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Every direction is North

United bodies stand (and fall)

Karine Ponties presents a seven-dancer piece devised with Moskva. Balet. A dance where bodies are the only landmarks in a desert and crepuscular landscape.

Until February 8th at Théâtre National (Bruxelles), February 11th at Cultuurcentrum Brugge, February 14th at the Ecuries de Charleroi- Danse.



Maria Bondareva



By Jean-Marie Wynants

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Seven men share a space in a desert land where daylight seems to have vanished. Seven men in the middle of nowhere, except for a few wooden planks and boxes that they carry for the first few minutes, and that, then, become walls, wardrobe, sleeping quarters...

It's head buried in one of those boxes that the first man appears on stage. Walking slowly, blinded by this mini-coffin imprisoning him, he is condemned to shout in order to be heard. In a horizonless world, this living “boxed in” man is as endearing as he is scary. A strong, captivating image matching the universes that, throughout the years, choreographer Karine Ponties has accustomed us to.

A peculiar path for this brilliant choreographer who, after a performing career with companies such as Plan K, Michèle Noiret or Mossoux-Bonté, threw herself head and body first into the creation of fascinating pieces where human beings are left to their own devices, and their bodies become the object of all possibilities.

Here in Belgium, her shows often involve a limited number of performers. But abroad, companies and institutions have been inviting her for many years now, to create performances with larger casts. Hence have come to the stage pieces in Finland, Romania, the Czech Republic, Canada, Vietnam, and of course Russia. Shows that we only rarely get to see here “at home.”

Global dynamics

When the man who initially appeared on stage finally manages, after a few contortions, to get rid of his cage, six others join him in a light rectangle lost in the middle of a large stage. That's when a gripping dance made of comings and goings, gatherings, crossings, encounters and side-steppings comes to life... On David Monceau's original music and the space imagined by Guillaume Toussaint Fromentin, the seven protagonists define a universe of their own. Slightly retro and yet timeless in their costumes, their trajectories and energies create a global movement in which each performer is both engine in ensemble dynamics and element stuck in its core.

An absurd world where bodies set and keep course

The seven Russian dancers, seven diverse physicalities, give themselves body and soul in this great whirlwind where every movement leads to another bigger one like in a domino game or the famous butterfly effect. A magistral interpretation of a choreography that is both fluid and complex, in the middle of nothingness. In this absurd, goalless, limitless world deprived of any history, this crepuscular world where no one really seems to know where they're headed, only the bodies keep course. Not only do they keep standing at heart of this infinite void, they also tirelessly keep moving, exploring, getting farther and closer as they look for their path, eventually finding each other again and again, holding each other tightly not to founder, and be able to set on another adventure against winds and tides.

Until February 8th at Théâtre National (<https://www.theatrenational.be/fr/activities/872-every-direction-is-north>) (Bruxelles), February 11th at Cultuurcentrum Brugge ([https://www.cbbrugge.be/agenda / 1080/Balet_Moskva_Dame_de_Pic_Cie_Karine_Ponties/Every_Direction_is_North/](https://www.cbbrugge.be/agenda/1080/Balet_Moskva_Dame_de_Pic_Cie_Karine_Ponties/Every_Direction_is_North/)), and February 14th at les Ecuries de Charleroi-Danse (<https://www.charleroi-danse.be/evenement/every-direction-north/>).