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CRITIQUE

Surviving in the 21th century

With Charleroi danse being the Choreography Centre of the Brussels-Wallonia Federation, it was a local choreographer, Brussels-based Michèle Noiret, who opened the festivities with the premiere of her *Chant des ruines*. A piece for five dancers - three boys and two girls, including Sara Tan, to whom Noiret recently transmitted her much talked-about solo *Vertèbre* - fluctuating between film extracts mimed to a playback, dance with an “off camera” threat that inhibits the movements, a video monopolising the eye on the screen that takes up the whole back of the stage and interventions disrupted by bugs of an android praising the merits of a guide to surviving in the 21th century.

“Surviving in» rather than “living in”, because the century to come looks quite grim. With the use of nothing more than large sheets, the dancers suggest the thawing of glaciers just as well as migrant shipwrecks. A filmed sequence of a pile of bits of cardboard in close-up is suggestive of the post-apocalyptic exploration of the ruins of our civilisation. A forest goes up in flames. The impossibility of continuing to live in our type of society is explained in an interview played bit by bit as part of the soundtrack (solid work by Todor Todoroff).

With simple means and an inventive use of imaging technology, Michèle Noiret provides an X-ray image of our time, lucid, but in which hope remains, in the light serving as cement for a couple, in the birdsong ringing out from the ashes.



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