

# HIT Goes on Stage

Mini-festival for International Theatre during CphStage 2020

## House of International Theatre

*HIT is an extended platform for performing arts, cultural activity and cultural exchange, promoting diverse artistic interpretations, brave ideas and multi-cultural dynamics.*

HIT's mission is to be an open house for cultural encounters between: local & international audiences, individuals and local communities through outreach, young and established professionals through the development of new platforms, and between art and government organizations.

HIT was established by Jeremy Thomas-Poulsen, artistic director of Down the Rabbit Hole, and Jana Pulkrabek, artistic director of Manusarts (Hamburg) in 2017 on the top floor of Huset-KBH, with the aim to create Copenhagen's first English+ theatre, presenting international work in English and/or other languages on a permanent basis.

Thomas-Poulsen is well connected in Copenhagen's local Danish- and English-language theatre scenes. Pulkrabek brings an international background, specializing on Danish-German cultural exchange projects for many years.

Since opening its doors in 2017, HIT has produced 15 productions, hosted 8 international guest productions and created over 40 further events ranging from presentations of laboratory work, to staged readings, concerts, pre-show warm ups, HIT4Kids, and international exhibitions. Always following our trademark to provide strong artistic expressions, new cultural experiences and social encounters.

Besides producing numerous HIT productions and presenting international guest productions we invite the local artistic community to perform under our wings and provide them with the platform and opportunity to showcase their work under our umbrella.

HIT aspires to connect with young up-and-coming artists and regularly incorporates them into the professional program, through events such as our Fringe productions, HIT Lab and Warm Up performances.

HIT as a platform is an opportunity for the artistic and theatre community to unite and strengthen the impact, outreach and quality of international artists and work performing in Denmark

House of International Theatre aims to strengthening Copenhagen's place as an international European capital city, serving as an attractive entertainment venue for tourists, while supporting the city's rich fabric of multiculturalism.

The international and foreign communities are an untapped resource, which struggles to engage in the cities traditional cultural offerings. HIT aims to offer a dialogue with cultural focus and broad international interactions. Roughly 24% of Copenhagen's population is international, of which a majority are non-Danish speaking.

A venue such as HIT offers the unique possibility for stronger integration into the local community and Denmark as a whole. The city would highly benefit from a cultural venue devoted to offer all Copenhageners and the city's visitors the possibility to enjoy and interact culturally.

## HIT's goals

- To present a span of international theatre that is varied, unique and engaging
- To establish Copenhagen's first English+ performance house
- To build a home in Copenhagen for local international artists and a meeting point for Danish, international & foreign artists and audiences
- To broaden Copenhagen's cultural offering by presenting international guest productions
- To develop cultural bridges through international exchange and collaboration
- To provide on-going opportunities for Danish artists to network internationally

## HIT's platform

- Provide a theatre forum in Copenhagen for English+ performance
- Perform contemporary, artistically relevant theatre of quality
- Showcase both acclaimed and up-and-coming contemporary theatre
- Present in-house work and guest performances.
- Collaborate with original international work, playwrights and actors/directors
- Build a platform which welcomes other English+ theatre producers, directors, writers by presenting their work in collaboration with HIT or as guest productions.
- Create an Actors Studio-learning-environment through the HIT Lab, by allowing professional international and Danish performers to experiment and develop their creative skills in workshops, showcases and training.



## Selected Reviews

### Last Tango in Little Grimley (1/11 - 23/11/2019)

CphCulture ★★★★★

*“Last Tango in Little Grimley må være årets sjoveste engelsksprogede produktion i København og endnu en sejr for de gæve folk bag Down The Rabbit Hole og House of International Theatre.”*

CphPost ★★★★★

*“This was a seamless performance – quite literally as all manner of silky, sexy and slinky garments were adorned and ripped off in full view... it’s frenetic sex farce meets French cabaret meets fast-forward on your VHS – a highlights reel of their night in tights in front of the lights, full of unexpected appearance.”*

### The Clean House (19/9 - 6/10/2019)

CphPost ★★★★★

*“The funniest play I’ve ever seen in Copenhagen... Touching play resonates with us all... Ensembles don’t come along like this very often... Masterclass in direction.”*

CphCulture ★★★★★

*“Jeremy Thomas-Poulsens betydelige evner som personinstruktør kommer her til sin ret, og ensemblespillet går på fineste vis op i en højere enhed til slut.”*

