

CIE
GREFFE / CINDY
VAN ACKER

& CHRISTIAN
LUTZ



Knusa / Insert Coins

2016

photo : Olivier Oberson

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Music : Mika Vainio

Performance production : Cie Greffe

Exhibition production : Christian Lutz et Images Festival Vevey

In situ performance in the Insert Coins exhibition space from Christian Lutz.

The Compagnie Greffe has a joint support agreement with the City of Geneva, the Canton of Geneva and Pro Helvetia for the period 2009-2017.

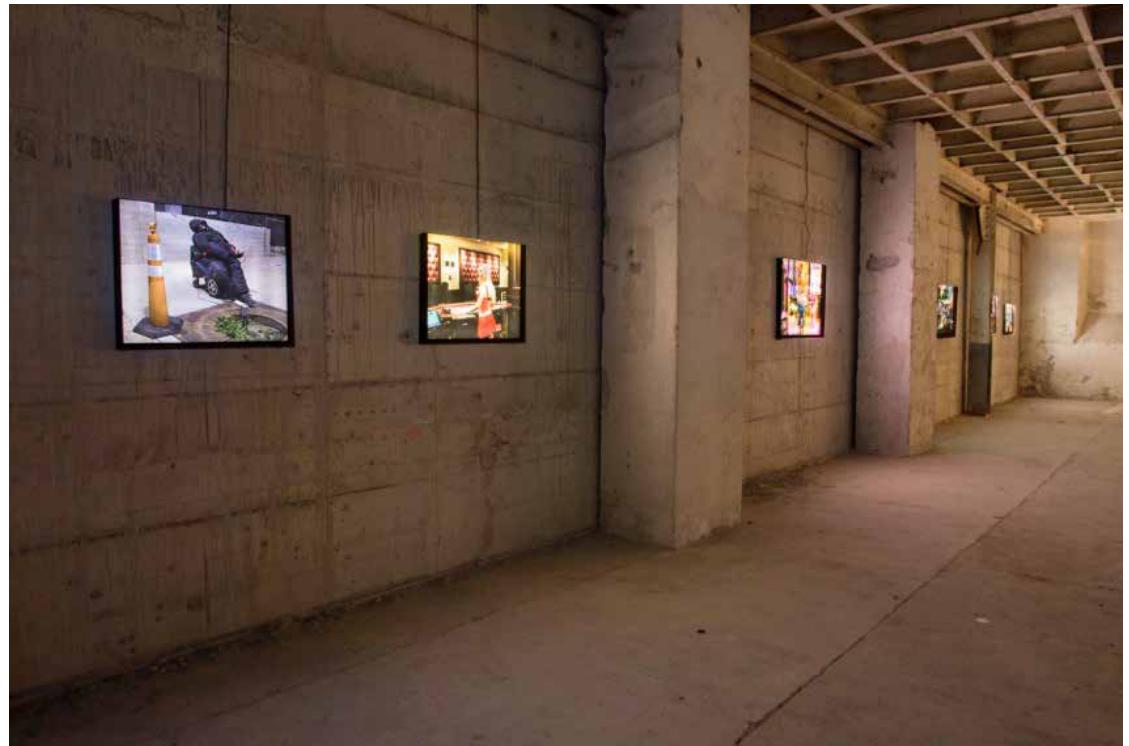


photo : Delphine Schacher

KNUSA, SITE SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE BY CINDY VAN ACKER

«To make of the body a power which is not reduced to the organism. Making thought a power that can not be reduced to consciousness »

Gilles Deleuze

"One day Christian Lutz sends me the picture of a place. The place where he is to set up his exhibition Insert Coins in Vevey. Underground atmosphere, concrete, darkness, cold. I reply : «The place where the tangible is able to open the imaginary. You have to be alone in it.» The hours that follow, this space remains omnipresent in my head, haunts me, creates in me the desire to dance. I said, «I want to dance there.»

