

Ligia Lewis: *deader than dead*

Wednesday: 16.11.2022 & Thursday: 17.11.2022

It is reasonable to situate the world on the verge of sense and NON-sense

You go round and round and then you stop and you fall to the ground

What is deader than dead? -Ligia Lewis

deader than dead is a multifaceted performance work by choreographer, director, dancer, and performer Ligia Lewis. The performances at Cordova in Barcelona are the first major presentations of Lewis' work in Spain.

Originally developed for Made in L.A. 2020, the work began with an intrigue-based inquiry into deadpan, an impassive mannerism deployed in comedic fashion in order to illustrate emotional distance. Utilizing this expression as a type of stasis, Lewis initially developed a choreography for ten dancers that remained expressively flat or dead, resisting any narrative or representational hold tied to a climactic build or progression. Lewis had relegated *deader than dead* to this corner of the gallery (a kind of "dead" space) where the dance would ostensibly emerge, although deadened in its repetition, limited in its fate, as it ricocheted from wall to wall.

Lewis abandoned this recursive ensemble of death due to COVID-19, reducing the cast to four performers and pivoting to a more traditionally theatrical presentation. In this new work the dancers use Macbeth's culminating soliloquy ("Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow," a reflection on repetition and meaninglessness) as the beginning of a work that unfolds in modular parts, each one an illustration or parody of death, stasis, and the void, each one tied to its own carefully selected soundtrack or sample. The work is full of play but is also a meditation on "playing," or acting, as well as on tragedy's recurring cycles and familiarity within Black and brown experience; on time, as it loops; on performance; on touch, as an act of both care and violence. The work is built in the form of a musical lament, a protracted complaint on loop performed ad infinitum, decomposing itself along the way.

The two performances of *deader than dead* in Barcelona, will be followed by two performances in Madrid and have been made possible through a collaboration with La Casa Encendida and the Festival de Otoño.

About the artist:

Ligia Lewis works as a choreographer and performer. Through choreography and an embodied practice, she develops expressive concepts that give form to movements, speech, affects, thoughts, relations, utterances, and the bodies that hold them. Her choreographic work slides between the familiar and the unfamiliar. Held together by the logic of interdependence, disorder, and play, she creates space(s) for the emergent and the indeterminate while tending to the mundane. In her work sonic and visual metaphors meet the body, materializing the enigmatic, the poetic, and the dissonant. Lewis continues to evoke the nuances of embodiment.

Her recent works include *A Plot / A Scandal* (2022), premiered at Ruhrtriennale Bochum, *Still Not Still* (2021), premiered at HAU in Berlin; *Water Will (in Melody)* (2018), a gothic tale set in black and white; *minor matter* (2016), a poetic work illuminated by red; and *Sorrow Swag* (2014), presented in a saturated blue. Her other works include: *Sensation 1/This Interior* (High Line Commission, 2019); *so something happened, get over it; no, nothing happened, get with it* (Jaou Tunis, 2018); *Melancholy: A White Mellow Drama* (Flax Fahrenheit, Palais de Tokyo, 2015); *\$\$\$* (Tanz im August, 2012); and *Sensation 1* (sommer.bar, Tanz im August, 2011 and Basel Liste, 2014).

Lewis is the recipient of the Tabori Award in the category of Distinction (2021); a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants Award (2018); a Bessie Award for Outstanding Production for *minor matter* (2017); a Factory Artist residency at tanzhaus nrw (2017-19); and a Prix Jardin d' Europe from ImPulsTanz for *Sorrow Swag* (2015). Her work has been presented in multiple venues and festivals and is currently touring internationally. www.ligialewis.com

Cast & Credits

Concept, artistic direction, choreography, set design: Ligia Lewis

In collaboration with performers: Ligia Lewis, Jasper Marsalis, Jasmine Orpilla, Austyn Rich

Performers in Europe: Corey Scott-Gilbert, Cassie Augusta Jørgenson and Damian Rebgetz,

Sound dramaturgy, design, and film score: Slauson Malone, with excerpts by S. McKenna

Costume design: Marta Martino

Texts: Ligia Lewis, Ian Randolph, Shakespeare, and Ian McKellen on Shakespeare

Song: Guillaume de Machaut, "Complainte: Tels rit au main qui au soir pleure (Le remède de Fortune)," ca. 1340s

Wigs: Gabrielle Curebal

Lighting technician: Joseph Wegmann

Production & administration: Sina Kießling

Production & distribution: Nicole Schuchardt

Production assistance (tour): Julia Leonhardt

Commissioned and produced by: Made in L.A. 2020 / Hammer Museum. Made in L.A. 2020: a version is organized by the Hammer Museum in partnership with The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. **Additional support provided by:** Human Resources, Los Angeles.

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