

ANNELEEN KEPPENS

Movement Essays

DANCE WORK-IN-PROGRESS

KAAISTUDIO'S ∫ dance studio

75' ∫ €5

28/06 ∫ 19:00

29/06 ∫ 21:30

Movement Essays is an encounter with dancer and choreographer Anneleen Keppens. Inspired by the personal essay in the tradition of writer Michel de Montaigne, she presents three movement essays that each place a fundamental aspect of abstract choreography at the centre and, at the same time, trigger associations, emotions and reflections beyond the field of dance.

In the essay *On Tempo*, Anneleen tries to make tempo visible and explores the relationship it has with emotion, genre, story and meaning. With *On Shape* she enters into a dialogue with the sculptural aspect of dance, with what shapes can potentially suggest and the impossibility of shapelessness. In *I am large – I contain multitudes* she explores the diverse movement qualities with which she can dance and fully embraces the plurality of her body.

Anneleen translates the atmosphere of the studio to the stage, where she asks questions, wonders, is surprised and discovers connections. She doesn't want to convince you of a point of view, but rather involve you in her artistic process. The three movement essays are connected through their passionate exploration of movement and they create an intimate and diverse experience of dance.

BIO

Anneleen Keppens (BE, 1986) studied at the Royal Ballet School of Antwerp and at PARTS in Brussels. She works as a choreographer, dancer, artistic collaborator and teacher in Belgium and abroad. In 2016, Anneleen started her research project *Transparency in Abstract Dance*. In 2017 her first creation *The moon is the moon is the moon* premiered. She is currently working on the solo *Movement Essays* (premiere October 2019). Anneleen works with choreographer Daniel Linehan/Hiatus since 2012. She is the choreographic assistant of Alexander Vantournhout.

Concept, choreography and performance **Anneleen Keppens**

Artistic coach On Tempo **Pieter De Praetere**

Artistic coach On Shape **Jolien Naeyaert**

Artistic coach I am large **Laura Dannequin**

Light design **Elke Verachtert**

Sound **Thibaud Dezyn**

Styling **Maria Ferreira Silva**

Mentor **Oonagh Duckworth**

Co-production **workspacebrussels**

Executive production **Caravan Production**

Residencies **workspacebrussels, STUK, Vooruit, KAAP,**

arts centre BUDA

Supported by **the Flemish Community**

working title festival

Your piece is called *Movement Essays*. How did the form of literary essays influence your way of working?

Anneleen: I was looking for a choreographic form that suits me and I found different values in the form of the essay that are important for me. The French verb 'essayer' means 'to try'. I like that an essay is process oriented and that it makes the gap between the final result and the working process smaller. I also enjoy its subjectivity. It is not a form that wants to convince the audience of anything. It is more suggestive, like a proposal. It is me sharing what I have discovered, which might make the audience think of something else. An essay is not hierarchical and not structured to make a point, which gives it complexity and depth. The meaning lies in the relationship between all the fragments. Each member of the audience can have a very individual experience, but at the same time we are having this experience together. Somehow, I think it is a very feminine form in its fluidity, its subjectivity and its acceptance of not being able to grasp or know everything. Not trying to dominate the subject, but interacting with it. This makes me very vulnerable and I am always terrified by this not knowing, but I also think it is what makes an essay a very warm and inviting form.

Your piece is divided into three parts: *On Tempo*, *On Shape* and *I am large – I contain multitudes*. How was your approach to each part?

Anneleen: With each essay, I work with a different artistic collaborator. For *On Tempo* I work with a singer, who is very familiar with tempo and music. For *On Shape* I work with an architect and for *Multitudes* I work with someone I met during my Body-Mind Centering training. They all share their expertise with me, and I try to translate the depth and beauty of the conversations into the material. With *On Tempo*, it is a lot of doing, a lot of sweating, a lot of stamina training. I am also looking for extreme tempos, so I have to be hard on myself to go there. The work on shape consists of a lot of reflecting and a lot of conversations. For the last essay, I am doing very long improvisations that will eventually become a structured, yet open score that reflects on the fluidity and the plurality of my body.

How is it different to use movement as the form of expression in an essay instead of written language?

Anneleen: The vessel of communication in my essays is not language but movement, because I put each topic in relationship to the body: the shapes of a body, the tempos of a body, the multiplicity of a body. I call them movement essays because the topics relate to the body, but also because I communicate through movement. So, movement is the tool I use to communicate with and it is also what I communicate about. I could have called them body essays, choreographic essays or dance essays. I chose movement in the end.

Choreographic work often is a synergy between tempo, shape and different movement qualities. How did the idea to work on each of the elements separately come?

Anneleen: What interested me was zooming into each of these elements, but at the same time expanding. I narrowed it down and I really limited myself to these three topics. But when I discover their richness and profoundness, it makes me happy. And I think that sharing this feeling of joy and enthusiasm is also a very big part of the essay and of my work. I find it important that they are three distinct worlds written by the same person. I would like the audience to have an experience of what tempo, shape and movement qualities feel like or what they can do. That can be on a cognitive level, but I hope on a sensory level too.

Interview **Anneleen Keppens** by **Andreas Fleck**