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Bruno Beltrão op Kunstenfestivaldesarts **Hip-hop away from the street**

Brussels. Bruno Beltrão is once again a guest at the Kunstenfestivaldesarts. For many years he has worked with Rio de Janeiro street boys, creating a sort of choreography that reconsiders hip-hop for the classic scene. His former creation for KFDA, H2, combined the best of these two dance universes. The follow-up, H3, is a sequel that emphasizes new accents.

By Peter T'Jonck

This time, Beltrão chose for 9 dancers instead of 12. At the beginning of the piece, sharp and bright patches of light appear at the back of the stage. They are like sunlight coming through a window. Immediately, it becomes clear that the place where this imaginary piece takes place isn't the street but a dance studio. Beltrão subtly makes it clear that his purpose is not to thread astonishing little dances one to another like street artists. He wants to explore something. That's why you never hear the pumping beats characteristic to hip hop. Mostly the piece is silent, although sometimes one hears some acoustic percussion or soft jazzy funk. In the background, sounds of cars and trucks can be heard. In other words: the dancers may have stepped out of the street to develop their dance idiom in the studio, but they are still close to this world.

Most impressive in H3 is certainly the fact that dance follows clear choreographic patterns. When the dancers are all on stage, they do not merely support each other's tricks. You could read this choreography as everybody's individual search for contact. In his group movements, Beltrão is a master in using a movement that you seldom see in hip hop or contemporary dance: his dancers move rearward with unthinkable speed, running in large circles. That they don't bash or bump one against one another is a real riddle. Here again, intense commitment in the ensemble, in the group and a strong trust in each other matters greatly. Nevertheless, Beltrão never loses sight of the brutal energy of hip-hop. At some moments, you even enjoy some hip-hop tricks. Beltrão never loses touch with the roots of this art of dance and just shows that there is so much more to his shows than threading showcases one after another.

Raffinerie, Molenbeek till Sunday. See more critics of KFDA on demorgen.be