Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Able

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, April 3rd, 2019

Seeing dance on film and seeing dance live are two completely different, albeit strangely complimentary experiences. Whether on site or in seats, as an audience member one has a sense of immediacy knowing that the dancers (no matter how close or far away) are breathing the same air in the same moment as oneself. And in viewing dance live one has more of a say in where to look, although I would also counter that argument by saying that an expert choreographer can grab an audience member and make it close to impossible to look away. Differently, a dance film can allow us to get up "close and personal" to a dancer, with a glimpse into the visceral power of the moment, of the movement, and of the human condition, that live dance simply cannot deliver with the same potency to every seat.

Such a film is **Able**, directed by Los Angeles based choreographer Jacob Jonas. Jonas has made a name for himself and his company—Jacob Jonas The Company—by deftly using the power of social media to amplify his films, photographs, and live work all at once. He has spearheaded striking photos of dancers in space and architecture, shot by numerous photographers of dancers and companies from all over the world under the auspice of his #CamerasandDancers, garnering thousands of Instagram followers in the process. Jonas has been featured in these pages before as a winner of Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival Round One. (Stand by for Round 3 coming soon!)

Jonas' film **Able** is about a group of differently abled dancers—Ill Abilities, whose mantra *"no excuses, no limits"* sets the tone for this moving film in which they transcend their physical limitations to deliver extraordinary movement. As a filmmaker, Jonas knows how to get inside of a dance as well as into the humanity of the moment, the movement and the person delivering it. The camera goes from wide shot to detail, racking focus, softening the hard industrial locations with a beautiful palette and lighting, and a feel for great framing. As far as I'm concerned, Jonas' dance films represent his strongest and most original work.

You can see **Able**, along with numerous other LA artist led dance films that I had the privilege of curating, at the Music Center's Grand Park for the upcoming Our LA Voices, April 22-28. For more information about Our LA Voices go to: **https://grandparkla.org/event/our-la-voices-2019/**

Till then, *enjoy*.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, April 3rd, 2019 at 3:57 pm and is filed under Film, Dance
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