

Reflex (cultural weekly magazine)

7h February 2008

APPLAUSE

DOT 504, a dance company that is making its mark in contemporary dance, has commenced its second season very successfully with its choreographic production *Holdin'Fast*, which Greek-Slovak choreographic duo Linda Kapetanea and Jozef Fruček – former members of *Ultima Vez* – worked on with the dancers of the ensemble DOT. The adrenaline style of the famous Belgian ensemble *Ultima Vez* cannot be suppressed by this duo, but they have taken their own path successfully. This path is influenced by Fruček's acting background, which is reflected in the masterly constructed tragicomic acting situations interlaced with touching, heady dance "dreamtime". Fruček's signature move is the pulsating moving spiral: Its fractal endlessness is created by the dancers falling one after the other into each other's arms, seemingly caught just before they fall, and then immediately propelling themselves without thought into the space around them, where a hand catches them softly and sends them on again... The intoxicatingly different stance of this production clearly bears the signature of Linda K. The choreography inspired by Kundera's *Unbearable Lightness of Being* addresses the topic of sexual addiction, manipulation, and submissiveness. It also points out the contrast between "racio" and "bio", intellectual and primitive, as well as gentleness and force. Three pairs of dancers create colourful configurations portraying quality partnerships and general inter-human relationships, i.e., miniature gender studies. Both levels – dancing and acting – are in terms of interpretation quite difficult, and the DOT dancers provide what may be a performance of a lifetime. Allow me to add that *Holdin'Fast* can be seen in Prague either in the Ponec Theatre or occasionally in La Fabrika in Holešovice.

Author: Jana Návrátová (Editor-in- chief, Taneční Zóna)

DANCE ZONE

 (dance periodical)

November 2008

BALLAD ABOUT TECTONIC COLLISIONS

The airy roots of Jozef Fruček's and Linda Kapetanea's *RootlessRoot* Company are momentarily in Greece. The curriculum vitae of these artists – a Slovak and a Greek – are highlighted by their participation in Wim Vandekeybus's renowned ensemble *Ultima Vez*. The fact that Lenka Ottová, the artistic director of DOT 504, contacted this duo for her group is not surprising: her awe of Vandekeybus's style is well known. Although the

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affiliation with the style of Ultima Vez is apparent in their new work, the two choreographers speak their own language and on a theme of their own.

Linda Kapetanea and Jozef Fruček are experts in contact improvisation, one of the most pronounced currents in contemporary dance that allows for the discovery of such bodily creations. For this choreographic duo, composition is then a series of tidal waves of dance.

Collisions

When the dancers in the production *Holdin´Fast* (Dreamy ballad about sexual addiction) fly into each other like a calamity, we understand the meaning of the title: the dancers really have to “hold on fast” in strenuous bodily positions. One dancer flies over another like a boulder catapulted in a tectonic drama, and then one flows over and around the other. Upon the collision of two bodies, the movement slows to a sleep walk, and the shape of the joined dancers (de)forms unpredictably. The shapes of the glued bodies then become reminiscent of slowly turning ships with virgins on the bow, rape of the Sabines, or Atlases buckling under the weight of the globe.

The compositions created by the collision of the bodies are surprising even for contemporary dance, where such full-contact dancing is the daily bread. The dancers of DOT504 – Helena Arenbergerová, Michaela Ottová, Lenka Vágnerová, Pavel Mašek, Petr Opavský, and Daniel Raček, who belong to our best – were thus able experience their bodies in a different way and discover what other things they are capable of. Linda Kapetanea and Jozef Fruček are experts in contact improvisation, one of the most pronounced currents in contemporary, which allows for the discovery of such bodily creations. For this choreographic duo, composition is then a series of tidal waves of dance. Separate studies of movement – but of what? – tie onto one another without causality, a type of automatic writing where perhaps only in dance does it find its proper place. It has its appeal as well as its malicious whirlpools.

Tides

In the duo, Linda Kapetanea represents the feminine element of water: her signature style in the shared choreography is identifiable by the lava-flow-like movement. Her dancers furtively crawl over each other like lovers, melting across the floor and over and under the sparkling gold Persian rugs. The carpets are scattered carelessly over the space, and their decorative mandalas and lazy ripples complement the erotic movement of the dancers. One of the dancers strews handfuls of shiny coins on her colleagues – or are they fish scales? ...

