

2013

## ON EXPRESSION



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Choreography and dance: Eléonore Didier& Renata Piotrowska

Premiere 27 28 mars 2013 --Festival 360° -Nationale Stage of St Brieuc

Partners: Art Stations Foundation –Poznan ; La Passerelle – National Stage of St Brieuc ; Micadanses –Paris

Renata Piotrowska and Eleonore Didier met in Poland in 2010 during polish-french choreographer's exchange organized by Tumulus from Paris and Art Stations Foundation from Poznan. The meeting was great between Renata and Eleonore. "ON EXPRESSION" is a first work they're doing together. This duet was born from a desire to deepen the meeting between them, to give it direction and form – place in their work and lives.

The creation proposes a different mode of production from the conventional ones. Their partners, the institutions which are supporting them since years: Art Stations Foundation in Poznan, La Passerelle - National Stage of Saint Brieuc and Micadanse in Paris decided to support their research, process of work, before they had very specific idea of what the piece will be and before having read any written dossier.

## **EMAIL EXCHANGE BETWEEN RENATA AND ELEONORE**

*Montpellier – Paris, 4th of March 2013*

**Renata Piotrowska:** We are about to premiere ON EXPRESSION, I wonder when the creation process has started.

**Eleonore Didier:** Can we say that the work began with our encounter... Because it has been a meeting between us! Or shouldn't we see our meeting as a full-fledged process, and identify and distinguish the moment when we engaged the process of creation. There would then be two processes in the same time: our meeting and the creation. In this case, the process started when we took the decision we will share writing work of a choreographic form connected to the notion of expression. Yes, I would say that is how we engaged the process. So we went on defining the territory of the work, meanwhile we deepened our relationship.

**R.P.:** Deepening our meeting, it's true, was a parallel process to define the territory of work. But parallel in a sense of being side by side, in the same time and space, with a small distance in between. So, influencing each other was possible. One of more specific elements which appeared at the beginning of the work was the discovery of our common experience as dancers. Both of us worked with Nigel Charnock<sup>1</sup> on his pieces. Two different pieces, 10 years gap between one and the other, but still a lot

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<sup>1</sup> Nigel Charnock (1960-2012) – british choreographer, co-founder of DV8 Physical Theatre

of similarities. Both of the pieces were created for 8-9 dancers. Both of them demanded strong physical and emotional engagement. Both of them were about national stereotypes. And both of us broke the leg during the work! As a result of this common experience, we got interested in the scream. We chose the scream to work with. It was one of the elements which started to precise our territory of work.

**E.D.:**We defined action of screaming as physical manifestation of movement from the inside to the outside, as expression of interiority. We noticed that all basic emotions can be expressed by a scream. We agreed that we are most concerned with joy, anger and sadness. More than fear or shame. I told you I'm interrelated with the scream, I believe that each of my pieces is a scream. Then, you opened new door by introducing the hypothetical link between scream, and through it the emotions, and digestive system. How do you connect those two notions in our work? Do you still think about Nigel?

**R.P.:**Which two notions? Scream and emotions? Scream and digestive system? Scream and Nigel?

**E.D.:**What made you introduce the digestive system at this moment of the process?

**R.P.:** When we talked about scream we also talked about emotions. But we didn't really make choices how we wanted to work with the emotions. We also talked about expression as something which is going from the inside of the body to the outside. I was curious to look for the emotions from the interiority of the body, from physical perspective not psychological one. Then I found those hypotheses about seeing the digestive system as the origins of expression. I realized how in fact first emotions in early age (babies) are expressed by the scream. And that those screams are often connected with digestive system. Then you proposed to make practice of eating in order to explore the digestive system. I think it was a very good proposal, otherwise we would have stayed in imagined situation about what the digestive system could do to our emotions. In real situation we could have observed what really happens with our body and emotions when we eat.

I had a thought during one of our eating practice that has perhaps some link with the connection between digestive system and emotions. I realized Nigel died because of cancer in the digestive system... It is completely not the subject of the choreography we constructed. But it is connected somewhere with our work. Were you thinking sometimes about Nigel during our work process? Do you think about Nigel now?

**E.D.:**In this last period, I didn't think about him anymore. Nevertheless, I was coming every day to the rehearsals with in my backpack the small plastic bull Nigel offered me for a premiere in Porto...

Nigel was taken by a cancer of digestive system although he was always highly attentive to what he was eating. But he was very emotional, and even oversensitive... For me Nigel takes part of the „imaginary“ of the piece. Do you agree with this idea?

**R.P.:** Yes. He is part of the imaginary of the piece. I also didn't think about him for a while. What I'm thinking about now that we are about to premiere, is the way of the expression, from where it goes to where, its direction. At the beginning of the process we were interested in looking on expression as a way from the inside of the body to the outside. Eventhough we had this intention, finally it is not the only direction present in our work. Finally, it is not only interior emotional or physical state who produces an expression of the body, nor the physical action of the body who produces the expression, but it can also be an outside action made towards the body that influences its physicality and therefore produces some expression. So, an expression is not only taking a way from the inside of the body to the outside. It can also be from the outside to the inside, and then back to the outside.

**E.D.:** I agree.

And now, for the spectator, do we need to explain the work more, risking to constrain it? We can talk about certain aspects in very specific way, but what makes deep sense of the piece ON EXPRESSION (like any other piece) will remain silent. The same with the meeting...

As Ryoji Ikeda says "Art can not be said. That is probably what makes all its interest."

**R.P.:** I don't necessarily agree with that, but this is for another talk. Or another piece to make!

**VIDEO:** <https://vimeo.com/66269071>

password: onexpression