I take in my hands his book Insert Coins and I flood the space of the universe with his incisive images. The movements arise. My body starts to move despite myself and where I am. I hear the music of Mika Vainio. I hold the essence of the project which is not yet one. Simply a call. A call free of all constraints of production, the duty to write words before even to move an arm, to stick images on what is not yet. The images are there before anything else. In a place, this place which starts the call.

On October 20, I went to Vevey, they opened the space to me for a few hours. Alone among the pictures, I measure the space, count the columns, analyze the light, dance, Mika Vainio in the ears. In the images, the density of a state of body exceeding the being. Explodes the understanding, pierces the codes, shows the urgency to survive, defies humanity. Encounter, embrace of all elements. After this immersion, I surface, if Christian agrees, it can start. My body sets out freely, moved by a subterranean atmosphere, an unlawful desire. Freed by the sensation of being clandestine to myself, of what I represent. So I danced on the balcony of the hotel in Orleans, in the bathroom, in my living room, waiting for the possibility of spending hours alone in my studio.

Today Knusa is here."

Cindy Van Acker

INSERT COINS, A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION BY CHRISTIAN LUTZ

Las Vegas has imposed her lights and her share of the dream in the very heart of the Mojave desert. Sin City is not only the primary city in the State of Nevada but it's also one of the leading tourist destinations in the United States, as travel guides praise her euphoria and lure visitors to taste the most extraordinary experiences in her lap.

Throughout the decades, the resort city's lucrative economic activity has also made her an attractive employer with an ever-growing population. Amid financial crises, Las Vegas relentlessly seduces.

Sparkling, ultra-liberal, intersected by the famous Strip and brimming with monumental casino-hotels, this stronghold of the mafia and prostitution combines extremes and excesses. Here, gambling and sex prevail in countless parties and addictions, whilst fates are determined in a game of poker or the spin of a roulette.

It is in the heart of this quintessential, Made in USA, symbol of entertainment that Christian Lutz carries out his visual work between 2011 and 2014.

His keen sense of observation slices through the illusionary varnishes of artificial joys and exposes the aimless wanderings of lonely individuals spewed out by the carnivorous casinos as so many other silent shatters of a harmful liberal system.

www.christianlutz.org

THE SHADOW OF PICTURES

"She is lying down, her legs bent, her arms stiff against her body, dressed in black, her feet bare. She recalls, without miming it, a man also lying in an image of the series Insert Coins by Christian Lutz - he is in front of closed shops windows, at night. She comes alive, repetitive gestures, convulsive. It is not known if she is struggling or if she tries to extricate herself from the heavy weight of the ground. Her gesture becomes a sort of scansion, a rhythm, and at the same time an anger, a rage, the ordeal of a will. The movement gets simplified, amplified and accelerated. And in the sequence appears the recollection of another character, on another photograph of Lutz. It disappears as quickly as it came, as if it were our memory of the exhibition that projected itself on the dance. But the dancer's body loses nothing of the fine energy living inside of it. It will travel through memories of images, as in permanent metamorphosis, as if it contained them all - just like our memory, just as fugitive and partial, for that is the true life of images. With the dancing body, one retraces the exhibition, mentally - meaning here, physically, by an intense and energetic inner movement. The dancer's body becomes a new support for the projection of photographic images embedded in their luminous boxes hanging on the wall - something like their shadow, the dark part they contain, which they hide, which haunt them.

Since the 2000s, Van Acker's choreographic body is made of abstract and repetitive rhythms crossed with unusual postures. Repetition and unprecedented tensions detach the physical body from the ordinary body, from the useful machine-body, bringing forth a living, vital body, a form of the inner life that is made as much from the shocks of psychic life as from the intensity of the organic life of every living body: amazing body of the intensity of life and whose forms are unexpected, unpredictable jolts. Through the constraints imposed by her choreographic scores Van Acker succeeds in extracting the living from the chanted and causal time of history and everyday life in order to reveal its singular time, its intensity: the tangible time of the lived experience . More recently, this body, struggling with the living being in him, once again seized historical time, that of figures and memories, but it was to charge them or confront them with this intense body of concrete experience.

