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Translation from swedish:© SU-EN Butoh Company

## **Sanguinous, blushing dance**

The Swedish butoh pioneer SU-EN has done it again, according to Björn Gunnarsson from the theatre news site, Nummer. He has seen red in a positive sense at the world premiere of the new piece Blush at Dansstationen, Malmö, Sweden.

Blushing is an expansion of the shallow blood vessels in the skin of the face. The result of strong emotion: erotic exaltation, anger, shame and happiness, all variations of feelings in life. Or a fever reaction.

Physiological embodiment of emotion is central to butoh, where the whole body is made to transmit expressions of feeling. Blush is the new conceptual work by SU-EN. The concept in the piece is blood. All is red within a spectra of nuances, from cerise to purple: the light, the dancers costumes.

Images are projected at the back- drop, live-processed through computer by Fredrik Olofsson, who is sitting by the edge of the stage. The images, by Gunnar Stening, reflects and follows the movements on the floor. A classical art motive is being seen: The three graces. But it is of course not graceful in the conventional sense - it is butoh. Also the painting on the floor and on the dancers bodies is conceptual, something like Jackson Pollock or the Ashbury Heights-psychedelia from the 60's.

Totally contemporary is Lise-Lotte Norelius' electronic sound, sometimes noise, sometimes more rhythmic and melodic, even this is processed live by the composer herself. SU-EN is also performing a part with her voice and electronic voice distortion. She cuts the words into syllables: word-butoh. The words are naturally blood, sangre and so on.

The fever that rushes through the body sounds like a roaring wild animal. Blood and female bodies of course gives associations, with red paint running down the thighs. But suffering och pleasure has a dynamically changing relation through the performance. Flower petals, paint, smashed fruit is smeared on the dancers, the images exaggerating the details and thereby the effect. The adornment of the body seems to turn into a state of rotting. An eye projected at the back of the dancer watches the audience.

Some repetitive passages are more like traditional butoh, positions with bent knees and arms folded by side of the body. Or two dancers lying on top of each other, rolling across the floor as if they were glued together. A movement and gesture that appears again and again is the head thrown backwards: expression both for extacy and for surrendering. The hands in the front of the face is of course the universal gesture of shyness.

SU-EN calls her new piece an "action art-installation", a description as good as anyone. Her multimedial actions are truly interesting.