

Two Room Apartment

Critic by Anat Zecharya, "Yediot Achronot"



The original production of "Two-room Apartment" was performed in Tel Aviv in 1987 by two independent dancers and choreographers Liat Dror and Nir Ben-Gal. Back then the work was considered to be ground-breaking dance, purposely avoiding aestheticised movement language, direct and poor in the good sense of the word. The work and its makers were very well received internationally, and their success opened a gateway for many up and coming Israeli dance makers to showcase their work overseas.

Unfortunately I have only seen a video recording of that production: of the original production: two dancers obsessively moving about the space, marking their territories. The conflict and drama were small-scale, and there was a sense of climax without any force being used. There was also something very formalist and mathematical about the work too.



And now, more than twenty years after the original work was performed, choreographers Niv Sheinfeld and Oren Laor decided to create their own version of the work, after having received the blessing of the original makers.

And indeed, the new version is much different to the original one. Everything still moves in perfect unison, in precise and forced movement sequences, without thinking, through everyday and ritualistic physical gestures, inside two tape-marked territories.

In this current version Sheinfeld and Laor's choice to seat the audience around the harshly lit stage, exposes the audience in the same way the performers are, leaving everything to be seen out in the open.

It makes for an honest dance work, moving between a sense of breath and a sense of suffocation. Its power is in the decision to not give over to passion so quickly. And it successfully escapes the predictable erotic turn, bringing us back to the material body, from which our relationships emerge - to the children that we were, before we needed sexuality to fill the innate emptiness we live in as we grow.

When Laor undresses and jumps ready and exposed into the arms of Sheinfeld, two distinctively different bodies become intertwined and merge into one. The cyclical movement holding within it the subterranean and the sublime. I will never forget the look on Sheinfeld's face, held high, mouth agape, saying so simply what we never dare say.

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