

FLAT

RODRIGO PARDO



Foto: Vincent Lucas

PERFORMANCE- 30th August 2014 - Old CBS building, Festival Cultura Nova, Heerlen -



The dance of life

By **Brechtje Zwaneveld**

Seen August the 30th, 2014

The audience sits on reclining seats beneath the dreamlike canopy of a few trees. The last couple of raindrops drip down, it is dark, and our recumbent position guides our gaze upwards to the tall, unsightly building. A large white square hangs down the building's facade, and on it we can see geometric shapes in relief: a triangle, a rectangle, a somewhat broader rectangle and a circle. Then the lights illuminating the audience are dimmed and we realise there is a man sitting at the edge of the square.

The man dangles his legs from the square's rim. Agilely, he gets to his feet and balances over the edge. And then something unexpected happens: he lets himself fall. But he doesn't fall down to the ground, instead coming to a halt in a perfectly horizontal position, parallel to the ground several metres below him. With utter calm, he continues stepping to the next side of the square. Then he leaps and lands on the surface area of the square as if it were on the ground – but his ground is at a 90 degree angle to the ground where the audience is seated.

From there on, a breathtaking, elusive narrative unfolds that combines movement, video projections and text. In *Flat*, Argentinian choreographer and theatre maker Rodrigo Pardo plays with abstract notions of time, space and perspective, all of them qualities that can no longer be taken for granted here – in a literal sense due to the tilted performance area hung at a dizzying height, and in a figurative sense. Climbing and falling, the dancer Yves Fauchon seeks and finds balance. We hear his thoughts through the speakers, as a voice-over. Projections successively transform the abstract shapes on his stage into a room – with a bed, a table, a toilet and a sink unit – a solid mass and a deep vortex. And in this ever-changing space, Fauchon feels the falling of his thoughts, as childhood memories become as real as the here and now, and delusions have equal value to reality.

This piece is, it would seem, an ode to 'the fall', to the loss of understanding and truth. Quite early on we hear Faucon's thinking 'It is tempting to let go,' and in what follows, all the associated feelings pass the revue: fear, acceptance, doubt and freedom – on screen, through dance and in words. The combined effect is strange and beautiful. The woman sitting next to me summed it up: 'He is an acrobat and a philosopher and he is dancing the dance of life.'

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