Jozef Fruček had already started developing his style before being engaged by *Vandekeybus*, which could be seen in *Noah*, the production in which he first

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called significant attention to himself in 2001. Here, one could already see the mix of dance and martial arts and the use of wooden canes as weapons, metaphors, and balancing aids. Here, one could already sense the fever of the apocalypse. Jozef keeps the dancers in a nervous simian state of readiness, a restlessness of matter. – The individual style of each of the two choreographers flows into a single choreographic gesture naturally but stays separate, like two beautiful swirls of paint poured into one container.

Springing

In this production, the mass of the dancers' bodies is tight, heavy, but also infinitely springy. One of the dancers has a fit in the middle of one of the Persian rugs, jumping up and down like a wind-up toy and laughing uncontrollably. Two dancers try to stop her, but cannot. The dancers, thus, turn their jumping and laughing colleague into a ball for dribbling, into a rubber toy, which they throw back and forth, bend, squish and release, testing her flexibility and resilience. She proves to be an unstoppable springy mass.

The overture to the performance already hinted at this restlessness of matter. In a crack above the ground in the back of the set, the spectator soon notices a number of pairs of feet running here and there, forming, re-grouping, and revealing that the purpose of the restless event lies apparently in the bodies from the waist up. But because there is a black curtain, what it is remains a secret. We therefore must read: the purpose of humanity is restlessness

One dancer flies over another like a boulder catapulted in a tectonic drama, and then one flows over and around the other. Upon the collision of two bodies, the movement slows to a sleep walk, and the shape of the joined dancers (de)forms unpredictably.

Sticking

The production is subtitled Dreamy Ballad about Sexual Addiction. In our civilisation, however, the theme of sex is so banal that we do not notice it anymore. Addiction, persistent urges, and stubbornness emanates from the dancers; rather, however, it is the urge for living matters to stick to other living matter, the persistent need for this sticking, almost as if it were a law of physics. And the compression of vital energy as part of this sticking leads to repetitive tectonic collisions.

In this way, contemporary dance has again started to teach us what the social code and the strayed interpretation of morality had forbidden: to touch and to exchange the energy related to touch. In day-to-day life, we will surely not see tectonic collisions and electric storms as we do on the dance set, but a clear signal has been sent to us.

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Cutting

During a boyish game called “meat”, the players – three male dancers – cut each other’s fingers with as much verve as possible, that soon not only are the tips of their fingers bloody, but also their faces. The game soon builds up to mutual slapping. One of the dancers, a sort of slapping doll, receives so many authentic blows that his entire face is authentically red.

As an entire dance generation has been doing, Jozef Fruček and Linda Kapetanea use the system of film editing. For this reason, both purpose and chance play a role in contemporary dance performances. There where two sequential parts bringing tidal waves of inspiration come together in a clean and smooth edit, nethertheless we do not feel the need to protest.

(Detaching Sometimes it happens that choreography comes apart at the seams where each of the etudes comes together and we see what we were not meant to see. We realise the whole comprises individual pieces, whose significance is vulnerable if the predator of our critical eye chases it away from the herd that protects it. The herd of etudes also has its weaklings. In this performance, it is a sort of humorous insert, a pseudo-lecture, an etude from some other opera. Perhaps this should have been some gallant opportunity for one of the dancers ... ? But It does not work. – Furthermore: “Enough of microphones.”)

The performance is only starting its career and will still be developing. I have put the previous critical note in parentheses, as it is clear that Holdin´Fast by Jozef Fruček and Linda Kapetanea and DOT 504 is a lifetime dance event in this country and an absolute success for both the choreographers and the dancers.

Autor: Nina Vangeli

Hospodářské noviny (daily press)

22nd October 2007

Dance as a collision of body masses

For the promising dance ensemble DOT504, the choreographic duo of Jozef Fruček and Linda Kapetanea – a Slovak and a Greek, respectively, whose curricula vitae includes their involvement in Wim Vandekeybus’ renowned ensemble Ultima Vez – created the new performance Holdin´Fast. Last week, the Ponec Theatre presented this show.