In Knusa, the dancer literally enters the images through our memory of them, animating from within the photographed bodies. Her abstract dance with tight and quartered postures and composite rhythmic sequences nevertheless, does not mime anything : she shows the inner life animating them, streaked with hopes and unconsciousness, will and lassitude, memories and dreams. As Lutz's man-made photograph shows how much the beings he meets in the streets of Las Vegas bear stories - theirs as much as that of our society - Van Acker charges her dance with their power of life. Together they invent a new kind of performance, a choreography which revisits an exhibition by orchestrating a round trip between the image and the movement, both of whom rarely share the same aesthetic project : to testify what makes the human."

Eric Vautrin

EMBRACE WHAT MAKES LIFE OR THE BEING WITH EMPTY TIME

"Dance seems to counteract photography. On one side movement, duration, the living body, on the other side, the image, the moment, the already-past. At most, dance finds in photography a gallery of faces it enlivens, postures emerged from the reality it inspires - and sometimes, its own archives, its past, its memory.

Therefore, dance and photography look at the other as the repository of its own limits, of what it will never be. However, in Knusa, or rather in Insert Coins + Knusa - as one does not go without the other - something else happens to lead to a sort of an unprecedented alliance between the two arts.

In Insert Coins, his series of Las Vegas photographs, Christian Lutz looks at the gaming city, the dream city, the pharaoh city. He could say its glory, expose its aura, sublimate the anti-matter produced by this black hole of American individualism. He does not. He could do the opposite and scrutinize the dark side, point out what it destroys, criticize the illusions it generates, dissect the mechanisms of the alienation feeding it. He does not do it either. He is watching, at a human level, as people go by : a waiting barmaid, a decorative acrobat in suspension, a circle of friends, a man - exhausted, a couple - asleep. Of course, in the world of magic and secure excitement virtually maintained, the photographer's exposure time reveals and accuses a constructed, intoxicating and sometimes devastating fiction. Yet everything else happens in his images. All those that the photographer has observed seem to be animated by a life other than the one assigned to them by Las Vegas, made up of desires as much as lassitude, tenacity as well as dreams : tiny lives evolving in a world parallel to the luminous fair, on a singular rhythm, each different. A blissful couple has fallen asleep, entwined, probably in the street - they are not only bodies crushed by their own dreams, they are also those who in all myth have ignored the limits, and their sleep reflects something appeased. Two beings in the form of plush ducks collapsed on a sidewalk are as similar to the garbage that surround them as they are merry party-goers and strange figures emerged from the dream world of fairy tales. He who crosses an immense boulevard and whose Lutz manages to grasp the slowness, is as much an abandoned being as the image of the pilgrim, the wandering prince, the melancholy angel, the endless path.

Of course, Lutz grasps the deceiving, illusory and alienating structure, but also the life force of those he encounters, was it tenuous, evanescent or uncertain. And no, as a honor for the report, they will not be the contemptible mass grave of his demonstration. Lutz succeeds then an amazing thing: he populates Las Vegas with ghosts. Specters of past lives as much as dreamed lives and cultural reminiscences. Trapped by the image of illusory success, Lutz brings them out of the picture: through photography he gives them an existence in time, linking the ages - from myths to dreams through today. Each image testifies the conjunction of these three times: the past - theirs as much as the one which connects them to a history as mythological as cultural; the present, in the continual friction between their situation (and it is not always miserable) and the city of lights which surrounds them; the future, where their dreams are confused or those which are attributed to them and their own becoming. In doing so, he snatches each of them from their misery, real or symbolic - there is misery in opulence and even in stupidity. Through his frames and perspectives, his lights and colors, the spaces he gives to these figures, the care of his compositions, the photographer seeks to restore time, rhythm and singular power of life to each and everyone, yet linked to a common history, across borders, countries and eras. They become mediators in the order of time, giving figures and forms to the history of men among themselves, to this human project that is called history and which Las Vegas attempts to deny by its empty and perpetual present. For Lutz's image is as clear-headed as it is fraternal: it is less a photograph of abandonment, fatigue or illusion than the possibility of a bond of solidarity between beings, a bond of compassion, understanding, and sharing. Stories, myths and common figures (what we call a culture) that are formed, in silence, between those whom he meets and him, then with us viewers.

