



Mossy Eye Moor

LOUISE VANNESTE

Sediments of aeons



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In 'Mossy Eye Moor', five performers, cloaked in sound, draw us in, closer and closer, to the details of their interactions and expanding choreographed constellations. Inspired, modelled even, on the incremental transformations inherent in the metamorphic cycle of rocks, the work emits an otherworldly vibration that feels at once uncanny and deeply comforting.

24 MEI 2025

Once through the doors and after the usual modern-day frantic fluster: fumbling for our QR coded phones and finding our seats, time dissolves. We're met with a scene of crystalline calm: a floor flooded with pale blue light and electronic sound, at once melodic and mineral. We first notice a ceiling-high drape in one corner, quilted with an appliqué image of a pointy-eared creature holding an imperfect sphere, then our gaze takes in a floor level, small, swinging mirror and a slab of stone a-topped with what looks like half-a-dozen plump pebbles.

Gradually I notice two figures (Maïté Maeum Jeannolin and Amandine Laval) in a tentative embrace, shifting together, going somewhere, hovering close but kept at short distance by what could be magnetic repulsion; and then a third figure, seated on a chair, translucent almost, in the shadows at the side of the stage. Is she alive or another part of Kasper Bosmans enigmatic scenography? On the back wall in a scramble of three languages, a text that (if I've remembered correctly) explains that we are perhaps on an expanding continent and that the earth is continually recycling, being constantly reborn and that scientific minds speak of a return to earth's age 0. That the cycle is tireless, inescapable.

Louise Vanneste has long been interested in exploring how nature, and more recently geological phenomena, and the relationship between human and non-human, can infuse her work and affect our perception. In her new piece 'Mossy Eye Moor', in close collaboration with her team, she's created an engrossing performance that she aptly describes as a kaleidoscope.

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Without my noticing when, two more dancers have arrived on stage (Castélie Yalambo and Eli Mathieu Bustos) and the figure in the penumbra has started to move. The group of five are simultaneously heteroclitic and harmonious. Performer Eli Mathieu Bustos for example, circumnavigates the space, his powerful body taking combat stances and then moving forward, vibrating from his core in shudders and sensual hip rolls. In contrast, Alice Giuliani's dainty, deer-like poses and long flickering fingers, seem to be casting spells. We learn during the after talk that the dancers' movement have been generated by them each exploring, both internally and externally, the element of fire. The group seem to shift from improvised encounters of twos or threes, again irrepressibly drawn together by an invisible force, where a minute individual action — an extended index rolling eye movements or muttering lips — become the group's focus, to moments of danced unison, where the shared choreography highlights the performers' uniqueness.

Vanneste's long term collaborator, composer Cédric Dambrain's soundtrack has a guiding role in our journey but at one point pauses and a spoken text tells us that if we look at embroidery threads through a microscope a tangled chaos is revealed but, if we increase magnification and look deeper into the chaos, we once again see order... ad infinitum. This notion seemingly underpins the work: an ongoing shifting in which stability slips away the moment we think it's in our grasp.

Vanneste is delightfully forthcoming and articulate about her passion for sciences and her endeavour to incorporate them into her art. She explains the work's title by telling us that "Mosses" are the performance's protagonists and that they can be a body, an object, a sound.... "The Mosses tell us about the visible, the invisible, about chaos, the order of things, they embody meetings, overlaps, transformations".

As she talks, I'm still trying to fathom why I found 'Mossy eye Moor' so absorbing even though my memory of it is already fading. Then Vanneste mentions something about "reactivating memory". Could it be that the work evokes an embedded memory from the aeons when our molecules were more akin to rocks and mountains? In any case, it now feels like a dream that's slipping away—but one that will remain, sedimented somewhere, for a long time.