Holdin´Fast is the name of the production, and the dancers truly have to “hold

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fast” when they fly into each other like the onset of a catastrophe; upon the collision of the two bodies, the movement slows down to sleep-walking, and the shape formed by the two dancers unpredictably (de)forms. One dancer floats over the other dancer; one dancer flows over the other dancer. The shapes of the glued-together bodies then appear to be slowly turning boats with statuesque virgins on the bow or a scene from the rape of the Sabines or like Atlases compressed by the weight of the Earth.

"Deluxe" category

Linda Kapetanea is an expert on contact improvisation; her signature can be identified clearly. Helena Arenbergerová, Michaela Ottová, Lenka Vágnerová, Pavel Mašek, Petr Opavský and Daniel Raček belong to the best contemporary Czech dancers. The music for the presentation was composed by Ivan Acher; costumes were created by Simona Rybáková; and the lighting design was the work of Pavel Kotlík. Therefore, all of the persons collaborating with the choreographic duo fall into the “deluxe” category. The result is phenomenal.

Jozef Fruček had already chosen his choreographic style even before Vandekeybus and first attracted attention to himself in 2001 in the production Noach. Already at this time, the elements of dance and martial arts mixed, and wooden sticks appeared as weapons, metaphors, and balancing aids. Already here was the fever of the apocalypse. It goes without saying that time spent with Vandekeybus did not harm his style in any way.

After his experience with Vandekeybus, he founded with Linda Kapetanea the dance group RootlessRoot Company, whose airy roots are momentarily in Greece. It is not surprising that Lenka Ottová, artistic director of DOT504, turned to them for her own ensemble: her admiration of Vandekeybus’ style is well known. In the production, the individual styles of both choreographers meld into one choreographic gesture and naturally merge, while remaining separate, like two colours poured into one bowl.

Dreamy ballad

Through a ground-level slit we can see bare feet running around, the meaning of which remains unknown to us. In the space there are a few Persian rugs haphazardly thrown about. Nevertheless, their decorative mantras affect the space: the atmosphere is the colour of rust and gold. One dancer strews handfuls of shiny coins on erotically slithering lovers.

The performance should be a “dreamy ballad about sexual addiction”; however, today – sex here, sex there; we don’t even notice it anymore. A movement study – but of what exactly? – the scenes tie on to one another

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but without a causal relationship. It is a type of automatic writing, that only in dance, it appears, finds its rightful place.

Author: Nina Vangeli

Haló noviny (*daily press*)

1st November 2007

Bearable lightness of dance

Recently, in the Prague dance theatre Ponec, a 50-minute original production entitled *Holdin' fast* was performed. This performance was inspired by the famous novel by Milan Kundera *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. The entirely professional contemporary dance ensemble DOT 504 derived its name from the funding it received from the Municipality of the Capital City of Prague, thanks to which it came to be. It is under the management of the largest Czech dance studio: Dance Perfect. The energetic owner of the studio, Lenka Ottová, is extremely proud of the group.

"It was already active last season, when it started up. The ensemble comprises the best dancers in the field, with the involvement of foreign teachers and choreographers," she said. The dreamy ballad about sexual addiction expresses through movement the words of Milan Kundera in his novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, where he writes: "The heaviest burden is an image of life's most intense fulfilment. The heavier the burden, the closer our life is to the earth, the more real and true it is." The choreographer is the work of the gender-balanced duo Jozef Fruček - Linda Kapetanea. The dancers were Helena Arenbergerová, Pavel Mašek, Petr Opavský, Michaela Ottová, Daniel Raček, and Lenka Vágnerová.

"I had no idea what I was going to see: I got the ticket from a friend. I told myself that I would survive it somehow. I had no idea that dance theatre could say so much. That it can be about love and about how much people need each other," said 25-year-old Petra after the premiere.

Author: Andrea CERQUEIROVÁ

A2 (*cultural weekly*)

7th November 2007

Holdin' fast – Drž se fest!

