

PAROOL

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Expressive portrait of brotherly love

“Still You 2” by choreographer Suzy Blok even more successful than original for man and woman

Still You 2 is perhaps even more convincing than the original for a man and a woman, because the good-natured competition between the ‘brothers’ Martijn Kappers and Reinier Schimmel is drawn from real life.....

It doesn’t matter who wins, it’s how they play the game, which is evidenced by Schimmel voluntarily giving his competitor ‘extra time’ when carrying out one of the ten-second tasks. In this way Blok paints a subtle yet expressive portrait of brotherly love, of their rivalry, and also of their dependence and affection. Beautiful.

Stranger than Kindness, a duet for Schimmel and Kelly Hirina, is also entertaining. In this dance she plays an unattainable dream woman, first surrendering to her admirer as a helpless mannequin, and then moving so quickly and swinging her arms so violently that Schimmel must prepare extremely well for their duet. He does a dry run, practicing the partner work on the chaise longue.

No matter how careful his timing, he is unable to keep hold of her. As a result Hirina’s stimulating enthusiasm becomes more and more of a burden for him. The passion gradually fizzles out and the couple return to their everyday lives.

The closing scene – Hirina upside-down in Schimmel’s arms, while Aznavour sings *She* – is a fine symbol of their fundamental lack of understanding *and* their harmony.

FRANCINE VAN DER WIEL

TROUW

15/01/2005

Leaping over the kitchen table like a gazelle

Dance

‘Still You 2’ and ‘Stranger Than Kindness’ by Suzy Blok. On tour until 18/2, for tour schedule see www.danceunit.nl

...You can’t help but fall for these two sensitive show-offs. The awkward long-limbed Reinier Schimmel who can be tempted to perform idiotic acrobatic stunts. The small Martijn Kappers who leaps over the kitchen table like young gazelle. Although this duet is small in design, it has a great power of expression. It is a warm and compassionate dance piece which anyone can identify with, laugh about and be moved by. The piece is both humorous and moving; the perfect feel-good dance performance.

Suzy Blok came into the public eye with her work on Pieter Kramers’ musical film ‘Ja zuster, Nee zuster’ [Yes Nurse! No Nurse!] for which she created the large colourful dance scenes. But she first proved her choreographical talent at the end of the 1980s with the creation of ultra-dynamic and theatrical duets.

'Still You 2' is a remake of the duet which Suzy Blok created for her then dance partner Christopher Steel and herself. This time the duet has been adapted for two men.

The adaptation has been stripped of its former tensions between man and woman, which have been translated into concepts like friendship and dependence. This has made 'Still You 2' remarkably accessible.

Slightly less accessible but equally interesting is Blok's new duet 'Stranger Than Kindness'. The tensions between man and woman, which have been driven out of 'Still You 2', are the driving force behind this piece. In a beautiful opening scene, the young but very sensual dancer Kelly Hirina takes a skirt from a clothes rack and tries it on. Her dance partner Reinier Schimmel stands with his eyes closed, impatiently awaiting what his 'dream' has in store for him. The 'saudade' of a fado accentuates his longing, but once he takes her into his arms he finds that Hirina is nothing but a rag doll. As the man's imaginary world grows more concrete, their dance becomes more realistic and more physical. Only once Hirina's evening dress is exchanged for a comfortable housecoat, does the obsessive and passionate longing make way for actual contact. Yet this contact proves to be intangible after all, as she ends up upside-down in his arms and ultimately slips from his grasp. There is only one word for such a richly nuanced emotional duet: beautiful.

SANDER HISKEMULLER

VOLKSKRANT
12/01/2005

Sophisticated duet by Suzy Blok

Dance

Duets by Suzy Blok: **Still You 2** and **Stranger Than Kindness**. Today and tomorrow at Amsterdam Bellevue. On tour until 18 February.

Anyone can identify with the situation acted out by the two boys in Suzy Blok's duet *Still You 2*.

A teacup on the table has to become their toy. And so the two brothers turn their companionship into a game of challenging and repelling and particularly of lightning speed responses. The cup flies through the air and they follow its arc effortlessly to every corner of the room with its red floor, red tables and red cupboard. They are mischievous boys, buddies who push each other to the piano sounds of Schubert, and later to the hard punk sounds of Dinosaur Jr. And every now and then they drift away behind a GameBoy.

In 1991, Suzy Blok created the dynamic duet *Still You* for a man and a woman,

The *remake* has been adapted for two brothers (danced by Reinier Schimmel and Martijn Kappers), which makes the performance less relationally charged, but more playful and family-oriented. The love is replaced by bravura and – although less elegant – this is enjoyable and accessible for a younger generation, which is not a bad thing in the world of modern dance.

Blok is now completing the remake with a new duet, *Stranger Than Kindness*, for an infatuated Reinier Schimmel who is visited in his dreams by a provocative female presence (a strong performance by the young Kelly Hirina).she manages to place them in an extraordinary setting that comes across as both lifelike and imaginary. It is a sophisticated duet in an 'easy to interpret' dance performance. And it makes you think: shall I ... with that teacup or that clothes hanger at home? Better buy some kneepads first.

ANNETTE EMBRECHTS