

Utopia Parkway

[Look what my body can do and how it can move: Charlotte Vanden Eynde in 'Shapeless'](#)



It's all in that last turn. That last look, the only real look she's casting at her audience. As in: you might think that they were all sort of randomly chosen, all the things, moves and scenes you've just seen, but hey, I do know what I'm doing. *Shapeless*, a solo by Belgian choreographer [Charlotte Vanden Eynde](#), which premiered at [Kunstenfestivaldesarts](#) (Brussels). For anyone who needed proof of the fact that Vanden Eynde is a clever and gifted artist.

Some may find it cold or distant. I find it utterly intriguing. Just watch Charlotte Vanden Eynde for a while and the thought will hit you too. It's fascinating to see how she succeeds in putting a moving body on stage devoid of emotions. But it's not as if you were looking at a robot. No, you're clearly looking at a human being. One that's behaving rather strangely. It's a body that's trying out all kinds of different things. A body that's almost surprised at how a body can move, by what that body can do.

For *Shapeless* Vanden Eynde wanted to explore the realm of abstract dance. To try out movements that come from a desire to want to move and not from an emotionally charged theme, a certain bit of content of a specific set of associations. To try and investigate the tension between form and not-form. She uses a quote from Jonathan Burrows to explain what she's looking for. 'The first time you create a movement, it's unseen, but the more you repeat it, the more normal it becomes. The trick is to re-invent that unseen, what is unique in a movement.'



It means that it often looks as if she almost accidentally stumbles upon certain movements, on stage. But the great thing is that you never get the impression that she's just making it all up, on the spot. That she's improvising. No, there clearly is a structure, even though all of this is conceived to look as merely random. I thought it was great to see how all the elements of this performance neatly came together. That blond girl in that blue dress (she does know a thing or two about the presence of a female body on stage, too), the many different ways those white spots lighted that stage almost randomly, that well-chosen soundtrack (Einstürzende Neubauten, John Zorn, Brigitte Fontaine...) played at the right volume (not too loud, that is) and let's not forget, even though it might look indifferent: the unmistakable pleasure Vanden Eynde takes in dancing, in that particular way that's clearly her own.