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REVIEWS

NOÉ SOULIER: IDEOGRAPHY



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I am avidly taking notes about this piece. Behaving like I am in a lecture. I am definitely in a state of learning as Soulier tells of scientific fact and philosophical thought, but have absolutely no desire to share any of the content of the piece here.

This review would turn into an essay that would only reduce Soulier's work into graspable fact and render the intangible nuances obsolete. And so it is, fortunately best experienced live. All I will directly say about the work's content is that Soulier aims to choreograph ideas so that they themselves become the dance.

There are many linguistic loops; shifts from linguistic discourse to the discourse of being-in-the-world. There are shifts between linguistic and sensory perceptions, well timed pauses and returns to themes in a fluid monologue in which individualised and discursive texts interweave and interact with one another. This is Soulier's *Ideography*, which not only re-awakens typical choreographic devices of narrative, theme and variation and motifs but proposes a refreshing take on (represented) knowledge.

My thoughts experiment with his. Although the space is sparse, Soulier devises his delivery in such a way that the ideas, once spoken, populate the space, composing an invisible picture and context for the next thought.

Frequently, time pleasurably slows when he describes something not physically present the space (whether idea or object or both). Our imagination is engaged with each description and there are many threads of ideas being introduced which don't have aims (i.e. all this knowledge will lead to or reach some great height), but rather which start off as invisible choreography and remain such. Objects and ideas being absent, my mind cannot help but make the thoughts (my own and his) vivid. As a dance, this is a fittingly immaterial choreography that pushes out in all directions.

Dramaturgically, the related thoughts and events (in philosophy, in performance, in nature, in Soulier's personal anecdotes) are full of anti-climax. I find this a crucial proposition for attaining knowledge; that it can be multiplicitous and as such, non-linear. I would go so far as to say aimless. Not in terms of undermining value but more along the lines of being incomplete or rather getting somewhere by not setting out to get somewhere.

There is a blend of the literal, figurative and fictional with an undercurrent of abstraction. Needing to imagine so much immediately involves me in this intersubjective relationship between Soulier and his audience. Rather than a dry, potentially smug performance, I am actively watching a person flicker as thoughts and bodies do. Like Soulier, I cannot settle. I keep missing snippets of what's being said, but who would want to catch it all first time around anyway? Thinking as an active process may be a cliché but the joint act of viewing and coming to understand as an active process can be forgotten in much mainstream performance. Too often visible product destroys the potential for not knowing all that we see. In *Ideography*, the field of knowledge and the engagement in knowledge is widened.

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