The International Denmark Magazine ★★★★★

*“Hilarious and dramatic all rolled up into one sensational play with professional and humorous actors! What a win to find theatre in English – great for our Internationals.... not to be missed and a definite thumbs up from The International!”*

Kulturtid ★★★★★

Pov.International ★★★★★

### Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (21/2-5/3/2018)

CphPost ★★★★★

*“Refreshingly modern, neither puritanically passé nor fantastically futuristic, with contemporary content relevant to everyone... this is principally the story of Vanya, Sonia and Masha, and all three are brilliantly cast... another masterclass by director Jeremy Thomas-Poulsen. An ingenious set ...a superb ensemble piece.”*

KOP Kultur ★★★★★

CphCulture ★★★★★

Kulturtid ★★★★★

XQ28 ★★★★★

*“... the ecstasy of hope, the despair of disillusionment”*

★★★★★ THE AGE



### About Finucane & Smith Unlimited

Finucane & Smith Unlimited are an Australian-based performance company globally acclaimed for their “salons of humanity”; provocative, entertaining, razor-sharp and visually intricate productions. From cabaret to drama, to richly detailed immersive carnivals, cross-artform collaborations and gallery installations, Finucane & Smith’s work mines an astonishing diversity of artforms to create indelible visions & provocations of humanity.

Finucane & Smith have won critical acclaim in 13 languages & 15 theatre awards, including The Patrick White Playwright Award, 7 Green Room Awards, & most recently, the International Theatre Institute’s International Presentation of the Year (Cuba). Finucane & Smith are the first Australian company to be invited to many influential & unique festivals worldwide from The Shanghai International Contemporary Theatre Festival where their Australian Gothic *The Flood* became the first Australian drama to be presented; The Havana International Theatre Festival (Cuba) to Mesto Zensk (Slovenia) to Festival Internacional de Buenos Aires (Argentina), and in 2016, Moira Finucane became the first ever Creative Fellow of the National Gallery of Victoria, working with the most significant visual art collection in the region.

The company is renowned for their voracious curiosity and extraordinary collaborations across cultures and forms: in 2014 Finucane starred in avant-garde director Meng Jinghuis’ *Good Person of Szechaun* (National Theatre of China/ Malthouse Melbourne) in Melbourne, Beijing & Shanghai; In 2015/2016 they worked in 10 countries from gallery immersions to drama and cabaret. In 2017-2018 they collaborate with exquisite artists & companies worldwide; in Chile creating a Spanish-language Latin-American gothic of their acclaimed work *The Flood*; in China the very first full Chinese production of *The Flood* premiered in Dec 2017 at Inside Out Theatre Beijing in partnership with Vertebra Theatre and some of China’s most respected stage actresses & designers. *The Flood* will Their most recent work *The Rapture* was received with immense critical acclaim and in 2018-19 will be presented in US, Germany, Latin America and China.

### PREMIERE SEASON

Final development as part of Finucane’s appointment as Inaugural Creative Fellow National Gallery of Victoria, the largest, oldest gallery & most visited gallery in Australia.

Chapter I | Gotharama Mesto Zensk Festival, Slovenia 2015

Chapter II | Climakaze Festival Miami 2017

Chapter III World Premiere | fortyfivedownstairs Melbourne 2017

### GLOBAL PERFORMANCE:

2017 Miami, Melbourne 2018-2019 Washington, Colombia, China

**DURATION:** 98 minutes (can also be durational installation)

**VENUE:** Proscenium arch, or black box theatre, gallery space or non-traditional performance site **VISUAL ARTWORK:** Rapture also manifests as a time-based installation visual artwork in galleries and non-traditional sites

### TOURING PARTY:

4 performers, 2 technical



**FINUCANE & SMITH** UNLIMITED

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**RAPTURE** rapt v.t. 1. carry away by force 2. Transport in spirit; enrapture [late 16th century] raptor n. 1. bird of prey. 2. a plunderer; a robber [late medieval] rapture n. & v. [late 16th century obsolete French, or medieval Latin raptura] 1. seizure, capture, the carrying off of prey or plunder b. the act or action of transporting a person from one place to another 2. Mental exaltation spec. as a result of religious feeling esp. joy, intense delight; a state of intense delight or enthusiasm [early 17th century] 3. Force of movement