Invited to dance in the exhibition, amid the pictures, it looks like Cindy Van Acker is making something very simple : she combines her abstract dance, based on a control of complex rhythms and the search for an unusual body housed in the body of everyday life, with the postures of the figures photographed by Lutz. Her high quality of execution goes hand in hand with the fugitive evocation of images that remember themselves as they persist in memory, fugitive and partial - the dance is less commentary than part of a memory of an exhibition. But soon the rigorous danciness of the choreographic score brings the performer into a specific and singular concentration. The dancer is as present and absent at the same time - involved and detached at the same time. At once imposing, lively, even carrying a form of rage, vitality decided, and at the same time inexpressive, executing with precision rhythmic sequences. Van Acker, by her way of recalling the postures of the bodies in Lutz's images, by her rhythmic and repetitive abstraction, by the quality of concentration and execution, makes visible or sensible the obscure energy embeded in the figures which she summons. This sombre and vital body which animates the figures and whose photography can only grasp the external event, is the life force which inhabits everyone, which will be tenuous in exhaustion, overflowing with rage, evanescent in the wait. Van Acker shows the collapse, the dull and repeated anger, the enormous energy, but as from within, with what it implies both physically and nervously. She reveals the muted power animating everyone with a form of life, even if she would come to stop against her own hopes. She gives a sensitive form to the hidden life of those bodies and beings that the neo-liberal machine has sought to cannibalize, and that a too fast, too tacit and sociological critical reading of Lutz's images might have ignored : this inner life which is as much the organic life as the agitation of desires and mental shocks, anger and mental projections, one and the other.

Lutz had restored their relation to time - to human time, not the empty one of machines, nor that of the historical narrative, but to humanly lived time. Van Acker gives them back their intrinsic power - the vitality, however bad it may be, that inhabits them. In doing so, both exacerbate what we share with each of these figures rather than pointing out their weaknesses. In this we can say that dance and photography do the same thing : they do not discourse on their subject, they re-write them in what makes them human, beyond their degradation, their exploitation, their wanderings or their illusions.

Insert Coins + Knusa is an amazing dialogue between two artists and two arts. On one hand, the dance reminds the memories of the exhibition - even if the images are right next door - by summoning what remains in us of the exhibition. Lutz's photographs have, so to speak, impressed the dance which in turn charges the images, to the point that one could say that dance shows the photographs as images.

But beyond that, Insert Coins + Knusa is a new kind of performance, not yet coded, in which dance and photography combine in a common project, each with its own characteristics and at its own place. Together they make art less as a commentary on reality, its trace or its evocation, than a singular and specific experience during which human time is grown, that of a dull and discreet vitality crossing and connecting the three ages of history, past, present and future. By linking memories and dreams, myths and fantasies, classical figures and incredible, unusual moments, this experience connects the being - the one being looked at and the one looking at - with time and space, meaning what he shares with others other than himself, what extracts him from his solitude and connects him to the human group. In other words, precisely what neoliberal alienation - of which Las Vegas is the fatal epigone - attempts to make him forget.

In a language that few speak, knusa means embracing, hugging. It is not known whether it is dance and photography or art with a lived reality."

Eric Vautrin

INSERT COINS

photos: Christian Lutz



BIOGRAPHIES

Cindy Van Acker – choreographer

Trained in classical ballet, Cindy Van Acker first danced in the Flanders Royal Ballet in Belgium and at the Geneva's Grand Theatre before emerging in the contemporary dance scene in Geneva. She creates her own pieces since 1994 and founds the Cie Greffe in 2002 at the occasion of the creation of Corps 00:00 that obtained international recognition. In 2003, Van Acker creates two other solos, Fractie and Balk 00:49.

