

Footballeuses

Rob I'm here at the Lieux Mouvants. I've just witnessed a very unusual pièce of contemporary dance called 'Footballeuses', and as the name suggests it's about women footballers, and I'm with the choreographer Mikael Phillipou. What kind of message are you trying to get across with this piece of dance?

Mikael I don't want to give a message with this piece. I only want to share an experience with these ten women on stage who are talking about themselves also play football on stage. Even through their words I want that there's no... not something very specific to say but more something to experiment, to have the opportunity as the spectator this performance and not to be passive but to have the, the, the something to think about.

Rob It's clear that the dancers, they talk about themselves. There is a dialogue, there is even a section in the dance that is a training session.....

Mikael Yeah, yeah, at the beginning....

Robwhich is actually quite comic.

Mikael Yeah, yeah that's true.

Rob Do you take this representation from real life?

Mikael We didn't have something written before the meeting between us. We really start from their experiences so, what they do be... before a match, what they do before a training, what they do after so we start from their experience and we build the piece, uh, the performance really altogether with the women.

Rob Because they are actually they're not dancers, they're footballers.

Mikael Not all of them, only eight play football. Two of them, one is a *secrétaire* and the other one is the president of a club, soccer club in the suburb of Paris. I met first of all Brigitte who is the woman who start to talk in the piece. It was three years ago and knew a bit on her from dance and she was working as a footballeuse so I invited her to come to join the group, and after she invited other women from this same club.

Rob Uh, I noticed that yellow, is a very important colour on stage...

Mikael Yeah...

Rob ...the balls are all yellow, they're wearing yellow strip - you're in yellow...

Mikael Yeah.

Rob and you've got yellow glasses!

Mikael Yeah, also.

Rob Tell me about yellow.

Mikael Uh, this is the beautifullest colour in the world.... no? It comes from when I was a child, my parents decided to wear me in yellow, to have a in the morning to eat with the yellow tools. It starts there, so I was dressed(?) in yellow from my childhood.

Rob How different was this kind of show to the ones you're used to presenting?

Mikael The most part of my performances, uh, come from meeting people. Every piece is a kind of a challenge because I never know where I go with these people, because with these ten women I didn't know where was the goal. It's what is very exciting for me not to know where we go but so that's why I say every experience is very... new it's fresh.

Rob Is it a feminist piece?

Mikael I don't know if I'm a feminist. I don't know if I'm a woman or a man so... no it's not a feminist piece in that sense that it talks about women on stage talking for themselves but for me it's more important to say this piece is talking about a theme. It's not injective. I want this piece to be open and in that sense, I don't know if for me it's a feminist piece.

Rob I'm also very interested to read about your other work 'À domicile'.

Mikael 'À domicile' is a festival created eleven years ago. The principle of this festival is that choreographers from ??? I invited people of the village....

Rob This is Gisigny in North Finistère?

Mikael During more than ten days the choreographers will work with the, the people of the village and some people from Brittany and from France come for this event.

Rob So how did the people of Gisigny react to these dance choreographers coming to this village on the coast?

Mikael They are completely amazing. Not all the people of course of the village practised with the choreographers but the people who performed during this festival are very engaged in the process and I think that this is the principle reason I continue to work with. Now after eleven years there are real professional contemporary dance. For example Ethan was eight years old in 2007 continues every year to work with different choreographers so Ethan Cavon (?) is a real performer. Completely amazing eleven years ago to think that this festival will continue and to have a so long life.

Rob Mikael Phillipou, choreographer of 'Footballeusesx, thank you very much indeed for talking to us and bringing the show to Central Brittany.

Mikael Thank you.