Dance theatre Ponec has entered the new season with a series of successes. A significant place among these is the premiere of the work *Holdin' fast*,

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CRITICISM

performed by the relatively new and promising contemporary dance ensemble from Prague: DOT 504. Its artistic director, Lenka Ottová, entrusted the choreography to the choreographic duo Jozef Fruček & Linda Kapetanea alias RootlessRoot Company. A Slovak and Greek, they met each other in the renowned Belgium ensemble Ultima Vez of Wim Vandekeybus, which has performed in Prague a number of times in the Archa theatre to sold-out shows. The influence of Ultima Vez is apparent; however, “rootless” has its own voice and addresses its own topics.

Holdin' fast is an appropriate title that expresses the dynamics of the performance. The dancers have to “hold fast” in positions in which they are off the group for a long time and glued to the body of another dancer, after having landed on the other body, flung there by his or her own flexibility or by a third person. The creativity behind these landings is boundless. The adhesions and clusters formed by the two bodies surprises even one who knows the contemporary dance environment, where such full-contact dance is the norm. The dancers also have to “hold fast” to actual blows. Both choreographers are experts in so-called contact improvisation, one of the most distinctive directions in contemporary dance. They have treated the composition as a series of incoming waves of dance currents. Linda pours into the joint choreographic work her lava-like movement: lovers-not lovers furtively approach each other, melt over the floor and over the glittering Persian rugs thrown haphazardly throughout the space; then they seep under the rugs and heave them up. Josef's contribution is mixing dance and martial arts: already in this “pre-Ultima-Vez” choreographer did these elements figure – both concretely and metaphorically; he keeps the dancers in simian nervous readiness, in restlessness, and loads their backs – load! – unload! The performance is subtitled “Dreamy ballad about sexual addiction”. The topic is in reality broader in scope: it is more about the gnawing need of living matter to latch onto other living matter, a need so great it is almost like a law of physics. Compression of vital energy due to this sticking together leads to repeated explosions of movement.

The images/dance etudes roll in one after the other; there is no other apparent connection between them. – At the start of the performance, while the spectators are settling down, a body hangs over a school blackboard for a tormenting amount of time, entering the story with the fall of the blackboard, churning up chalk. – Change – Through a black, ground-level slit, we see only feet running around back and forth, the meaning remaining undisclosed to us. – Cut – A golden light illuminates the entire space; we see a few Persian rugs, whose mantras deceptively suggest the possibility of getting a hold somewhere, but where? The atmosphere is the colour of rust and gold.

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One dancer strews handfuls of glittering coins over lovingly slithering dancers. – Cut – A dancer stuffs balloons under his costume, transforming himself into a joker with bumps all over the body; with a crazed expression, he glides over the set and is then flushed away by tidal waves of dancers. – Change – A girl sitting on the rug runs amok, jumps up as if wound up or is enchanted and laughs uncontrollably; two boys try to stop her, but can't. So they decide to dribble her around like a basket ball, throw her back and forth, squish her; she is as flexible as a rubber toy. Grotesque matter. Flexible matter that can't be stopped...

The group DOT504 has confirmed its quality. The taxpayers' money has not been thrown out the window, which cannot be said about all grant recipients. Dancers Helena Arenbergerová, Michaela Ottová, Lenka Vágnerová, Pavel Mašek, Petr Opavský, and Daniel Raček; composer Ivan Acher; artist Simona Rybáková; lighter designer Pavel Kotlík; and the mentioned choreographers have created a performance from which springs forth the following message: People and their dancing are guided by the fundamental restlessness of matter. Each and every movement has far reaching effects.

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Taneční zóna (*internet version of dance periodical Taneční zóna*)

(http://www.taneznizona.cz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=491&Itemid=30)

HOLDIN´ FAST – LOVE ON A SLANT

At the Ponec theatre, one could see a production that moves contemporary Czech dance another step forward. Josef Fruček and Linda Kapatanea, dancers who spent a number of seasons in the dance ensemble Ultima Vez, have become involved with the dance ensemble DOT 504, the result being the strong piece of work” Holdin´Fast.

The eternal theme of relationships, love, and endless desire and torment never gets tiring in the theatres. Holdin´ Fast goes further, however, viewing emotional relationships mainly through the more carnal physical aspect. Here, sexuality is presented unusually directly, and the dancers often succumb to its power. In fact, what is courtship, flirtation and subtle physical contact, but a tortuous path to the bed?

