's that word?

To which I fall

Besides the world

*I am a message in a bottle
Spilling ripples in your pocket
Floating freely in a spiral
I belong like a song to vinyl*

*To the moment of transition, zero chance and hard decision
But in the middle of the word
I slip and fall
Besides the world (besides the point)*

*So what's that word, what's that word?
To which I fall
Besides the world*

*And when your cigarette is out I feel so lighter
Like without
Like without
Limits are your revelations in infinity of spaces*

'Ghost Writer', the title says, so who's writing here?

In the performance we mix-up texts by me and Raimundas – a very good visual art writer with whom I worked in Marseille. But, yes, who is it that writes your story? People say 'Everyone writes their own story', but that's not true. Even if you want to write your own story, if the world doesn't cooperate, you can't control it. Things just happen to you.

This thought automatically brought along *the Broken Hand Break*. As a human being, you just have to 'go' – you just deal with what comes your way. So I didn't mean it in a wild way, but rather intimately. Like I did with "Fruits of Labor", actually I was just making a ritual for the world to have a moment to laugh at terrorism, something like that. It's wholesome.

*- Break the hand break
Roll the wheels
Use them as a jacket
And hit the wall*

*Roll on
I do look forward
I love the past
Now sucks when you pull a death end
And there's no ball to roll on*

The whirling dance also has a sacred connotation.

Yes, but we are more interested in profanity. Rather than reaching for something that transcends us, we want to pull things to the ground. That whirling is a state of being that also exists when we are not physically doing it, you know? I would have liked us to even be able to drink something while doing it. It's like throwing 100,000 litres of paint on a stage. Is that beautiful? No, but the underlying energy makes the audience get a sense of freedom. I think everything revolves around the attitude with which something happens, with which you pick up something and put it down somewhere else.

*- I can see
The fear in your tail
I'm looking at your happy eyes*

*You waggle to see me
Even if you think
You hate me
You hate me*

*If we ever give your tail back
I would see you lying
I would know
You love me
You love me*

*We would know better
Know better the bottom lines
Of our thoughts
And
Stroke it down
Stroke it down*

Interview by Tineke De Meyer