

NEW CREATIVE DANCE PERFORMANCE

DANCE: The Waves. For Mary Magdalene

STAGE: The big stage (with its world-famous acoustics)
at The Culture House at Ytterjärna, Sweden

PERFORMANCE: A nearly 40 minutes long piece of music
zthat could be called experimental world music, to butoh-
inspired choreography

DANCER: Thida Louise Varunée

MUSIC, CHOREOGRAHY and STAGE DESIGN: Percival

FEMALE VOICE: Carina

MALE VOICE: Percival



The stage in darkness. Silence. The audience: a couple of hundred young people aged 16-25. A surprise awaits. It is the 31st of July 2003, and Percival, the invited guest artist at the conference, introduces his performance and tells the audience something about his work as a writer, composer, and artist. Then:

An island of light appears midstage, where a human figure, crouching like a child before birth, is moving infinitely slowly. The sound of chimes is heard, thunder, sea-waves... from loudspeakers all around the audience. A woman's voice sings "Mary Magdalene", as a mediievally-inspired ballad, and another six islands of light are lit on the stage in a geometrical configuration.

The music is mathematically structurally composed in eight parts: long rhythmic sequences where the storm and the waves speak, turning into overtonelike vocal voice choirs, where the light feminine and the dark masculine notes are reminiscent of Antonin Artaud, whom Percival has written about in several of his books. The singer Carina intones at the beginning and at the end - after the storms and the challenges - the song for Mary Magdalene, a poem in Percival's book "Time Plays" (2001). The composition (available on CD) was composed at EMS in Stockholm, a studio with next to unlimited possibilities, and the song is sensitively and multidimensionally intervoven into the whole. There are many people who have experienced the healing quality of this music, maybe because the shrilling sounds turning into cries lead up to the clarity and stillness conveyed by Carina's voice.

The choreography is minimalistic and lingering, and in the storm parts where the influence from the modern art form of butoh is most perceptible, the dramatic pulse accelerates...

After "The day when he entered the temple and heard the voices within and the voices without...", where Varunée gives life to a symbolic, statuesque, wavelike idiom of movements, the choreographic play attains a heightened expressiveness. Varunée on stage with her marble-coloured pody paint, red ribbons in her black hair, and draped in red silk, radiates an almost magical stage presence. She fills the empty space on stage with a language of movements suggesting a close contact between earth and sky and a close encounter between male and female within a human body.

At the end of the performance, where Carina's voice can be heard again in the song we heard in the beginning, all the islands of light, except the one in the middle, are extinguished. Now Varunée is giving shape in the light to the vision of the new spirit of time - that which is being born in the third millennium when the interest in Mary Magdalene as an historical person is growing.

This you can read about in Percival's latest book "Letters to Shanti" - (for information about his books and CDs see www.artdistribution.se).

We hope that this choreo-drama will be back on stage soon, perhaps at the House of Dance in Stockholm, or abroad. Here, at the beautiful Culture House at Ytterjärna, skillful stage technicians, e.g. from the prestigious Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, helped to give the audience a deep-going as well as uplifting experience.

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Performances of THE WAVES. FOR MARY MAGDALENE by Percival on 26 and 27 July 2004, at 9 p.m.
at The BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA, Alexandria, Egypt.