Slowly and with feeling, the dancers just roll over each other on the floor. Six dancers, however, do not honour any sort of polygamy. Each tastes the body of the other; then he or she rolls into a ball on the floor by him/herself, only to

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then get in the way of another pair and become part of it. The couples writhe on large Persian rugs, and when a couple does not want to be observed by its surroundings, it slides under the rug.

In the end, one of the men puts up a big blackboard, runs onto it, and the blackboard falls back to the ground under the weight. This battle against gravity is repeated a number of times, always without success. Is it the journey to the top, from which we must as a rule fall? The unending scaling of heights where we have no chance of holding on? This metaphor is abruptly interrupted by a grotesque scene where three men inflict blows on each other.

Male vain has been choosing this method to settle scores for many centuries. And usually in the middle of these little battles stand a women and the man's desire to keep her under control. It is extremely difficult to overcome the feeling that your chosen one was beatified by someone else. The blows get more intense and are never-ending. On the face of the smallest dancer one can already see the handprints from the hard, open-handed blows. The weakest, who loses the fight, actually becomes the victor. An overly sprightly woman latches on to him like the most affectionate of Siamese cats. In a drunken fashion, she responds to his lecture about film anti-heroes.

“You, Pete, are (my) hero...”

A few glasses of wine, and the biggest outsider becomes a prince. The microphone, which his admirer places up to his lips so he can show off his intelligence, soon, thanks to her evident intentions, is swinging in places that are more attractive to her. Sexual desire always wins over intelligence.

In each scene, the dancers show their flair for exaggeration. They flirt with great animation, but their dancing overlaps into more inward aspects. It is not only frivolous bobbing. The external aspect of eroticism of dance is trumped by internal strength that fights its way uncontrollably to the surface. It is not only physical attraction that causes one body to stick to the other. Rather, it is an invisible, flexible string by which the dancers are tied to one another. And as the string stretches and contracts, relationships between the dancers are formed. Variations on the relationship between man and woman can be seen in the other scenes as well. A male dancer hops onto centre stage. She is bouncing up and down as if crazy, laughing hysterically. When two men start to push her around, her enthusiasm comes close to ecstasy. Although the men's behaviour is savage – they push her head back and forth, know no gentleness, and attack her brutally – she is satisfied. This fact becomes clear at the moment they stop attacking and leave her alone. The energy returns again at the moment when the male aggression again takes hold of her ethereal body. She is only a rag doll without her own opinion. The purpose of

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her existence is only being connected to someone else, although this connection is rather proprietary and inconsiderate. She is not looking for a partner; instead, for her to be happy, it is enough to be dragged around by someone and degraded to only a body.

At the same time, however, we sense that after this scene there remains a feeling of hopelessness and sadness over her fate. The possibilities for experiencing full-fledged love are infinite. Eroticism intertwined with loving gentleness is the theme of another scene. Three couples experience their desires on stage. They are devoted to one another, but sometimes the situation changes a bit and the pairs get mixed up. Love knows no rules or bounds. No emotional and physical joining offers finality, and just as the movements of dancers change, the emotional inclinations change. Everything flows and varies; no certainty exists. Someone has luck and connects with a partner for life; someone else is destined to experience his or her dance/life solo.

Written based on the repeat performance at the Ponec Theatre on 17th October 2007. For more information about DOT 504 and both choreographers, visit www.dot504.cz.

Author: Veronika Pacíková

Právo (daily press)

14th December 2007

Dance that attracts

The presentation entitled *Holdin' Fast* of the first professional contemporary dance ensemble in Prague called DOT 504 will take place this evening at 7:00 p.m. at Divadlo loutek (Marionette Theatre) in Ostrava.

