

REVIEWS

Who We are in the Dark: Into a Deep Night



BY GUYLAINE MASSOUTRE

MARCH 1, 2019



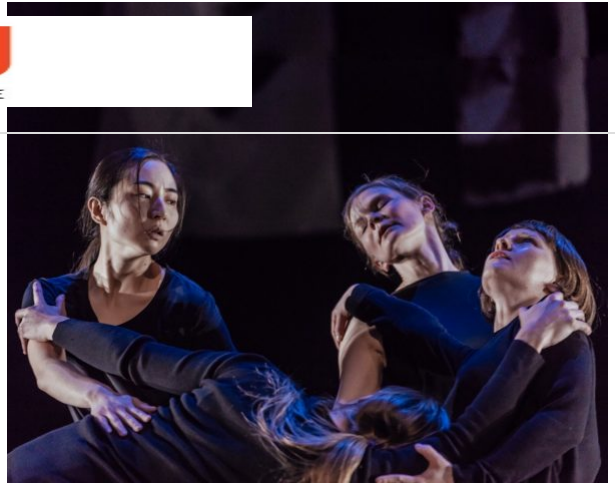
Jeremy Mimnagh

We did not expect to see the names of Arcade Fire and Peggy Baker associated on the Maisonneuve theater stage, in a very precise, very talented choreography, as technical as it is sensitive. It is however the second time that Baker, with the complicity of his performers, has created closely with the composer Sara Neufeld, violinist of the group Arcade Fire, which inspired the title of this piece, *Who We are in the Dark*.

The play is intensely dramatic. All the emotions, past, present and, it seems, to come, resulting from a deep night are summoned there. A cosmic universe, shaken by violent and mysterious turbulence, stirs in an unpredictable chaos, full of luminous explosions. Jeremy Mimnagh's projections on the big screen constitute an impressive tableau of celestial black, dense and leaden, which seven dancers will come up against.

performers this frightening sky under which to wander, hide, grow, observe, nest, extend and stretch in waves, together. , in the formidable drum rolls of Jeremy Gara who accompanies them.

The fluid movements of the dance, of high quality, vibrate under the bow of Neufeld, who wraps them in his throbbing, melancholy melody, his music sucking and holding our attention, then suddenly releasing it to restore its emotion for the benefit of dance. The bow dances solo, and the undulating bodies decline their score. Fascinating duel.



Jeremy Mimmagh

Atmosphere

Is it abstract? Is it purely sensory, this quality of black? Is it a game or anxieties, this cataclysmic atmosphere? Is this the expression of great perplexity? The scenography strongly colors the dance: touches, rolls, lifts, unbridled farandoles, all the surges of dance put their undulations at the risk of a fantastic immersion.



Jeremy Mimmagh

Suspended, a canvas weakens the dance by its strong presence: this canvas, then a dozen torn tarpaulins, stained blue, black, blood red, signed by the late John Heward, who died at the end of 2018, offer its images of banners disturbing, that the dancers will tear off at the end of a wild outburst.

Then, the great disturbing space will once again become what it is, a dark world where anything can happen, an invasive blackness where a multicolored aurora borealis will appear, in a riot of rays signed by Marc Parent, before day breaks.

Composition

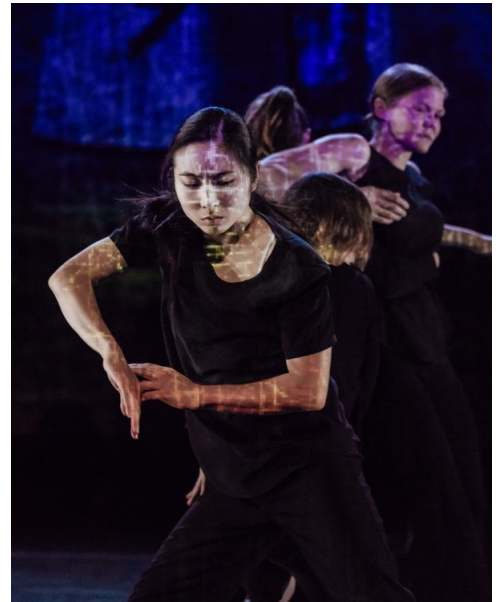
Baker's bet is bold, ambitious. How does she manage to merge the body languages of dance and music, so distinct in sensations, with all these scenic elements? His secret undoubtedly lies in his readings, poems, stories, essays on the worlds without light that cross us and surround us.

uncertain these united body units, by opening the faces of her performers to the emotions carried by their voices.

When she invites Neufeld to take center stage, the bodies come to rub close to the violin. The rhythms then graze each other closely; silences, rest, sensory correspondences, everything contributes to harmony and listening. These Arcade Fire musicians, with their rock, disco-funk, indie pop *tunes*, *assume here without fail the pure pleasure of enriching this electric universe with strength and skill.*

The last group scene, before daybreak, is particularly moving. Caught up in the dance, the superior and strange beauty of this sequence rises to a crescendo. It is possible, at this moment, to feel the fusion of all the partners in action. This raw energy of the motor and nervous centers of the performers follows complex, energizing lines, full of a tremendous expenditure of innumerable and varied interior states. Three final duets will initiate the awakening and a beneficial return to calm.

Dreams, nightmares, restless sleep, tenacious insomnia, animality, imaginary bodies, Baker's composition lends each aspect of this creation a moment of its own art, a solo vertigo, offering the public to appreciate both the assembly and its spare parts. The emotional fuel spreads through the fourth wall: bet taken, the scene communicates live the emotion of time.



Jeremy Mimmagh

Who We are in the Dark

Peggy Baker Dance Projects. Choreography: Peggy Baker, with Sarah Fregeau, Mairi Greig, Kate Holden, Benjamin Kamino, Sahara Morimoto, David Norsworthy, Jarrett Siddall. *Live* music : Sarah Neufeld (violin) and Jeremy Gara (percussion), from Arcade Fire. Lighting: Marc Parent. Screenings: Jeremy Mimmagh. Costumes: Robyn Macdonald. Presented by Danse Danse at Théâtre Maisonneuve in Place des Arts until March 2.

TAGS • ARCADE FIRE • BENJAMIN KAMINO • DANCE DANCE • DAVID NORSWORTHY • JARRETT SIDDALL • JEREMY GARA • JEREMY MIMMAGH • KATE HOLDEN • MAIRI GREIG • MARC PARENT • PEGGY BAKER • PEGGY BAKER DANCE PROJECT • ROBYN MACDONALD • SAHARA MORIMOTO • SARAH FREGEAU • SARAH NEUFELD • MAISONNEUVE THEATER • WHO WE ARE IN THE DARK



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