# The Rapture

*“Finucane’s performance approaches the sublime, in the philosophical sense; tableaux which cannot be assimilated through any frame of reference except their own heightened hysterical brilliance”* REALTIME

*“I am speechless. I have just experienced something extraordinary. If you’ve never seen a Moira Finucane performance, you’ve probably never seen anything like it.”*

*“So if you’re someone who can approach theatre with an open mind, please buy your tickets now; in seeing this show you will feel like you’re making history.”* WEEKEND NOTES



Moira FINUCANE, one of the world’s greatest performance chameleons, literary genius and apocalyptic rock goddess, brings her major new work. A transcendent synesthetic emporium of gothic-erotic dreams, rock’n’roll angels, soul searing music, skin shedding tales and total art gesamtkunstwerk.

Art vs Extinction; a wild dream at the edge of the abyss.

PHOTO: SIMON SCHLUTER COURTESY OF THE AGE

**“Finucane is ‘the original’ of our time. The Rapture challenges ignorance, caresses the innocent foreheads of all children and ignites the healing of humanity.”**

★★★★★ THEATRE PEOPLE

**“It is sublime. It is divine. It is dangerous”**

★★★★★ PLANET ART

Moira Finucane has been hailed as ‘transcendent’ by audiences across 5 continents and described by critics as ‘exquisite’, ‘the volcanic physical presence’, ‘mesmerizing’, and as a ‘national treasure’.

Her new production *The Rapture* sets fire to a decade of performance practice, reincarnating Finucane as a transformer, a snake always shedding her skin, writhing through a visual feast of prophecy, Gothic dreams, birds of prey, soaring wings, apocalyptic fairy tales.

A Wunderkammer, a Human Illuminated Manuscript of the Sacred and Ruined Heart. To explore the taxonomy of hope, transgression and the treasured. Art vs Extinction. Some of the earliest manuscripts were written on skin, and *The Rapture* takes all that has been written on the skin of Moira Finucane and brings it together with some of Australia’s most distinctive sculptors, a community of highly gifted intellectually disabled artists, extraordinary singers and vocal artists, composers, and haute couture creators.

Immersed in a visual and aural landscape created by internationally renowned sculptors William Eicholtz & Catherine Lane; visual artists from Arts Projects Australia; sonic & red centre genius Shinjuku Thief and Eleanor Jo’ngarli Nalyirrima Dixon and a catacomb choir of beyond-genre voices: from heavenly voiced counter-tenor diva Mama Alto, smoky chanteuse Clare St Clare and 82-year-old heartbreaking songbird Shirley Cattunar.

*The Rapture* is the result of several years of international exploration and presentation by Finucane, including her time as the inaugural Creative Fellow of the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), which saw Finucane immerse herself in galleries and collections around the world and deliver the runaway hit, *The Intimate 8*, at NGV this past January. In her pursuit of this work, Finucane has performed on the sides of a mountain in South America, in abandoned power-houses in Slovenia, reduced the Cuban literati to tears, and for the first time ever, alchemised her training in science, her decade’s work in gender-in-development, taxonomy, extinction, fine art, wildness and the philosophy of treasuring into an immersive storm.



**“I also know now, because here we are in a grungy Fitzroy bar, resting with tea after a head-spinning visit to a studio nearby where two of several designers are collaborating on costumes for her new production, *The Rapture*, and I’m being educated by her majestic self at full hair-tossing, fingers-raking, eyes-flashing throttle, that I had the wrong end of the feather boa all along.”** THE AGE

**“Her performance is more honest (sometimes brutally), evocative and inspiring than it ever has been before ... Moira Finucane is considered a national treasure in Australia and this sublime show perfectly explains why. *The Rapture* is here, there’s no denying it. The question is: what are we going to do about it?”** MY ABOUT TOWN



**“A fabulous, overflowing, disturbing uncanny cult ... Finucane feels completely uninhibited letting the power of her words and her purpose transform her body in each moment of her performance”**

ARTSHUB

**“Moira Finucane is one of the wildest, most exotic, seductive, terrifying performers you’ll ever see.”**

BOOKS AND ARTS RADIO NATIONAL

**“The show seamlessly transforms from one sequence to another in a manner which elicits a stream of consciousness and encourages a more visceral response to the material. Finucane’s ideas are provocative and she is never apologetic for the forcefulness with which they are delivered.”**

AUSTRALIAN STAGE



**“Extraordinary, visceral, unique, exciting”**

LONDON CALLING, UK





"A dystopian immersive masterpiece – UNMISSABLE!"  
*To Do List, London*

# THE WHITE PLAGUE

by Alexander Raptotasios & Ferodo Bridges



**The White Plague** is an immersive new play, created for flexible studio spaces, about an epidemic of blindness that devastates a country and forces the government of a big city to quarantine all those who have been infected. We follow the stories of five strangers that meet each other in a quarantined hospital and have to fight for their survival.