"An ambitious project of European format awaits lovers of modern expressionist dance. The protagonists of the evening – recognised dancers and choreographers Jozef Fruček and Linda Kapetanea of the renowned dance group *Ultima Vez* and the high level of the ensemble DOT 504 – are a guarantee of an extraordinary artistic experience," claims choreographer Lenka Dřimalová on behalf of the organisers of the entire event. The theme of the choreography of the aforementioned renowned artists is *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Czech-French author Milan Kundera: "...The heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But in the love poetry of every age, the woman longs to be weighed down by a man's body. The heaviest of burdens is therefore simultaneously an image of life's most intense fulfilment. The heavier the burden, the closer our lives come to the earth, the more real and truthful they become." ... wrote the literary genius.

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Helena Arenbergerová, Michaela Ottová, Lenka Vágnerová, Petr Opavský, Pavel Mašek, and Daniel Raček appear in the performance, which lasts 50 minutes.

“DOT 504 is the first fully professional contemporary dance group in the Czech Republic. It works with external choreographers and pedagogues from the Czech Republic and from many other countries around the world. It is characteristic for its high technical level, creativity, and personalities inspiring change. Its aim is to build an internationally respectful dance ensemble in the Czech Republic that offers a foundation for exceptional dancers and helps develop contemporary dance in this country,” says modern dance follower Lenka Dřimalová.

Author: Břetislav Uhlář

MF Dnes (*daily press*)

14th December 2007

DANCE IN THE THEATRE

Ensemble to offer variation of Kundera

Ostrava (ama) – Divadlo loutek (Marionette Theatre) will host top contemporary dance today at 7 p.m.

The persons involved will be members of the first fully professional Czech dance ensemble: the Prague-based DOT 504. They are coming to Ostrava with their production *Holdin' Fast*, where the choreographic duo Jozef Fruček and Linda Kapetanea from the world renowned dance group *Ultima Vez* drew thematic inspiration from Milan Kundera's novel *Unbearable Lightness of Being*: “The heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But in the love poetry of every age, the woman longs to be weighed down by a man's body,” say the choreographers referring to the text from the work. The presentation is part of the project *Tanec v zóně* (Dance in the Zone). The organisers from *Tanečního sdružení Zóna* (Dance Association Zóna) and the Marionette Theatre recommend this as one of the most interesting dance performances of the 2007 season.

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Dancing through the Festival

Interview with Yvona Kreuzmannová (Director of the Tanec Praha (Dance Prague) Festival)

...In comparison, DOT 504 is the only professional modern dance ensemble in the Czech Republic that received a grant for the entire year, which allows it to invite excellent foreign choreographers. When creating the performance "Heaven is the place..." they worked with Slovak choreographer Anton L'ahký, who works in Germany. The result is a highly dramatic and physically demanding piece, in which Anton, in my opinion, captured the individual character of each dancer in this group to such an extent, that the dancers themselves did not like how much the performance revealed about them. And it is exactly this kind of cooperation that should be the norm. But this would require much more money to flow into dance. And this is not happening, unfortunately...

Author: #

Respekt (weekly press)

19th February 2007

Dance is growing wings

Quality of local dance theatre jolts ahead

At the edge of the street Narodní třída is an inconspicuous passage in which Dance Perfect, the largest private dance school in the Czech Republic, has its studios. This place is occupied day in and day out by hundreds of teenagers enthusiastic about learning hip hop, break dancing, and the latest dance steps seen on MTV. In addition to commercial operations, which make the school its money, something else is being created: the first independent Czech contemporary dance group DOT 504, which is absolutely professional and ready to compete against the best European productions. As its first performances have shown, it has brought a significant qualitative jump to the dance scene in this country.

From paradise to the present

Lenka Ottová (1959) – the charismatic manager, choreographer and owner of Dance Perfect studios – is the persona behind DOT 504. She has been able to obtain a grant from the Prague magistrate to cover a number of years. For the first season, the grant amounts to CZK 800,000, which is more than half of the annual budget – the rest

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of the budget is supplied by Ms Ottová from the school's proceeds. Thanks to the grant, her dancers are not paid traditionally per show, but actually receive a monthly salary. Ms Ottová writes for the dancers one performance per year, with the other performances being created by a foreign choreographer who resides in Prague for extended periods and teaches open classes.

