

La Beauté du Diable

Koffi Koko is more than a choreographer. He is an ambassador. In this case, though, not in the service of the "black continent", but as a dancing Hermes of God as well as the Devil.

"The Beauty of the Devil" in the title invokes the attraction of the moral and ethical abyss. There are doubtlessly more than enough visuals in this regard. But whoever falls under the spell of Koffi Koko will immediately forget that man created the devil to explain his inherent evil. Whoever watches Koko dance will physically experience that no one in this world is isolated from the rest of the world. "And that's exactly what I'm trying to say" Koko would reply: "Neither the Devil nor God."

His solo is spiritual, full of elegance. It is a testimony of maturity, not unlike a good wine that has been cultivating its bouquet for decades. Here notes of flamenco have a tryst with universal folklore. With Koko dance is basically just a bonus. He could be sitting there talking, or just watching us, and you would be under his spell. He stands, dances, floats above everything including his own self. One minute he shows us instinctively and highly focused, meditative, grounded and heavenly at the same time, seething with energy on the inside and an almost stoic calmness on the outside, that Africa has got something to do with Butoh, too. If he so wishes, he seems able to connect with the realm of the dead without effort. Yet the next minute this impression is joined by touches of self-deprecation. At this moment the vocabulary of tradition belongs just to him, and he revives it, spontaneously and unpredictably.

There is no doubt that Koko is a dancing alpha leader. (And) as such he takes absolute liberty and tongue-in-cheek "plays" the keys of his body. "La beauté du diable" is free jazz, danced in dialogue with the musicians, who accompany him on this tour.

Koko is making faces, stomping and flailing about, enveloping himself in a cloud of chalk, bringing everyone under his spell. Every move originates in the inspiration of the moment. This way a direct link to the audience is formed. Whoever witnesses such a being on stage will immediately forget to wonder if he's watching African, contemporary or ritual dance. And this in turn shows that man no matter how much he might be torn between good and evil on the inside always has the ability to shine under the banner of nobleness.

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