

BØRNTEATERAVISEN

\*\*\*\*\* to Aaben Dans' dance performance 'Again'

## Joyful Journey of Wonder

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By Kirsten Dahl

Both small and big persons are absorbed in 'AGAIN'. In an organic meeting between the playing and exploring movements of two dancers, the fine shifts in the light, the soft floor and round balls in the room and the rhythm of the music, Åben Dans materializes the very feeling of sensing and discovering the various opportunities of life.

Speechless they lean forward and lap up the performance. The nappysmall children who squat on the first parquet. They sit, as the rest of us, with our stocking feet planted in the baby soft naturel-coloured carpet that lies spread out beneath us in the small square scenic space – as if we were sitting in a sandpit. The joyful and exploring playground of childhood is exactly what meets us after having been led to our seats by holding on to the (umbilical cord-) yarn-plastic string, we're handed in the entrance and are told to follow. Where the predecesing performance 'Me You Us' was scenografically super advanced and filled with visual challenges with mysterious objects of all kinds, the space in 'AGAIN' is simply designed to organically play and to manifest the artistical frame around childhood's open and joyful approach to the world.

A world which the tall Ole Birger Hansen and the short Antoinette Helbing embody together with music that splutters with spark and wonder. With simple, round and various strings that create patterns and even sounds in the room. With balls that disappear into holes, thrown up in the air and rolled into the arena, as an invitation to play. And with a series of round lamps which placed on the floor level around the stage paint dynamically shifting, clear and striped ambience in the room.

### Enthusiasm

There's a reason why the performance is called 'AGAIN'. Antoinette Helbing and Ole Birger Hansen stir and invite each other to games, imitation and repetitions, motivated and inspired by each other, by shifts in the light, by rhythms in the music, and by things they see and do to themselves and each other - and probably also by our influence.

The dancers' movements are soft – the soft underlay efficiently absorbs the sounds of the bodies' contact with the floor, which makes the sensibility even stronger. They lie on their stomachs on the floor, they roll and they turn soft somersaults.

The tall Hansen who effortlessly changes his body into the size of a dwarf, holds the face of the almost one meter smaller Helbing in his hands. She rolls on her stomach across his back. She floats like a bird on his stomach. She hangs around his neck. She is like a ball or a yarn rolling across his body. At one point her belt becomes the string that starts a dance. At another point it is his rotating hips. At a third point it is their short exchange of lines, like their "So what's up?" and "What do you mean, what's up?". At a fourth point it is the rhythm of the percussion that

makes their feet move. Or balls that make them roll over, turn their wrists or walk sideways. The two dancers are like children, like creatures, like music, like material, like the very expression of embracing the world with open senses. This seems to be what the small children experience – inclusive the only six months old baby.

The simplicity of 'AGAIN' is its strength. As is the imagination which it has in common with Aaben Dans' performance 'Arms and Legs' that was for slightly older children. It is as if the performance crawls into the feeling of enthusiasm. The enthusiasm that small children are so naturally familiar with, and that we hardened adults are lucky to get access to, if we are attracted and invited. And in this tribute to the joyfulness of life – we are!

Read the Danish review on: <http://www.børneteateravisen.dk/frydefuld-forundringsfaerd.html>