“It is fantastic; we are finally catching up to France, Germany, Holland and Belgium, where things have been operating this way for years,” say 28-year-old dancer Lenka Vagnerová, a member of DOT 504, who, before joining this dance ensemble, managed to realize a number of foreign engagements. In her opinion, financing over a number of years is the only way to ensure consistent concentration on the part of the dancers and, at the same time, sophisticated choreography. The high quality of western productions, which we know thanks to the Tanec Praha festival, is, among other things, the result of this more effective form of support.

The short existence of DOT 504 (it was established last summer) has already borne the first fruits in the form of two pieces of choreography. The more successful, called Heaven, premiered at the end of January in the Prague theatre Ponec. It was created by the wonderful Slovak choreographer Anton L'achky (1982), who lives in Brussels. Even though his piece of work is only 20 minutes long, it is at a level way above the average in this country and shows off best the strength of the new ensemble.

L'achky has created a perfect dance “puzzle” based on contrast and quick alternation of situations. The presentation begins in the jungle or in a natural representation of Eden, where the dancers perform animal-like movements. This is followed by a cut to a confused present full of tension, where dancers collide into each other and exchange sharp invectives. The choreography is dominated by precision in movement, exactness, and an enthusiasm on the part of the dancers that is not often seen in this country. It is true that the storyline is not very original, but overall the show on the podium is highly engrossing and, for the full twenty minutes, the public does not even move....

Author: Jaroslav Pašmik

Houser (*cultural weekly / review*)
8th February 2007

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Heaven is the place...

A new project of dance ensemble DOT 504 called "Heaven is the place" premiered 31st January in theatre Ponec. "Heaven is the place where nothing like that happened and will not happen. Heaven is the place where things like that happen all the time. Heaven is the place where I would like to go. Heaven is the place where colours are coloured. Heaven is the place where I won't possibly ever get..., but I would like to."

DOT 504 (former Domino Dance Company) thus describes their new piece in the programme. Both civil acting and clothes of dancers lead us to "our reality". We become witnesses of all the aching places of our communication and non-communication. The movement which comes out from us is the expression of ourselves. Is it thanks to this possible to identify with or even become someone else? Is it possible to communicate without not being ourselves?

Short phrases from everyday life and imitated animal movements humorously refer to the source of our reactions. Familiar situations, cut from daily life, and their rythmisation, supported by sound design, often provoke a smile. It's as if the urge to contact someone changed into a conflict, only in the moment of silence we can see that movement can become inspiration. Dancers become one large body and it's no longer important whose part of body belongs to whom; only this collective dance brings the real contact, only this connection brings harmony...

Author: [-bbj-](#)

Academica (<http://academica.centrum.cz/studium/clanek.phtml?id=1853>)
15th January 2007

Ensemble DOT 504: Purity

The dance ensemble Domino Dance Company has changed its name to DOT 504, and its work has become more professional. Its choreographic work Purity, created under the guidance of Lenka Ottová, is built on contrasts: dizzying tempo, tension and lightning-fast reactions to the impulse of a thought versus stops, breaks, relaxing moments, and calm. A net is suspended in the back of the set; the kind of net that belongs to the standard equipment of practically every gym. And

And we would see it as such if there wasn't a limp human body entangled in it...

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CRITICISM

For several long minutes, the body attracts the stares of all eyes in the theatre. Then, the spotlights turn off for a moment, and there is an onslaught of action: all performers are frantically running around along the perimeter of the stage, leaping high, pirouetting, and falling. At times it seems that the runners are trying to catch up to one another, but in fact they create regular, systematic patterns and figures. A pair of dancers runs spontaneously out of the circle. One of them, with breathtaking coolness, charges toward his opposite, but each jumps away at the last moment in mutual symmetry.

An effective allusion to aggressive and adrenaline-inducing group sports – the dancer, who before the start of the performance provoked the audience with her lifeless body entangled in the net, is dressed in a football uniform. And again we see the exhausting race, with the microphones increasing the volume of the heavy panting.

A reckless demonstration of life energy; the struggle of the body scrambling forward unabashed; fury; ecstasy; animal-like vitality exceeding all bounds... the surroundings transformed into blurred spots; a swirling mass of indistinct bodies, each body forming an integral part of the whole; intertwining of movement; the need to follow a provocative gesture and not to divert from one's own position; taking responsibility for the shape of the agglomeration of bodies. The exalted experiencing of one's own body allows one to escape from the persistent and agonising train of thought...

