

NEEDCOMPANY



THE TIME BETWEEN TWO MISTAKES

A comment on Peter Brooks "The Empty Space" and the position of art in society

Anything we do not want to share
is completely worthless.

After war and cannibalism,
art is the most hysterical expression of civilization.
Beauty is a commitment.
Ugliness is a lack of thought.
Anything we do not want to share
Is completely worthless.

We never know what the end result is,
or what it should be.
We call it an endless party for tomorrow.
The performance for the citizens of this city
is an attempt to share beauty.
Moreover, we act as a group and you are alone.
Anything we do not want to share
is completely worthless.

The only task an artist takes upon himself
is to question beauty and truth.

THE TIME BETWEEN TWO MISTAKES
is a search for the boundary between art and entertainment.
A people that loses itself in a party ceases to exist.
This feast must have a purpose.
That is the job of every reveller.
This party will be watched.
A party that is watched is not a party,
but an image.

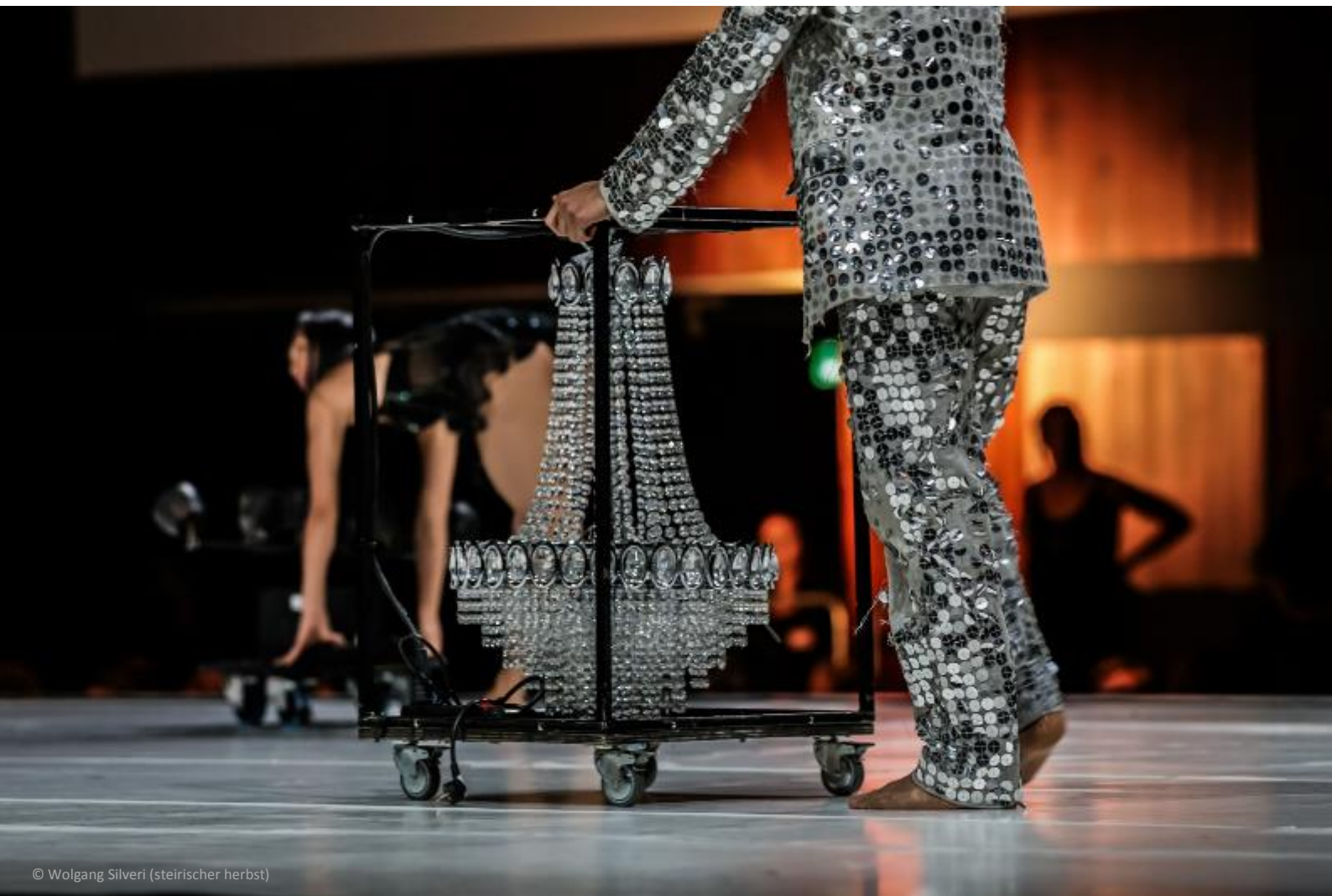
Jan Lauwers



'The Time Between Two Mistakes' is a commentary on Peter Brook's **'The Empty Space'** and for this purpose delves into the Needcompany archive. When images from the archive are looked at anew, their content changes. The visual idioms of Grace Ellen Barkey and Jan Lauwers are being brought face to face for the first time, with dramaturgical accompaniment from the music of Maarten Seghers. At the same time, the spectator's view and the artist's role in society are questioned and made more specific. Such statements as **'an artist has to be nice, so you can understand'** and **'if art is our lover, then who the f*** are you?'** are chanted all around, making the theatre hilarious, passionately and violently burst its seams.

