

## Reviews "PULSE"

*ITS Daily, 28/06/2010, Festival daily magazine of the International Theatre School Festival in Amsterdam (<http://issuu.com/itsfestivalamsterdam/docs/itsdaily6>)*

PULSE

By Jodean Sumner

Hammering on mercilessly, a machine in constant motion, *Pulse* is a performance that is as relentless as it is rewarding.

Directed by Jolika Sudermann of Amsterdamse Hogeschool voor de Kunsten, this performance creates an environment in which the players execute the repetitive pounding of movements in parallel to the rhythm of their own pulse. They begin by feeling the beat of their own bodies. Touching different pulse points, they gently show us what they feel, tapping it out on a hip or nodding their heads in time. This beat gradually takes over and crescendos into movements and music that take possession of the whole body. Pounding their arms, and thrusting their hips in time, they exact physically the pattern of their bodies, the surge of blood through their veins. The performers gaze at us directly as they become increasingly exhausted, but we do not see a message or an attempt at communication. Instead, their eyes are windows to the visceral workings of their bodies. (...)

*Flare Festival Blog, 09/07/2011 (<http://flarefestival.posterous.com/review-pulse>)*

Review: PULSE

By Molly Seremet

For 30 minutes, four stamina-laden performers plumb the depths of one single relationship: that between body and external rhythm. They begin silently, but quickly introduce a driving beat, which then pumps for the duration of the work.

The choreography is gestural and abstracted. The performers create shapes not by attention to form and visual picture, but from an organic physical response to the relentless beat. The honesty of this physical exploration makes it feel as though sometimes the rhythm is exploding from within the performers, not the other way around. Although the beat is constant, iterations in movement create the illusion that it occasionally slows and more often speeds up, with bouncing gestures happening in jarring bursts. These are augmented by satisfying moments of fleeting unity before breaking off again in obedience to the metronome.

The effect of this rhythmic relentlessness is not limited to the performers, but spills out into the audience. Several quick checks of my changing pulse proved that my body was obedient to the rhythm even while I remained stationary. This performance evokes kinesthetic empathy, making us more aware of both our own bodies and the tension caused by the rigors the performers' bodies are being put through. At the piece's climax, they advance on the audience, close enough for us to easily observe the effects that this exertion is having on their bodies, sweat and breath abounding. As they stand in almost-stillness, they can see us and will know that we have also been moved.