

Intervention

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Determined, yet not in a wild, aggressive manner, but peacefully, almost contemplatively – that is how I experience Petra Zanki's dance. Determined is how she appears, how she performs and repeats her movements.

Her work with these movements on stage is out of the ordinary. She interrupts the rhythm of the festival by taking away speed from the dense, quickly proceeding programme of the weekend. Singled out, this evening would have certainly left a different impression, perhaps be less appreciated, but at this particular moment, on this very Saturday evening, anchored in these eventful days, it feels good to see Petra Zanki dance on stage.

Perhaps this mere watching is sometimes all there is, perhaps there is nothing more – only watching her move.

Her work certainly risks remaining a mere meditative background, mistaken as a warming-up exercise, even as a sunrise or wind-in-the-meadows type of kitsch.

Probably it is the partly imperceptibly small variants, the transitions from one flowing movement into another, the change of rhythm, the continuity, the consistency (or should I rather say endurance?) that should be admired, but is there something more that makes *Paces* a successful staging, and the performance an experience that deserves to be remembered?

In retrospect, one can wonderfully reflect on everything that comes to one's mind. One would assume that the dancer's swinging-back-and-forth, her lying-down-in-the-wind, affects the audience, produces an effect, lulls in, focuses one's gaze on the movement, drawing it away from the performer's body (like a movement emerging from her and out into space, multiplying, radiating like the vibration of a sound, then getting thrown back, crashing against the dancer, perceived as a vibration of space, losing all its origin).

One could talk about gray on gray, the mild and sometimes disturbing softness of the stage situation, or about the all too foreseeable dramaturgy, with no ruptures and no surprises, no ardour. About the possibilities that grow out of the simplest movements, branching off, conjoining, and proliferating. About the density of such ramification, but also about the fact that nothing collides, everything ends in mutual balance. About the way in which such a structure can be hermetically locked, making it difficult or even impossible for the spectator to penetrate it.

But doesn't a piece such as *Paces*, which could even simply be a field research (in the most literal sense of the word), actually close itself against such a complex of reflections and theories? The meadow, the manner in which the grasses move in the wind, is already complex, or a complex, endlessly prolific in its dynamisms, movements, tempos.

It occurs to me that, in terms of minutes, it was a really short piece. It occurs to me that, when I think of it today, *Paces* was hardly more than a moment, perhaps hardly more than this falling-out-of-time, the mere watching that leaves behind that letting-it-happen and letting-it-pass.

Before the audience leaves the room, in extraordinary silence, I see some spectators squirming on their seats, as if things were gaining on speed again.