The audience is absolutely at the centre of the performance, following the characters on their journey, and sharing their predicaments through every sense except their sight. This is achieved through special audience-masks producing white light and a series of specially designed sound effects, soundscapes, smells and other sensory devices.

The play has been presented in Athens and London and has achieved excellent reviews and a series of sold-out performances and is now available for touring in the UK and Europe. The show can be performed in any studio theatre with flexible seating and offers an immersive performance that may be unlike anything your audience have experienced before.

UK Trailer: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGa\\_fsbAar4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGa_fsbAar4)

Greek Teaser (contains strobe): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pktphiHkiY8>

# The Production

## The story

A man suddenly goes blind while driving his car. Someone will help him to a doctor but soon he will go blind too. This is the beginning of a mysterious virus creating a state of white blindness that spreads among a major city's population with no apparent explanation. The fear that spreads along with the virus casts the infected as second-class citizens and the government, in panic, quickly isolates the infected in unprepared and unsuitable facilities.

*The White Plague* follows the stories of five infected people who are thrown together and left to survive within an inhumane quarantine facility. Basic needs and the communication between the factions that are created becomes a struggle. Whoever gains control of the food distribution will be in control of the population. In the midst of discrimination and exploitation, a woman will try to lead this group of survivors to freedom.

The play is a testament to the power of community and an exploration of the brightest and darkest aspects of human nature. It is a vital story to tell in today's climate of social division and political scaremongering.

## The experience

The actors engage with the audience from the start, assigning them identities as the characters in the story.

The story begins as a narration in a foyer, bar or other space, and is momentarily transformed into a nightclub until soon after the armed forces enter to quarantine the area. Audience members are then given special masks that reduce their vision to a block of white light, and they are guided to the main space where they are seated as if they have been assigned beds in a hospital dormitory.

The rest of the performance takes place around them and is comprised of live scenes, amplified narration, smells released into the space and live sound effects. By the time their vision is restored and the participants take their masks off, a new small community will have been created between the performers and the audience.



# Reviews

## English Press



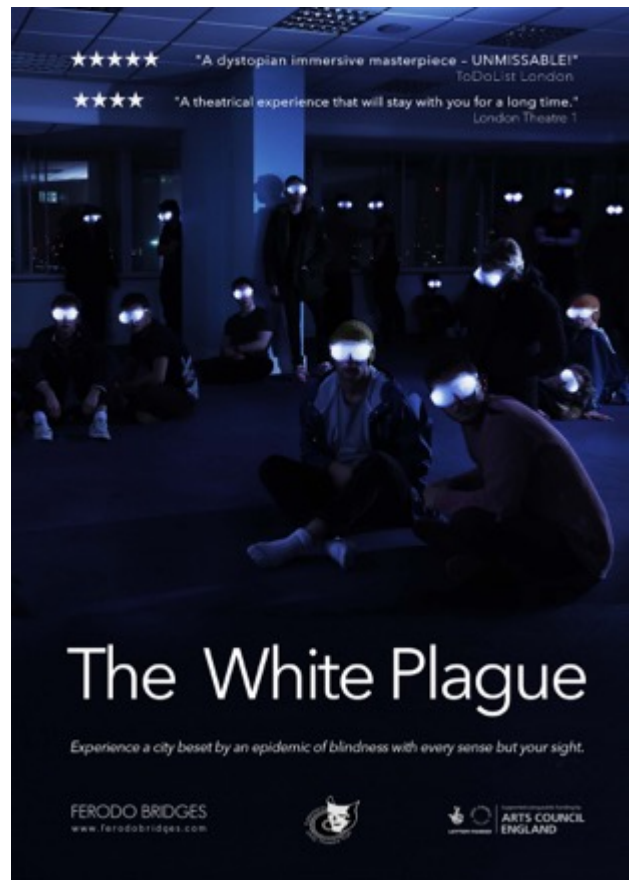
"A dystopian immersive masterpiece – UNMISSABLE!" ([ToDoList London](#))



