Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

I Hate Dancing

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, June 29th, 2016

I'm always fascinated by the relationship between words and dance. On the one hand, dance so often elevates itself beyond words to tell a story, convey emotions, create concept etc. Dance can live very comfortably in the realm of sheer visceral energy and a sort of kinetic and wordless poetry without the need for language at all. And yet, there are so many dance shorts that employ language. I've seen dance films with seemingly unrelated narration, dance films with a conversation between two people, dance films that interview someone who is never seen, dance films using poetry as voice over… Overall, words and language are often left searching for meaning in the genre of screen dance. It simply seems that one way or the other, words frequently fail in conjunction with dance, falling short in their ability to convey what dance can say without any need for them at all.

Jo Roy stomps to display Stephen Fry's disgust with dance in "I Hate Dancing"

Then you have **I Hate Dancing**. This really smart short film with voiceover by the British comedian, actor, writer, and activist Stephen Fry is… well… a bird of an altogether different feather. Created by Los Angeles based dancer, choreographer, and filmmaker Jo Roy, **I Hate Dancing** brilliantly uses dance to embody (I think that may be the best word) each hilariously recited phrase that Fry delivers – and there are so many – in his oh so British, high brow sort of way. As he waxes on about how much he absolutely ***hates*** dancing, you can almost here him spitting in disgust:

> *I **hate** that slovenly mixture of sexual exhibitionism, strutting contempt, and repellent narcissim that it involves… I hate it when it's formless, meaningless bopping. And I hate it, if anything, even more when it's formal and choreographed! Those cavortings are **so embarrassing** and dreadful as to force my hand to my mouth.*

Extremely well edited and shot with a minimal black and white look against a white cyclorama, the viewer focuses distinctly on Roy as she moves in direct response to what Fry is saying. What is so wonderfully ironic is that the Roy's astute choreography simultaneously embodies and translates, all at once, the words and meaning of Fry's hilarious treatise, into the very thing that he so detests – dance. And I ***love*** the result.

Enjoy.

https://youtu.be/LnqrqRGyFQo

This entry was posted on Wednesday, June 29th, 2016 at 12:00 pm and is filed under Film, Dance
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.