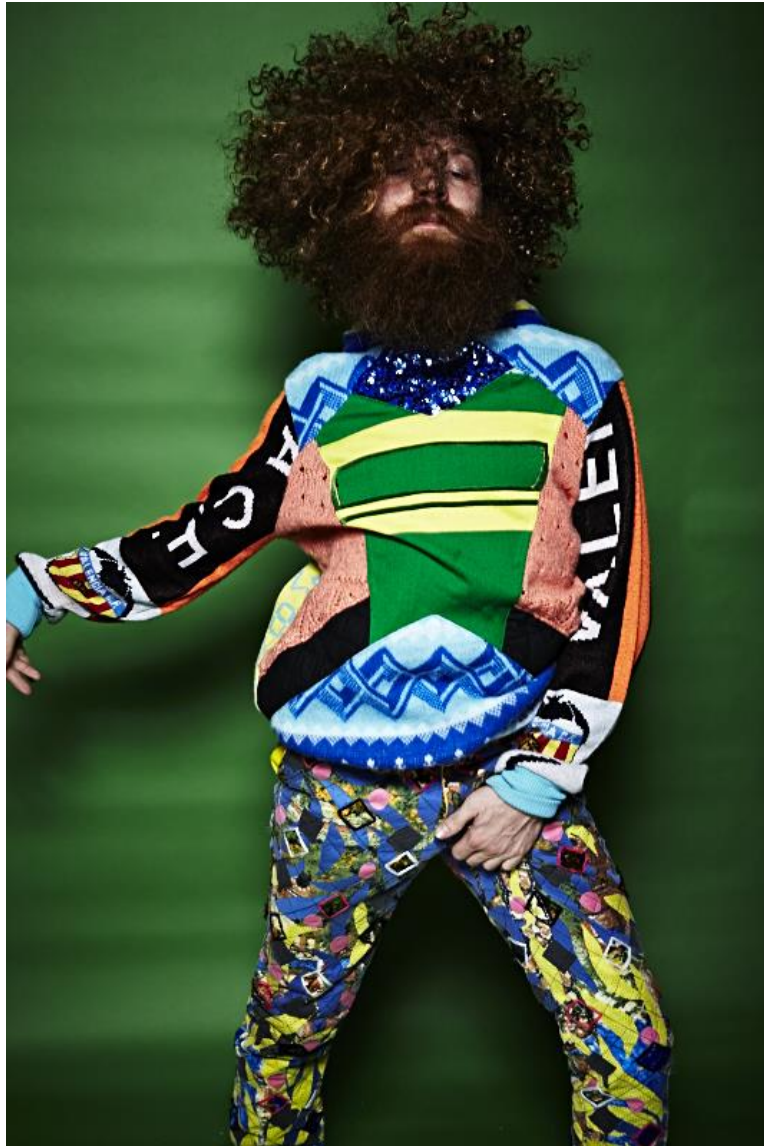


CAMPO

ARTS
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Pieter Ampe / CAMPO

so you can feel



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1 & 2 November 2014

Premiere

Helsinki (FI), Moving in November

INTRODUCTION

After a series of duets and a quartet, dancer and performer Pieter Ampe is going solo. While staying in New York, Ampe immersed himself in a world of transformations, an environment where standards are continuously shifting and blurring, where emancipation and sexual and emotional energy go hand in hand. Are we aware of how others perceive us? Which energy do we emanate through our bodies? Do we need to be liberated? Pieter Ampe will find out. The chance that he will seduce you with grand gestures is very real, but the regained sensuality could be no less externalised by subtle hip movements. In any case, it is a solo performance to eagerly look forward to: the coming of age of a man and his body.

A vimeo link towards some recent transformation research:
<https://vimeo.com/88883765> (password: 2014)

'Sometimes you think you can conquer the world, then you fall flat on your face again.'

Pieter Ampe on So you can feel

October 2014

After a series of duets and a quartet, the performer and choreographer Pieter Ampe has made his first solo production. In the dance piece *So you can feel* he looks at how others see him – and how he would like them to see him. From vulnerable to 'on top of the world'.

In So you can feel, although you are alone on stage, you did not create this piece on your own. The soundtrack was compiled by your brother Jakob, with whom you did Jake & Pete's big reconciliation attempt for the disputes of the past.

Pieter Ampe: 'We listened to something like a half a century of music history during the rehearsals: Eurotrash from the 1970s, old soul, Nina Simone, David Bowie, Robert Palmer, Roxy Music, sixties rock-'n-roll, and also Nikki Minaj and Mykki Blanco. What all the songs have in common is that each one appeals to your emotions. Whether it's exciting, melancholy or mechanical, they all seek out a wide range of feelings. There is always one number that perfectly captures your mood. From the sensual swaying of hips to shamelessly letting go: these are all facets of a personality. It's just that people soon form an image of you; you are either a half-wit, or the serious one, whereas in fact it varies – from hour to hour, but also over longer periods. What's more, you also form an image of yourself, and you can get bogged down in that too.

Which is why David Bowie – the man and his music – was also a source of inspiration for this solo. He is a typical example of a man who reinvented himself and developed a new persona at every stage of his life. For me, *So you can feel* is a quest for exactly what sexuality is, with all the emotions it involves, but also, and above all, a study of the desire – and the impossibility – of being able to play, to do everything you want, without getting hooked on the person you are.

