

The Exploration Between Balance and Unbalance — “Floating Horizons”

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At the edge, the woman in white looks at all the happenings on the stage as an entranced observer, with a suspension of demonstrative emotion. Yet it seems she is related to the stage and appears to be looking for some intrinsic value of life. Or perhaps the stage is the Utopia in her heart, which is leading to the exploring of a mysterious new territory through all the dreamy unbalance unfolding on the stage.

Choreographer Cheng-Chieh Yu deconstructs and restructures body languages by breaking down the existing frames and rebuilding new embodied languages for the dancers. Dancers use their awareness and mindfulness to find new connections through the body. The plastic sheet lay on the stage supposes a still floor, to provide a safe and stable platform for dancers to dance on it. However, it becomes lively like a living object through the dragging, twisting, and spiral turning by the dancers. They try to keep balance on the unstable, unsafe plastic sheet while encountering its hasty and transient shifts like waves or clouds. Dancers seem to grasp onto these new experiences, and find balance within the turmoil of unbalancing, and restructure the kinetic sense of tempo and rhyme within their movements.

In the first half, dancers express tension and motion through the friction with the floor, resisting and dragging internally. They are highly aware of each other, opposing or responding to each other's movement choices. They seem so closely related and working collaborative in face of various tasks. Individuated movement intentions sparked at different time and situations. When the clear plastic sheet is pulled up and held parallel to the floor. The stage space is divided into two -- above and under the sheet. Dancers move between those two spaces. On top of the plastic sheet, they explore and climb. They utilize various body parts crumpling and twisting, try to resist and simultaneously working with the everchanging reality of the plastic sheet. Unlimited interactive possibilities arise. Above the milky plastic sheet, dancers were driven in expanding their lexicons of movement responses.

On the other hand, the space under the plastic sheet evokes another mysterious world, distinct and insubstantial at the same time. Dancers have to use various methods in dealing with the unruly surfaces, above and under. In order not to be circumvented above or buried under, they either fight or take flight with it, surrender as well as dance with it.

The second half is performed on an oil-coated plastic sheathed floor. Taking away friction and resistance, dancers can't help not to change their familiar ways of moving, or come up with new vocabularies in face of the slippery ground to rebuild a new balance. The other reality is to give it in and allow the unbalanced reality to manifest itself. They use body oil to redefine their dance mechanism, tear down and reform existing movements. They use pushing, squeezing, sliding, and bumping to propel motion, and this creates new visual effects in across the milky translucent stage. Dancers use their bodies entirely with their wills and efforts to find new venues, extending into the unfamiliar and dangerous field. From repeatedly physical falling/rising phrases, to slippery standing, gliding, to walking, and even running, dancers discover new states and self-identities on the oiled surface. They form a new rhythm of motion and new ways of expression from the unknown state in between balance and losing balance.

One interesting aspect is that while dancers continue their adventure searching for their foothold in the unhinged world, there is always a fore-mentioned woman in white existing on the fringe of the stage. Sometimes she holds a camera recording an upside down live-feed of what's happenings on the stage, searching and documenting the uncertain world caught striving for a grounding reality. Sometimes she drags her heavy stepping at the corners as if she is invisible, not listening or asking about things around her. She acts as if all things happening are irrelevant to her. It makes one curious, whether she has found her bearings, or an understanding, or she has completely lost her grounding in this floating world of balance and unbalance.