After the most intense action, things cool down and relax. The dance group unwinds and sinks to the stage, their augmented breathing interspersed with short replications.

The dancers whip up their strength again in the second part, this time the dancing diversified by each dancer's more meticulous dance figures; playing around with the nets causes dizziness; until the final applause brings us back to the normal course of time...

Purity is a presentation not only for those who long for extreme fluctuations in emotions; there are moments where one can see the tension of each muscle in the body...

Author: [Petr Andreas](#)

Literární novinky (<http://litenky.ff.cuni.cz/clanek.php/id-1819>)

24th December 2006

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The vicious circle of purity

Movement. To the point of exhaustion. To the limit of one's own possibilities. It's not possible to go further – yet... The heart is about to burst; the pain is everywhere. You are racing off somewhere. You are not aware of your surroundings; you are not aware of the pain; you are not aware of even yourself. But you feel! Through the palpable pain you have clear proof: you are alive. For the feeling “afterwards” it is all worth it. Nothing compares to it. In mid December (12 and 13 2006), lovers of contemporary modern dance, and thus visitors of Ponec theatre, were presented with the premiere of the second project of the dance ensemble DOT 504.

Lenka Ottová, the artistic director of a renamed, no longer amateur but professional dance group (the former name was Domino Dance Company), surprised us and presented a high level piece of work. On both nights, Purity was accompanied by the work of Austrian choreographer Helene Weinzierl – Duo para ella >>>comida para dos – which started of this evening. Then the premiere came.

The dance space was filled with bodies thirsting for extreme exhaustion. They go from extreme to extreme. Adrenaline alternates with meditation. For some, it is a feeling of gratification and satisfaction; for others, it is the onset of frailty. You observe the bodies. Are they are bodies that, together with the spirit, form a personality? Or are they nobodies – only matter – needing constant movement?

In addition to the search for an answer to this question, the thirty-minute presentation brings with it an audio-visual experiment. Usually before the start of the presentation, you enter a lit up auditorium, sit down, and look at a dark stage and wait for what will come. This time, however, DOT 504 began in an untraditional way: the lights in the auditorium are dimmed and on the stage is a body, lit up in an interesting way, twisted rather unnaturally and wrapped in some sort of rope ladder fixed to the ceiling of the theatre. It swings, breathes, but is unobtrusive. It is waiting for the right moment to start swinging more and, by doing so, starts up the dance narrative. From the very onset, the light show symbolises the beginning an infinite circle, and the bodies of those who are running hard and in a constant circle only confirm the basic storyline of the work. This is in no way a descriptive course of events. This is about feelings. This is about physical exhaustion and the subsequent calming down. Incessant thoughts arrive. A person would shoot his brains out to get rid of them...but the body is faster that the thoughts themselves ... Aliquot tones are heard from one of the dancers, who turns

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into a lamenting entity for a certain amount of time. Bondage spreads from one person to the next. Energy is depleted from one, but drawn by another.

To the layperson, the entire choreography can seem like chaos with no meaning, but to my surprise, Lenka Ottová has thought out Purity thoroughly. I did not find many defective elements that would disrupt the flow of the performance. Almost every symbol fits into the whole. Questions are met with answers. Movement responds to movement.

Gone is the commercial cliché of a choreographer owning one of the biggest private dance schools in Prague (afternoon school open to the public).

At the end I am only left with the question: Why Purity? Cleanliness? Pure blooded? Clarity? Innocence? Pureness? Fullness? Which word is the best? Perhaps cleanliness - dancing to purify the body? Or fullness - we can reach a certain point of saturating ourselves?

Although all synonyms designate feelings that you experience during the performance, I do not know if it is suitable to emphasize the abstraction that Purity is with a name of multiple meanings. But here Purity can mean absolutely everything that I mentioned. And then the last piece of the puzzle of the perfection of the work falls into place. That the transformation of the dance group has also brought about a transformation in the choreography? If DOT 504 continues in this way, I will not want to miss any of their other projects.

[Literární novinky](#) – Episodic publication for cultural publicity – Internet version of the printed magazine for literature and similar things.

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