"A very interesting and enjoyable theatrical experience that will stay with you for a long time." ([London Theatre 1](#))



"...bold in its experimentation with the immersive form, playing with many of the senses including sight, sound, and smell. This is a company who clearly work well together as an ensemble and have a strong understanding of non-visual storytelling...a production worth seeing." ([London Pub Theatres](#))



## Greek Press

**National Newspaper Avgi:** *'A peculiar condition of blindness that feels weird but soon proves to be effective in immersing us in the character's psyche and living conditions.'*

**Art Harbour:** *"...a well-structured and inspired piece of theatre that contains the reality of the human tragedy through the loss of identity and basic human rights."*

**Provocateur.gr:** *"I was extremely impressed by what I experienced. It completely immerses you in a world that seems strange and feels depressingly familiar. It gives an incredible new perspective on a story first conceived by Saramago and definitely rewards its audience."*





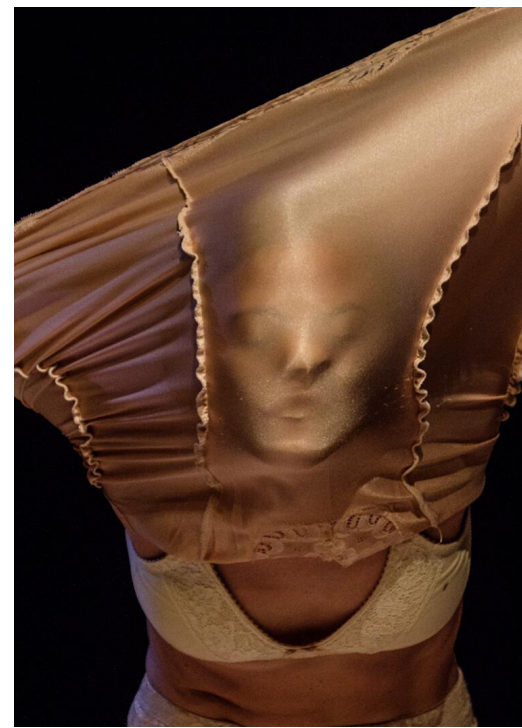
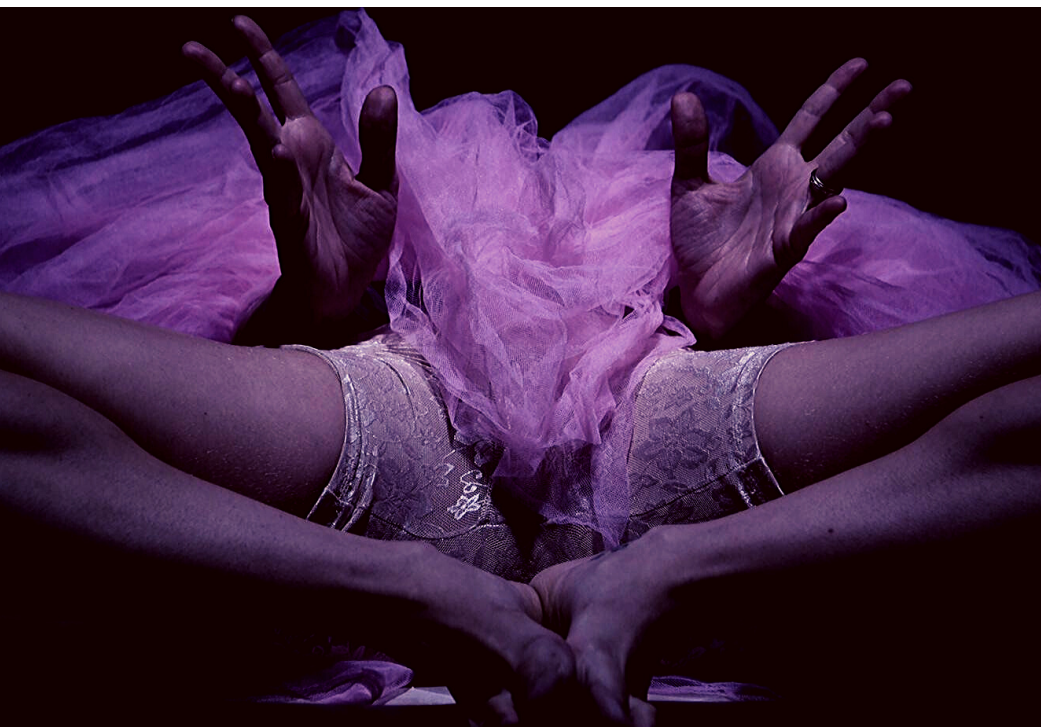
# Scrambled

