

VIRTUAL BALLET, A CONTEMPORARY RITUAL

Isabelle presented the ballet of the global village in Londrina.

Sitting in the Nucléo I theatre, echoes amplified by drops of water, suggesting a cave, who knows Plato's cave. As Choinière begins her performance "Communion", the space simultaneously becomes an uterus, a camera obscura and a video monitor. Our senses are connected to the heart throb, the heavy breathing and visceral voice-music of the performer. She looks like the heroine from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, levitating between screens that dematerialize her body. It is a virtual pas de deux which confronts us with a difficult contemporary question: our senses have been definitively removed from direct contact with reality. Nowadays most of our sensory experiences are mediated through information technologies, to the point that we are confounded by the leveling of time, the plethora of events which happen at the blink of an eye (CNN for example). But the images that float by us are a simulation of a TV screen turned to a dead channel. The colors, the hallucinations of the lysergic *Artificial Paradises*. The instantaneous visual speed contrasts with Choinière's calm and slow movements. She questions the sphinx of technology: how to use technology while preserving our emotions?

"Communion", running twice this weekend in Londrina, is a unique show not only because it is radically different, but also because of the divergent opinions which it expresses. There were those that may have wished that Isabelle had put a little bit more physical energy into the performance, after all we are dealing with dance here. There were those who may have found the computer graphics shocking. And then there were those that didn't understand very much, looking for the old references, theme, plot, story. For me, in

"Communion", it is the spectator who is the screen. Like photographic film we were exposed to light. In my mental retinas two images still persist: a face and a body, both large scale, are being reduced slowly until they disappear in a single point. The same point equal to the infinite points that form the image of the TV cathode ray tube.

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