Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Chimera

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, April 6th, 2016

According to the dictionary, a **Chimera** is *a mythological, fire-breathing monster, commonly represented with a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail.* Or, scientifically speaking, *an organism composed of two or more genetically distinct tissues … partly male and partly female, or an artificially produced individual having tissues of several species.*

Dancers spliced and reassembled in Chimera

While hardly a monster, such is the inspiration for director Steven Briand's short of the same name that uses editing effects to more or less create a hybrid dance short. Readers may recall Briand's direction of a beautiful and very different short that I featured in this column some time ago entitled **Shunpo**. While **Chimera's** liner notes in Nowness say that recording artist MIA's choreographer Cathy Ematchoua "merged three unique movement styles," it looks like one dynamic contemporary combination that rides the music by Phazz, alternating between sharp, crisp, staccato movement and Limon style releases. The four dancers in the sequence, each beautifully performing the same choreographic sequence, are spliced and reassembled to create a kind of patchwork woman but the dance itself seems homogenous in its composition.

A moment from Chimera

Chimera looks like a vehicle for fashion – and I in fact found it as a recent addition under that category in Nowness – but even the fashion is reassembled, really interestingly, so that it loses its singularity. Given that funding for dance films is not exactly falling from the sky, the fashion may in fact be the vehicle that allowed **Chimera** to be made in the first place. With beautiful dancers Aliashka Hilsum, Leonore Zurfluh, Hajiba Fahmy, and Dalila Cortes highlighted by a black background, and cinematography by Kaname' Onoyama, **Chimera** is fierce and well done.

Enjoy.

https://youtu.be/EjnbIzGB83M

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