

Sini Haapalinna, Freelance Artist, Finland

Program: "Beyond the Lens III"

"Feel the Beat" (Tuomo Kangasmaa)

"About to Dance – Swing of Politics" (Pia Lindy)

"Raadelma" (Pentti Luomakangas)

"Threat of Freedom" (Raila Knuuttila)

"Tar 5" (Juhani Räisänen)

"Uuno Turhabuto – King of Dance Vol. 1" (Pasi Mäkelä & Jussi Saivio)

"Tila, Osa 1" (Lulu Saimi)

"Tarkastaja" (Salla Juntunen & Jose Ahonen)

"Tango Lesson" (Elia Saloranta)

"Close the Door Please" (Hanna Brotherus Company)

This is my first curation for a national video dance screening program, called Linssin taka / Beyond the Lens and coinciding with the dance and live arts festival Z – in – Motion, organized by Zodiak, Center for New Dance in Helsinki, Finland.

Our open call for 2008, Beyond the Lens III, was really left quite open in order to inspire a wider array of artists and dance, performance and video makers. We announced to be looking forward in the field of video dance and video performances (currently infusing not only the medium of dance with video but also dance with performance) strictly made for screening and dealing with movement / dance / performance / event corporeality. Art works of spontaneous experiments were welcomed, as well as broadcast-quality productions.

We received 28 pieces all together. I keep talking about 'we'... In the beginning there were two other persons screening the videos with me: Riika Innanen, who had curated the first series of the screening programs during the last two years and Liisa Risu, who was the main curator of the performances for the festival. After watching the videos through and discussing them together I was given the space for creating the screening program freely and according to my vision.

Soon these 28 videos became, for me, a kind of instant sample of "the state of the art" of the Finnish field of screendance. They became a kind of reference, found site, ambience and multitude of bodies with which I could share dance through my practice of curating. The works not shown here were actually the ones on the cutting edge for the program and, in a way, continue to hover around and invisibly anchor the program in a specific local context.

It was quite clear from the very beginning of the curating process that there wouldn't be one centered theme to pull the works into a school, and I didn't want to stick to the technically restricted gravity of quality. Quite the opposite! I was willing to have works with different laws of nature, state, horizon, and mindset. Different kinds of processes, tactics and production modes came together to create an example of possibilities and to inspire the community, while still pursuing a critical agenda (and as now formulated almost a kind of manifesto, smoothed by exceptions to the rules):

Deconstructing the cult of a trained, young, and/or aesthetically pleasing dancing body; being the only one able and having the right to move or reason to be filmed/watched.

Deconstructing the cult of traditionally produced, "narrative" and/or high-tech quality dance film; being the only one able to "speak" and having the right to be produced/publicly displayed or broadcasted – other than youtube.

Deconstructing the cult of marginalizing the art form.

Deconstructing the cult of cults.

Co-existing in some sort of post-dramatic and incompatible relationship to each other, the works of this program will hopefully sparkle in multiple directions at once and leave traces of a multitude of movements, pixels and modes both honoring the differences and celebrating the hybrids of realities, bodies, media, performances, and aesthetics without forcing the variety into one steady structure for simplified comparisons or limited contours of what is possible.

I end up here with a couple of questions:

How and where does dance/performance happen? How is the logic of the work / meaning produced? What are the tactics for body/video politics? What is popular? And what about ... Freedom? ? !

Sini Haapalinna has collaborated with artists from different fields and backgrounds, and with experimental art collectives (Voukkoset, Proimpro, 3rd Side Specific). In her artistic work she finds her interest in systems of perception in action, somatic sense of space and time, visual dramaturgy, improvisation, installation and intervention by varying hybrids of movement, dance, performance and lens-based media.