In 2005 she signs her first group piece for eight dancers, Pneuma 02:05. The same year, the Italian director Romeo Castellucci invites Van Acker to present Corps 00:00 at the Venice Biennale. This first meeting leads to an artistic collaboration with Castellucci who suggests her to create the choreographic part for his creation of Dante's Inferno (2008 edition of the Avignon Festival). Under his direction, she also signs the choreographic part of the operas Parsifal, created at De Munt in January 2011, and Moise und Aron, set up at Opéra Bastille in October 2015.

In 2006 she creates Puits at the Théâtre du Galpon in Geneva, a collaboration with Vincent Barras and Jacques Demierre, performed by Perrine Valli.

Invited by Michèle Pralong and Maya Boesch during the first year of their co-directorship of the Théâtre du Grü in Geneva, Cindy presents a trio of women, Kernel. Created in 2007, Kernel provides an opportunity for a first and stimulating collaboration with the Finnish composer Mika Vainio of the Pan Sonic group. He created and played live the music for the performance. This experience continues in 2008 with Lanx at the Electron Festival and in 2009 for the creation of the solos Nixe and Obtus for the Bâtie-Festival de Genève. Obvie, Antre and Nodal complete this series of six solos and are the source of as many films realized by Orsola Valenti. The choreographer presents four of these solos : Obvie, Lanx, Nixe and Obtus at the Festival d'Avignon in 2010.

With Monolog in 2010, she renewed her collaboration with the Electron Festival and Mika Vainio.

In October 2011 she creates Diffraction, piece for six dancers and a light-machine, 9-tubes designed by Victor Roy. In October 2013 Diffraction receives one of the four Swiss awards of dance in the category « Crédation actuelle », designated by l'Office Fédéral de la Culture. In January 2012 she conceives with Victor Roy the project Score Conductor, an exhibition and materialisation in visual objects of the choreographic scores that Cindy has written since 2003. At this occasion and on the initiative of Michèle Pralong, a book by the name of Partituurstructuur is edited by Héros-Limite.

In 2013 she creates Magnitude for 22 dancers of the Ballet Junior directed by Sean Wood and Patrice Delay as well as Liniaal for the Cie Virevolte directed by Manon Hotte in Geneva. Then, in the same year, Helder is premiered on la Belle Scène de Saint Denis on the proposition by Myriam Gourfink in the context of her residence at the Forum Blanc-Mesnil. And, last, in November 2013, she signs Drift, a duo performed by Tamara Bacci and herself. In July 2014, Cindy Van Acker created Anechoic during Expeditie Dansand on the beach Ostende for 53 danseurs de P.A.R.T.S. The play is resumed in June 2015 with 40 dancers of the Ballet Junior 13 and CFC-dance in Geneva.

ION, created in March 2015 at Théâtre Vidy Lausanne, marks her return to the solo form, its possibility of radical experiments and the looking for extreme plasticity.

She then created in 2016 Elementen I Room for the Ballet de Lorraine based upon Alvin Lucier's music and Zaoum, based upon Luigi Nono's work.

Cindy Van Acker has been responsible for the physical formation at the Haute Ecole de Théâtre, la Manufacture, in Lausanne from 2006 till 2010.

Her professional path is marked by her collaborations with Myriam Gourfink, Romeo Castellucci, Victor Roy and by the collaborators of the Cie Greffe.

Christian Lutz – photographe

Christian Lutz was born in Switzerland in 1973 and is currently based in Geneva. He's a graduate from ESA 75, L'Ecole Supérieure des Arts et de l'Image, in Brussels and is a recipient of several awards.

His work is both exhibited throughout the world and regularly published.

From 2003 to 2012 the primary focus of Christian Lutz was to create a trilogy on power that brought him international recognition. Three books : Protokoll, Tropical Gift and In Jesus'

Name were subsequently published based on political, religious and economic power.

His photographic approach focuses on a scrupulous sociological observation of human groups and while the formal qualities of his images are visually appealing they often reflect an acerbic visual commentary on our collective preconceived socio-political constructs.

From his earlier documentary approach to photography, his work has since evolved to encompass a more cinematographic perception of his environment.