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Published in: Svenska Dagbladet, 5 April, 2008  
Original title: Både obehag och skönhet  
Translation from swedish: © SU-EN Butoh Company  
**Both discomfort and beauty**

Dance  
CRACKS  
Dansens hus

CHOREOGRAPHY, SCENOGRAPHY SU-EN. COSTUME: JOANNA BODZEK. MUSIC,  
SOUND: LEE BERWICK. LIGHT: SVANTE W MONIE. DANCE: SU-EN, ANNA  
BRALKOWSKA, LINA PALMGREN, FRIDA LARSSON, IRYNA ANUFRYIEVA

Three smashed water melons catches my eyes in the sand-coloured room. The red pulp is shining in the light, tempting with almost erotic tension. This is how real vital force looks like; some species can survive in the desert despite lack of water. For humans it is harder.

SU-EN Butoh Company, based outside Uppsala, has developed a highly specific dance-style with roots in Japanese butoh. The leader SU-EN (Susanna Åkerlund) has performed in provokative solos and conceptual pieces in sitespecific locations but also created ensemble pieces where the feminine aspects colours the transformations.

Fragrant (2005) was an intoxicating experience of beauty; a cycle that ended in a firework of flowers. The new piece Cracks is going the opposite way, towards perishability, decay and the sense that life is a dreamy hallucination. In the beginning the dancers appear like crouching creatures only dressed in dry ribs, like a mirror of the sterile surroundings. They economize their strength through minimal movement, sliding, tipping over.

In Joanna Bodzek's costumes they transform into colorful, tender flowers, put in a row like on a catwalk. Lee Berwick's subtle sound changes into heavy drum'n'bass that spurs the figures into to human form in self-reflecting spirals. But the beauty is condemned to destroy itself. With a bizarre brutality the bodies collide and collapse.

Only SU-EN is in her animallike four-legged figure a survivor, even with the absurd attacks of itches. Instinctively she moves closer to the light, exposes the upper part of the body and slowly washes herself in her saliva - a beautiful cleansing ritual. In the final part the figures moves in a sleep walking state like demons. Time stops.

Cracks contains both discomfort and beauty. It can be interpreted as a picture of our civilization where humanity lingers in confusion on a planet more and more ready to burst. But that would be to diminish it. Butoh can be seen as a subversive movement, an attempt to move away from materialistic ideals and superficiality. The unpersonified body expresses an existential, ever-changing condition rather than the individual. The body is the world, where every form is meant to be wiped out to give space to a new one.

As a spectator you may defend yourself against the ritual aspect, but because the dancers succeed in making the grotesque expression their own, senses opens up for other dimensions.