

The siren call of theatre [De sirenenzang van het theater]

French choreograph and theater director Vincent Dupont, according to me, has been one of a kind along this festival.

In *Hauts Cris (miniature)*, the director places a box in shifted perspectives, in the middle of the stage, kind of a stage on a stage. Which undoubtedly represents a slightly miniaturized and bleached, version of a middle class bourgeois dining room.

By using various surprising light-and mainly sound effects he manages with his first moves to completely blend in with the setting. It's as if the setting of the character had become one of the characteristics of so many, like part of a big picture. An experience, quite familiar for those who are somewhat acquainted with bourgeois living room theater. In this case it's being quite hysterically enlarged. But then Dupont proceeds to cutting the setting with a saw and chainsaw until nothing remains. Only when this is achieved, is he able to escape from this.

Mind that: this escape and destruction is theater. Even more: the more his actions are spectacular, the more theater one receives. There is no escape from theater.

However: the play ends with a highly estranging image. He uses two wooden sticks to rhythmically hit an enormous wooden trunk in front of the wrecked box. Suddenly a mystical encryption, about the suffering of Christ of French Huguenot Agrippa d'Aubigné appears on that trunk.

One can interpret this message in various ways, but one thing is undoubtedly true: Dupont shows us through this work the power of theater as a magical box full of effects and surprises. In this we can say he is in the same league as Italian Romeo Castellucci. Though in this same movement, especially in the epilogue, he shows how the theater machine can reduce man to an abstraction or an accessory. (...)