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Lichens**** In the magic of Karine Ponties's floating world

Karine Ponties won her bet: bringing to the stage her vision of the poetical and oneiric universe of “The Tale of Tales,” Russian animation film by Yuri Norstein, that mixes uncountable memories in which everything is in constant transformation.



Around, on and under a table that lives a life of its own, bodies appear, disappear and melt into space - Andrea Messana

By Jean-Marie Wynants

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Surfaced from the depths of our memories, conscience and dreams, Karine Ponties's new performance is a pure jewel where the audience, adult and young alike, are led into a magic, floating world where anything seems possible.

In total darkness, our eyes vaguely perceive some movements; something moves slowly. Limbs, perhaps, arms or legs. But the way in which they undulate in space evokes the movement of algae, until a stupefied head appears and disappears just as fast.

At the same moment, on the other side of the stage, a frog-man with huge flippers slowly glides down a Chinese mast. This simple circus technique becomes, thanks to amazing lights, sound and the unexpected costume, the gentle progression of a diver into the abyss.

The show has barely started and we already know that Karine Ponties has won her bet: bringing to the stage her vision of the poetical and oneiric universe of “The Tale of Tales,”

Russian animation film by Yuri Norstein, that mixes uncountable memories in which everything is in constant transformation.

Elusive bodies

Heads without bodies come out of a table that lives a life of its own. Costumed characters cross paths, disappear, change and melt quite literally into space. Space, which also is constantly transformed, as different levels are revealed and used as an old circus or a long-forgotten ballroom.

The sounds from the beginning become music. A sort of slow fanfare from which pop waltz and tango elements. A little ball comes to life. Couples embrace, bodies agitate themselves, losing it... A woman steps out of a frame to deliver a master-like solo center stage...

Images follow one another, evaporating like dreams in an instant: each performer go wash in a shower cabin popped out of no where, a sort of Little Red Riding Hood crosses the stage and offers a white balloon to a stuffed Minotaur that doesn't really know what to do with it...

From the beginning to the end of the show, the audience is captivated and surprised. Dumb-founded in front of so many inventions, poetry, humor, magic. Charmed by the incredible physical virtuosity of Ares D'Angelo, Eric Domeneghetty, Vera Gorbacheva, Liesbeth Kiebooms, Nilda Martinez and Jaro Vinarsky, masterfully directed by Karine Ponties who, after *Every direction is North*, confirms once more she is one of our greatest choreographers.