A new era now presents itself for Needcompany and in this project it is directed towards a new form of freedom. The original ensemble looks for confrontation with young performers in the form of workshops prior to the performance, and thus introduces a new dynamic.

'The Time Between Two Mistakes' is constantly evolving. The research for this project was launched during Steirischer Herbst 2014 and the MESS Festival in Sarajevo, where it was awarded the SOUND OF MESS Prize. Each performance of **'The Time Between Two Mistakes'** raises new questions, and thereby generates a new form on each occasion.



Concept

Grace Ellen Barkey & Jan Lauwers

With

Jules Beckman, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Julien Faure, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Romy Louise Lauwers, Elke Janssens, Maarten Seghers, Mohamed Toukabri, e.a.

Musical director

Maarten Seghers

Composers

Maarten Seghers, Hans Petter Dahl, Rombout Willems

Costumes

Lot Lemm

Video

Jan Lauwers & Benoît Gob

Choreographic directing

Sung-Im Her

Dramaturgy

Elke Janssens

Sound

Bart Aga

Technical supervision & Lighting

Marjolein Demey

Production

Chris Vanneste

Photo

Wolfgang Silveri, J.J. Kucek (steirischer herbst)

A Needcompany production, coproduced by steirischer herbst.
With the support of the Flemish authorities.



© Wolfgang Silveri (steirischer herbst)



PRESS

'Es wird eine Party sein, und wir wer'n nimma sein' (There will be a party, and we shall no longer exist.) Or shall we be there after all, precisely for that reason, despite all the sombre signals regarding the 'eventisation' of art? Undoubtedly an egg dance on increasingly flat ground...

Grace Ellen Barkey, Jan Lauwers and Needcompany were invited to meditate on precisely this matter. In this case it meant that the group had to get a move on and look for a sound, convenient form for whatever might emerge – and then scatter the performance with tricks whose purpose was actually to nip in the bud the laughter that would give the audience its release. Only very short, and ironic, and then on with the business at hand! There was sufficient room for this at the Helmut List Halle in Graz: a stage of at least twenty metres by ten in the middle of the hall, around which the audience stood or walked. But in fact you didn't have to move at all, there was always someone passing by.

Main artistic criterion: nice, nice, nice

First an hour and half of enjoyable reflection on art as such and on how close we let it approach us: 'If Art Is My Lover Then Who The F*** Are You?' A harsh rock sound and pithy songs with a chorus, dazzling choreography – and then all at once everyone is standing there completely alone thinking out loud on this gigantic stage. For example, about the question of whether the stage can really be completely empty. 'The Empty Space' is the title of the renowned theatre essay by Peter Brook. We read that this does not actually exist, because we fill up the space with our own thoughts, which are in themselves worth a poetic-philosophical outing. But it's soon wound on, sometimes by means of a little rough association. Apparently the artist has to be 'nice, nice, nice'. In the meantime Needcompany is itself building a sort of inhabited house of cards with 'agreeable' artists. In every little space a scene – shown on video-walls – is played out that enables one to imagine the minor tragedies behind the illusion.

Logically enough, the house of cards itself is fragile and starts to wobble dangerously at the slightest touch of the soft, mobile sculpture in glittering thread that hangs from the ceiling. In the wink of an eye a mobile tent descends over the whole malaise like a bell-jar. This tent apparently swallows up everything and everyone, including the giant playing cards, and spits out only the glittering costumes. The helpless little people in their tight lingerie are then as it were emptied out of their protective covering. Sex sells? An idea that is developed as a parody of the Chinese state circus. The revue is fuelled by associations with the present moment and is enriched by plenty of clowning. One of the actresses, the same one who had previously speculated with abundant words and images on the good and space-filling thoughts, finds herself at loggerheads with the lighting equipment. This machinery starts to lead a life of its own and gets her into a very tight corner. Very tight despite the wide open potential for interpretation. ...

With this surprisingly positive ending the spell was finally broken and the audience started cheering.

Nachtkritik, 27 September 2014



In *Die Presse* (27.9.2014), Norbert Mayer reported on 'an artistically staged party' on the opening night of the 'steirischer herbst' festival and looked in greater depth at the colourful, turbulent activity on the stage. This Needcompany evening was everything at the same time: 'performance, reflection on art, interaction with the audience and even a happening, an unforgettable event'.

Die Presse, 27 September 2014

'For the opening in the Helmut List Halle, the Needcompany artists' collective headed by Jan Lauwers and Grace Ellen Barkey put on an interdisciplinary show involving theatre, dance, music, words and visual theatre in which the boundaries between art and entertainment were considerably blurred. ... most of the audience enjoyed the colourful, sometimes quite chaotic activity on stage.'

Kurier, 27 September 2014

'The performers, from every possible country, presented an always surprising mixture of dance, theatre, song and visual theatre. Whether they were gymnasts performing something between acrobatics and military drill, the shrilly giggling, the self-satirising Asiatic women in colourful hoop skirts or a melancholy song with simple, idiotic words, the performance constantly moved forward and all the time offered a new view of the small stage and the performers, whom we thought we already knew. ... all this was backed up by powerful images. And plenty of glitter, shrill music, videos and meticulous performers – this assured us of a colourful, exciting opening programme.'

Salzburg24, 27 September 2014





© Wolfgang Silverl (steirischer herbst)

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