

# Aerowaves

**Aerowaves Spring Forward - dance for changing times**  
25-27 March 2011, Ljubljana, Slovenia

## Press

*Extracts from an article by Donald Hutera published in the June 2011 edition of Dance Europe.*

How do you keep the act of seeing performances in three days from becoming a complete blur? John Ashford hit upon a solution for Spring Forward - or, to use the local appellation, Plesna Vesna. As he envisaged when engineering this marathon dance platform in Ljubljana, walking from fifteen to forty minutes between a handful of venues in Slovenia's pretty, compact capital city helped clear overloaded brains and refresh tired senses.

Such ambulations worked wonders for me as one of a roster of about 250 presenters, programmers and artists gathered in Ljubljana on the last weekend in March just as the clocks were about to change. The pieces featured in this feast of dance and dance-theatre had all come to our attention under the auspices of Aerowaves, a European performance network comprised of specialists from 34 countries....

So what was the net result of tasting the creme de la creme of the Continent in one binge-like setting? I felt beat but replete, glad to have taken it all in but unsure what it revealed about the state of European dance other than that it seems to be thriving. That's no mean feat.

*Here's extracts of what Donald had to say about the performances:*

Silvia Gribaudi (Italy) – *A corpo libero*  
'hugely agreeable comic celebration of cellulite'

Ferenc Fehér (Hungary) – *Tao Te*  
'raw Beckettian slapstick'

Rosana Hribar & Gergor Luštek/PTL (Slovenia) – *Duet 012*  
'bold, hard-pushed movement of acrobatic virtuosity'

La Macana (Spain) - *VEN*  
'tightly wound, elastic toughness'

Produced by **EN-KNAP**

Cia Daniel Abreu (Spain) - *Equilibrio*

'a gallery of guises from seductive vamps and shrewish whores to exotic animals...exuded a dreamy aura'

Yossi Berg & Oded Graf (Denmark/Israel) – *4 Men, Alice, Bach and the Deer*

'a calculated and very entertaining plunge into myth and manhood...clever and giddily amusing it was too'

Club Fisk (Denmark) - *Forestillinger*

'beautifully structured, wonderfully deadpan lecture-demonstration...priceless'

Public in Private/Clément Layes (Germany) - *Allege*

'drily witty, neo-conceptualist, delightfully even audaciously non-dancey...a bullseye'

Koncentrat/Rafal Dziemidok (Poland) - *Floe*

'subtly ironic yet sincere autobiographical breakdown of choreographic creation'

Dog Kennel Hill Project (UK) – *The Devil and The Details*

'rich, cruel satire of domination'



## SPRING FORWARD

Besides being World Book Capital for almost a year, Ljubljana also became a centre of European modern dance in March. Over the last three decades, this type of dance has virtually taken hold of Slovenia by attracting numerous young artists and reviving dance theory, and has called for an event such as the Aerowaves cross-border dance performance network festival, which also brings a new quality to the field of organising major dance events. On the part of Slovenia, the festival was organised by the En-Knap Institute, which is headed by a member of a network that links thirty-four members and six associate partners from European countries. This festival provides a stage for works entered for a special competition and selected for a presentation held each year in a different city. In addition to staging a number of productions for the audience, the festival's purpose is to provide opportunities for programme managers, theatre directors, dance critics and theoreticians to meet and exchange experiences, and to enable dancers and audiences to meet, an opportunity usually not available because of lack of time. All festival participants – a total of 83 with 22 dance performances – stressed that this social dimension, which has contributed towards exchanging experience and mutual acquaintance, is the most important feature distinguishing this festival from others held throughout Europe.

Out of 582 works entered in the competition last year, members of the Aerowaves network followed a complicated procedure and selected 30 works (22 were staged at Spring Forward). Slovenia was represented with Duet 012 by Rosana Hribar and Gregor Luštek, a winner of the Gibanica Festival, which closed a few days before. Why was there only one Slovenian performance? Aerowaves head, John Ashford, said that there were fifteen entries from Slovenia, but only four met the competition requirements. There were problems with the expected performance duration of fifteen to forty minutes and the mundane reason that some of the entered media carriers were malfunctioning (DVD or other recordings).

Anyway, the three-day festival met most of the expectations, was very well organised, as usual when En-Knap and Iztok Kovač are involved, and succeeded in directing the spotlight on some young artists who have just started gaining recognition in their own countries. A strict but competent critic from Delo magazine, Mojca Kumerdej, voiced her critical view of some performances, describing them as almost amateur, but commending some excellent ones. Among them she listed the previously mentioned, perfectly performed and structured, Duet 012, a duet Ven (Come) performed by Spanish tandem La Macana, and a solo performance Allege by Clément Layes, who uses simple stage elements with imagination, ingeniously enhancing them with words. Kumerdej believes that the two boldest performances were the Dutch-Finnish dynamic and multilayered performance Hi! My name is ... by the choreographer Cecilia Moisio and the Israeli performance 4 Men, Alice, Bach and the Deer, in which the choreographers Yossi Berg and Oded Graf tackle the issue of the macho slaughter of a helpless victim.

The festival was welcomed at a very high level – in addition to speeches delivered by a representative of the city and Iztok Kovač at the opening ceremony at Španski borci Cultural Centre, the

packed audience was addressed by the minister for culture and minister for foreign affairs – and it also conveyed some other pleasant messages. Acrowaves Director Ashford organised the event in a way that provided for common residence and dining and enabled constant communication among participants; the 4-kilometre distance between the stages and the hotel where they resided was always covered on foot. In this way, the festival became a sort of campus and this added a special charm to it. Next year, the Spring Forward will be held in Bari, Italy, but industrious Izlok Kovač has already started to prepare a review of some productions, with a view to again bringing a substantial portion of young European dance to Ljubljana. The main dance performance season in Ljubljana is not over yet. The end of April will see the opening of Exodos, a traditional international dance festival, which was the first to put our capital on the modern European dance map.

