

Sini Haapalinna, Freelance Artist, Finland

Program: "Beyond the Lens III"

"Feel the Beat" (Tuomo Kangasmaa)

"About to Dance – Swing of Politics" (Pia Lindy)

"Raadelma" (Pentti Luomakangas)

"Threat of Freedom" (Raila Knuuttila)

"Tar 5" (Juhani RŠisŠnen)

"Uuno Turhabuto – King of Dance Vol. 1" (Pasi MŠkelŠ & Jussi Saivio)

"Tila, Osa 1" (Lulu Saimi)

"Tarkastaja" (Salla Juntunen & Jose Ahonen)

"Tango Lesson" (Elia Saloranta)

"Close the Door Please" (Hanna Brotherus Company)

This is my first curation for a national video dance screening program, called Linssin taka / Beyond the Lens and coinciding with the dance and live arts festival Z – in – Motion, organized by Zodiak, Center for New Dance in Helsinki, Finland.

The open call for 2008, Beyond the Lens III, was left really quite open in order to inspire a wider array of artists, dance, performance, film and video makers. It was announced that the festival was to be looking for works in the field of video dance and performance (currently infusing not only the medium of dance with video but also dance with performance art) strictly made for screening and dealing with movement / dance / performance / event / corporeality. Art works of spontaneous experiments were welcomed, as well as broadcast-quality productions. Reality: the call resulted 28 video pieces all together.

In the beginning of the selection process there were two other persons pre-watching the videos with me: Riika Innanen, who had curated the first series of the screening programs during the last two years and Liisa Risu, who was the main curator of the performances for the festival. After pre-watching the videos through and discussing about them together I was given the space for creating the screening program freely and according to my vision. Soon these 28 entries became to represent, for me, a kind of instant sample of "the state of the art" of the Finnish field of screendance of today. During the process of curating, the received works started to generate a meaningful environment of reference for each other, almost like a found site as a starting point for a site specific work. The curational process seemed to start to mix and intertwine together with the works and generate a shared ambience for multitude of bodies with which I could work to create a statement, composition, act, performance, politics.

The works not shown in the final programme were actually the ones on the cutting edge for the body of the programme, and in a way, continued to hover around and invisibly anchor the program in a very specific local and current context. It was clear from the very beginning of the curating process that there wouldn't be one centered theme to pull the works into a smooth school or easily flowing journey for the audience and I didn't want to stick to the technically restricted gravity of quality. I was willing to risk it and have works with different laws of nature, state, horizon, and mindset. Different kinds of processes, tactics and production modes coming together to open up possibilities and to inspire the small community, while still pursuing a critical agenda (and as now formulated almost a kind of manifesto, smoothed by exceptions to the rules):

Deconstructing the cult of a trained, young, and/or aesthetically pleasing dancing body; being the only one able and having the right to move or reason to be filmed/watched.

Deconstructing the cult of traditionally produced, "narrative" and/or high-tech quality dance film; being the only one

able to “speak” and having the right to be produced/publicly displayed or broadcasted – other than youtube.

Deconstructing the cult of marginalizing the art form.

Deconstructing the cult of cults.

Co-existing in some sort of post-dramatic and incompatible relationship to each other, the works of the program hopefully sparkle in multiple directions at once and leave traces of a multitude of movements, pixels and modes both honoring the differences and celebrating the hybrids of realities, bodies, media, performances, and aesthetics without forcing the variety into one steady structure for simplified comparisons or limited contours of what is meaningful and possible.

I end up here with a couple of questions:

How and where does dance/performance happen? How is the logic of the work / meaning produced? What are the tactics for body/video politics? What is popular? And what about ... Freedom? ? !

Sini Haapalinn (1975 / Helsinki) is a live artist who's work is based on continuous exploration of embodied experience of space, time, kinaesthetics and technology. She uses lens-based and mixed media for creating interdisciplinary and immersive environments and atmospheres for performative actions and events to take place. In her artistic work she finds her interest in systems of perception in action, somatic sense of space and time, visual dramaturgy, improvisation, installation and intervention. She has collaborated extensively with artists from different fields & backgrounds and with experimental art collectives eg. Voukkoset, Proimpro, 3rd Side Specific, Maus & Orlovski.