

For Kirsten Debrock, who is a Belgian choreographer, the relationship between others and one self is an inexhaustible object of reflection, and therefore, of dancing. She demonstrated this when she explored, respectively, in *One*, the place of the individual in a group, in *Latency* (2011), consisting of two dance solos, the encounter with one's own identity, and in *Two* (2010), the difficulty of staying true to oneself within a couple. For this artist, who works in the little rural town of Puissalicon (in the French Département de l'Hérault) the relation to the other is not only a source of inspiration but also of action, by her participation in numerous projects with old age people, high school students and children.

In a completely different environment, she brought dance to the prison for women in Nice (France), which to her was an eye opener. "A visit to a prison does not leave one cold. Upon leaving the prison for the first visit, I needed to go and sit down on the terrace of a café. With a knot in my stomach, I watched people passing by in order to get a hold on myself again. I noticed a man whose body did not match the expression on his face. He seemed to be cut in two pieces. And the people around him seemed more or less disconnected. This upset me profoundly. Bodies that were diminished, oppressed, bent by the confinement and lack of intimacy in prison cells, somehow were reflected in the bodies of men and women who, though seemingly 'free' were held back by invisible chains.

Moreover, with every difficult test we experience, the social conventions that from the very beginning of our lives restrain us, makes us erect screens around ourselves, partitions beyond which we no longer dare to enter, thereby locking the door to a whole set of experiences, restraining natural impulses, each of us building our own internal prison. Thus, every gesture leads us through an often very complicated labyrinth, which to some inmates I met in the prison in Nice was so constrictive that their only aim was to get to where they were already."

Profoundly marked by her weekly workshops (from October 2011 to May 2012) in the prison environment, Kirsten Debrock decided to use that material in a new creation. This was the basis of her *Impostures* (sham, make-belief), in reference to this bodily lying, this corporeal sham, invented to make up for reality that has become so far removed. But in her new piece she turns things around, and, inspired by the inmates' bodily language suddenly set free, four dancers transcend them and seek ways to touch what is true, what is below, and to explode those internal prison bars.

Michel Vincenot, who is a specialist of contemporary dance and the director of the Théâtre Saragosse, in Pau (France), accepted to act as the external supervisor of this creation. He invited Kirsten Debrock to explore her 'own formal shams' which she had constructed during her years as a student in the Royal Conservatory of The Hague (The Netherlands), and during her career as a dancer with the *Netherland's Dance Theater*, the *Basler Ballet*, and the *Scapino Ballet Rotterdam*, as well as during her experience as a choreographer.

In turn, for several weeks, Kirsten Debrock created a solo for each dancer separately, so that one could not see what the others did. "Given this restriction, I wanted them to take full possession of their own personal vocabulary of gestures, I wanted each of them to stay in their own cocoon, even though in the end they would share the same space."

In the theater, the dancers will explore “the gesture prison of the free world”. They will do this on a bare stage, against the electrical musical backdrop created by Olivier Soliveret and the lighting by Laetitia Orsini.

Each of us will share the experience.

Muriel Plantier/Interlock 9/octobre 2012