

Badische Zeitung

Earthward

By Bettina Schulte – Tue, October 15, 2019

"Out of Order": The performance artist Julie Jaffrennou makes a strong appearance with nine female Freiburg dancers in the E-Werk.



The stuff we come from: Scene from "Out of Order" – Photo: Maurice Korbel

One hears them before one sees them. Synchronous steps from behind, down the stands in the E-Werk Freiburg. Nine dancers walk past the audience in three rows. Clogs can be very

noisy. The women wear their hair open and sophisticated gray, shiny jump suits with a very daring back neckline. They solemnly carry black plastic buckets with earth in them, which they distribute on the floor of the hall in complete harmony of movement and heavy breaths - just like the sower used to till his field. They walk to the end of the room, turn around and start their way back with empty buckets, fetch a new, full vessel upstairs.

It goes on like this for a long time, it's like watching a machine come alive. On the back wall of the hall, this can be seen more clearly now, more buckets pile up to form mountains. It should be 250 in total, we learn later. The nine proceed in a similar manner with these. Pick up the bucket, load it on your shoulder, walk forward, pour it out, repeat the whole thing - completely in sync, that's how it is when women work on the assembly line in a factory.

Except that in Julie Jaffrenou's performance "Out of Order" nothing is produced. The stubbornly repeated work steps of the dancers come to nothing - when in the next scene the heaped earth is collected and immediately afterwards distributed on the floor again. To do this, the dancers each circle around a pile with three buckets, one of which serves as a stool, the other as vessels: it is a symbol of meaningless activity. No wonder the nine suddenly burst into hysterical laughter.

What is „Out of Order" here? Laughing or robotic functioning in the system? The artist, who came from the visual arts to dance, suggests that it could also be the system: our social and economic system based on performance and standardization of self-optimization. If you watch the dancers who instead of showing their skills exhaust themselves in the same sequence of movements, you could definitely agree with this reading. And some of the best from Freiburg gather here, older and younger: Alice Gartenschläger, Emi Miyoshi, Maria Pires, Unita Gay Galiluyo, Olivia Maridjan-Koop, Laura Heinecke, Isabella Bartsdorff, Dagny Borsdorf - and Tjadke Biallowons, who is a trained actress. Three of them, Gartenschläger, Maridjan-Koop and Biallowons, together with Julie Jaffrenou, form the Cie la Performance, which mainly developed "Out of Order" - the first part of a trilogy with the programmatic title "The wrong life".

On this evening, which gets by completely without music, the wrong life reveals a few moments of pause, of interruption of the routines. For example when the performers form

four couples; where one part passively - surrendered or powerless, the two readings seem to be possible - lets happen what the other does to her: rolling onto her body, pulling her up, remaining in close embrace with her: this could be a tender or a demanding gesture. And when earth is scattered on the legs of the bodies lying on the earthy soil: Who would not think of the transience of life?

These are strong, very strong images that "Out of Order" brings to the spacious – thank God – E-Werk stage. At some point the performers - should they even be called dancers? - sit down in a row, the light falls on faces with closed eyes. And then everyone slowly sticks out their tongues: The familiar at the sight of a face becomes bizarre and strange. At one point they also seem to be rehearsing an uprising: The black side curtains are pulled away a little and the performers are spinning faster and faster with the bucket in their outstretched arm - to thunderously slap the filled vessel against the wall and stand in the earth rain. Liberation looks different. You can think longer about the last scene: the group has broken up, two are sitting in front as observers, one is letting earth trickle to the ground, a group of four alternately sprinkle earth on their heads or their beautiful hair. With this impressive production, Julie Jaffrennou proves that she can also fill a larger format - not least thanks to the conceptual funding granted to her by the city. A strong performance, also for the dance scene in Freiburg, which is on the rise.