

CARLOTTA IKEDA
COMPAGNIE ARIADONE

ZARATHOUSTRA
VARIATIONS

PRESS

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The Fanatics of the Faits d'Hiver Dance Festival

Between violence and laughter, Fabrice Dugied, Graziella Martinez and Carlotta Ikeda made an outstanding impact

As it reaches its half-way stage, the Faits d'Hiver Dance Festival has confirmed its support for the most singular personalities. Since 12 January, we have been treated to iconoclast Fabrice Dugied, extravagant Graziella Martinez and offensive Carlotta Ikeda. Three figures of a kind rarely seen today in contemporary dance. (...)

With *Zarathoustra Variations* at the Théâtre Silvia-Monfort, Carlotta Ikeda from Japan offers a piece for six performers choreographed with Ko Murobushi, a remarkable reinterpretation of a show first conceived in 1981. The violence of the original is still pretty much intact. Set against a hurricane of sound, the women transform themselves successively into hyenas, witches and rockers, clinging to each other in an improbable chain. In their G-strings and their folly, these girls dare to do all those things women are taught not to do. Their grimaces and howls wring laughter out of their audience.

Rosita Boisseau

WEBTHEA Monday 7 November 2005

Zarathoustra - Variations

Butoh Date

From *Zarathustra*, a piece by Ko Murobushi (1980) for Carlotta Ikeda and the Ariadone Company, we have now moved on to *Zarathustra Variation*, co-authored by these two key figures of Butoh dance. And twenty five years later, its hypnotic power remains intact.

Slow, slow movements with a sense of anxiety, an impression of diving into a mass that is downy and limpid all at the same time. It is a journey as well as a show. And slowly but surely, twenty years on, *Zarathustra Variations* revives a founding work in the introduction of butoh dance to Europe, possessing all the elements for an analysis. There is the historic background: Carlotta Ikeda meets Ko Murobushi and the Dai-Rakuda-Kan (Théâtre du Grand Chameau) Butoh troupe in 1974 and creates the Ariadone no kai Company. It is the first all-female Butoh troupe, breaking away from past tradition. In 1980, Ko Murobushi choreographs this *Zarathustra* for Ariadone and Ikeda and it is with this piece that the company arrives in Europe. For western audiences, it was to come as a shock. An artistic style blending the slow movement of the spectre and the outrageousness of its expression. Nudity without sex, flesh without sensuality, and a ceremony without god. And then there is Nietzsche, or to be more precise, a rather strange omission of the philosopher: "*To be more precise, I would say that we are the opposite of the work of Zarathoustra, a twisted Zarathoustra: while Nietzsche thinks from West to East, we start out from the Orient*", says Ko Murobushi. The last element is this return, in a way that is quite paradoxical for an artistic movement which is far from placing the notion of heritage at the centre of its approach, to a piece from the past, as if from the repertory.

A journey into the ambiguity of the body

And yet, despite all these points suggesting the analytical, *Zarathoustra Variation* defies analysis. It has changed much, if only in that a good half of the performers are of western origin now, but it gives off the same sensations as it did in the beginning. Visually splendid, with a blood-red robe illuminated by the spotlights, with a mirror as its horizon and cascades of sand on the women's naked bodies. In seven scenes, it shows no sign of development, seems devoid of dramaturgy. One image succeeds another as the bodies grimace. The strangest of torpors takes hold, erases the sense of time and the demands of logic. We are ready to accept these funny, grotesque witches, and this solitary feminine figure left abandoned under the light, moving slowly with a hieratic quality. The strength of this piece is that it is not only a show, but is also the experience of diving into the ambiguity of the body, attractive and repelling, and yet a show all the same.

Philippe Verrièle

SUD OUEST Wednesday 16 march 2005

Ikeda in Beauty

Carlotta Ikeda is based in Bordeaux and dances with her company all over the world. At the Tendance Festival, she presents her new creation.

We might as well say it straight away - the new creation by this Japanese artist based in France for the last twenty-five years and in Bordeaux since 1997 with her dance company (Ariadone), is magnificent. After *Togué*, a show of varying interest put on in 2002 to the rock music of the group Spina, *ZARATHUSTRA – Variations* sees Ikeda at the peak of her art, as in her *Sacre du Printemps (Haru No Saïten)*, *Tampopo* and *Ai-Amour*. The qualities of Ikeda join forces here with the mark of choreographer Ko Murobushi, the talented accomplice of the work of Ariadone.

Enchantment. A sell-out at Les Carmes and an additional performance scheduled last Sunday, for a total audience of some 800 people: twenty five years after the first version of *Zarathustra* made its mark on the Sigma festival in Bordeaux, this new work for 6 dancers around Carlotta is the fruit of enormous efforts by the choreographer with Ko Murobushi, a far cry from the butô dance of their beginnings. In the very first scene, with a girl cast adrift like in the beginnings of the world, the spell takes hold of the audience. Between slow, sliding control like a caress and the celebration of primitive violence, Ikeda rolls out her art, pathetic in her long crimson robe, the bearer of pure emotion in front of audience that holds its breath. Sculpted duets skilfully lit up by a Loustau-Carrère in great form, between the ultra-feminine and the savagery of gorgons, Olia Lydaki and her partners undulate in the shadows, drape themselves in a handful of piano notes, crawl under the salty rain of a sea unleashed, and laugh...

Jean-Noël Cadoux