Scrambled is a single show featuring a woman's journey to conceive naturally. Due to gynecological disease, her two fallopian tubes were removed. This forces her to go to war. Forcibly, she enters the world of fertility treatments. The Stage is set - As an intimate restroom, a shrine to her solitude, injecting hormones and urinating at a pregnancy test, dealing with inner demons, feminine ideals and relationship issues. watching her longings and desires get drained into a pink toilet from which hope of redemption might come. For her, the outside world, where everyone brings children into the world and builds a family becomes a personal wall, the growing pressure from society and the damaged self-image as a woman who fails to do the natural thing brings her to try everything to hold a child in her lap. Gradually she becomes like a soldier equipped with syringes. Falls and rises, again and again, What happens if we never have children? Maybe we will create a world that only has those couples? does she want to be a mother because everyone does?

An intimate, yet unsettling Performance featuring a woman's journey to conceive while dealing with her most dark and feminine sides.

A reality embedded in the toilet that has become a small, private temple in an attempt to create life in the shadow of death. When deep in shit, poetry comes out, and when the stench is so present it becomes a fragrance in her Fantasy Cabaret...





### **"Yekum Tarbut" Culture magazine**

**"Rotem Nachmany is so beautiful, in all aspects. Her control of the body is amazing, her movements aesthetic, her facial expressions are precise, her diction is clear, her voice impressive. She is a perfect woman, almost. She suffers from endometriosis - a chronic gynecological disease, who one out of ten women is diagnosed with and which causes severe pain and infertility. The awareness for the disease has increased recently. Actresses Lena Dunham, Kim Kardashian, Susan Sarandon, Shani Cohen openly spoke about their great suffering and their struggles with the disease.**

**Rotem Nachmany has made a fascinating performance of her illness and of the fertility treatments, in her rich theatrical language. She makes creative use of accessories such as a toilet seat, toilet paper, two eggs with painted faces on them, which break down and spill at a significant moment in the play.**

**She changes outfits and hairstyles. She is strong and then breaks down repeatedly, because there is no other way. Rotem comes up with an original idea of a childless couples' community, far from here, away from the ideal cultural and fruitful society.**

**Rotem is not alone on stage. With her, in the plot, the audience envisions - the unborn baby, the doctors who treated her, followed by the voice of a medical secretary, which informs her of the success of one of the artificial insemination treatments. At the beginning of a long-awaited pregnancy, Rotem Nachmany breaks into a joyful dance to the sound of the heartbeats, with a pregnant belly and breasts made of pink balloons, which suddenly stops. The feeling of emptiness increases with the loss."**

**(“Martha yodaat” Theatre today)**

The play begins with Rotem Nachmany's stomach rising and falling, kicking all the symbols related to fertility and life straight to our faces. Nachmany and her co-director, Maya Bitan, embroidered a work that is aesthetic and beautiful, starting with the stunning actress up to the stage props, which include a toilet seat and a clothes hanger which are used in unordinary ways, unaesthetically in purpose, but are nonetheless designed in a gentle and aesthetic way. Injectors which are used in the insemination process are staring throughout the show, but when they fall from what is a supposedly a pregnant stomach – as a symbol of a natural abortion after a short and very expected pregnancy (which is painfully familiar to me) – they shake us with their fall. It is evident that Nachmany is proficient in dance, and she uses dance elements to illustrate the process of fertilization, and the shattering of femininity in the process. I loved the portrayal of the world of the failures of fertilization: a world of couples who retire from this society who sanctify parenthood and establish their own separate society, which will eventually go extinct when they all die because they have no continuity. There were many tears at the end. Many women who identified with the subject, whether because they are personally acquainted with the process of artificial insemination, or because of dealing with issues of female and marital self-image, cried. The applause that refused to die showed the audience's enthusiasm.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bibk34DRrGs>

Full version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6D6tczwlR8&feature=youtu.be>