I always have the desire to be someone or something different from who I am. For instance, at times when I sleep too little and live too hard, I dream of regularity. Healthy food, enough sleep, back in the rehearsal room at 9 in the morning. That sort of rhythm makes me think more keenly. But once I'm in a period like that I become overconfident and lose the sense of routine. But in fact that's necessary, because I find it healthy to have the occasional excess, to forget what's right and to go to one's limits. And then precisely at moments like that it's glorious to briefly let go completely, and to dance. That's when I'm at my most vigorous. Though the idea of living constantly in that sort of state is no more than a dream. Because it's at that moment that the destruction starts again. It goes in waves, like sexuality: sometimes you think you can conquer the world, and then you fall flat on your face again.'

Between navel-gazing and honesty

It's the first time you are alone on stage, so now you have no 'partners in crime' to hold onto.

'Working alone makes you face the facts: all at once you feel like an egocentric navel-gazer. At that moment I want another body, another gender, and want to be seen differently. Not because I'm not happy with what there is, but because it is so defining, because it is so limiting. And at the same time I experience a sort of greater honesty precisely because the solo is very much made to my measure. By appearing alone on stage I make myself very vulnerable, and that's not so easy. Because although making oneself vulnerable in relationships is the best thing you can do, in practice it turns out not to be so, because that's where most people invariably show their strongest side. The performance lies in that tense area between the urge to stress one's distinctive features and unadulterated honesty. And that is damned difficult. Some people go to India to find themselves, I create a solo.'

It was in First Date with Boris Van Zeebroek at Dansand that we saw the white man for the first time. Do you appear painted white in So you can feel too?

'By painting myself entirely in white, I was transformed into a character. I had initially intended to do a lot of costume changes, but in the end I kept it very simple. The tactile experience of the white paint has a highly physical effect. But it also makes reference to various visual idioms: from Greek sculpture to Aboriginals, from Indian tribes to Butoh. And after all, transformation also represents a form of emancipation, a rite of passage.'

The images you used to publicise the production are very colourful and at the same time extremely rock-'n-roll. But they contrast sharply with your white character.

'In my view the one does not exclude the other. They are two sides of a personality, vulnerable as opposed to empowered. It is the power of the stage combined with the sensuality of the brothel. That's why I find such subcultures as rockers and strippers so attractive. They radiate a similar energy: they are emancipated figures who are doing what they want, but at the same time they wear a mask and are often seriously melancholic. The one-dimensional image we have of them does not correspond to the truth.'

When we talk about this sort of subculture, it is essentially a matter of moral conventions, on a broader scale too. Take Pasolini's *Salo*, for instance, or Houellebecq's *Elementary Particles*: these are stories that concentrate on the misery we bring down on ourselves when we put ourselves at the heart of things. I have trouble with stories where sexuality is shown mainly as a destructive force driven by egocentric motives, while it can also be a driver of creativity. For example, my duets included violence, but not its devastating nature: it is play that gets out of hand. Ultimately I try to give a reassuring message: shit happens, but you will get over it. So it doesn't help to navel-gaze and to wallow in your own misery.'

CREDITS

BY & WITH: Pieter Ampe

MUSIC: Jakob Ampe

OUTSIDE EYES: Jakob Ampe, Pol Heyvaert, Alain Platel & Sarah Thom

PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE (STAGE): Femke Platteau

THANKS: Sarah Bleasdale, Rickard Borgström, Tim Darbyshire, Michael Dudeck, Nuno Lucas, Jessica Massart, Laura Eva Meuris, Tommy Noonan & Boris Zeebroek

PRODUCTION: CAMPO

CO-PRODUCTION: Moving in November (Helsinki, FI), Kaaithheater (Brussels, BE), BIT-Teatergarasjen (Bergen, NO)

SUPPORTED BY: de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, de Provincie Oost-Vlaanderen & de Stad Gent

FIRST DATES 2014-2015

1 & 2 November: Moving in November (Helsinki, FI) – premiere

5, 6 & 7 November: CAMPO/ Gent (BE)

13, 14 & 15 November: Kaaithheater / Brussels (BE)

13 December: Natura Dei Teatri / Parma (IT)

26 February: Nona / Mechelen (BE)

3 & 5 March: SICK! Festival / Manchester & Brighton (UK)

7 March: De Werf / Brugge (BE)

21 & 22 March: Le Printemps de Sévelin / Lausanne (CH)

More dates on www.campo.nu



BIOGRAPHY PIETER AMPE / ARTIST IN RESIDENCE AT CAMPO

Pieter Ampe (°1982, Burundi) grew up in Ghent where from 1990 to 2001 he took part in several theatre workshops at the Speeltheater, now known as the Kopergieterij. In 2002-2003 he studied at the Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance and the following year he took a theatrical dance course at the Arnhem Dance Academy. From 2004 to 2008 he completed both P.A.R.T.S. cycles in Brussels. During this training he created the solo performance *On Stage* (2006) and *Still Difficult Duet* (2007) together with Guilherme Garrido. With Simon Mayer he presented the duet *O feather of lead* (2008).

In 2006, along with 64 dancers and choreographers, Pieter took part in danceWEB, a scholarship program that takes place each year in Vienna as part of the ImpulsTanz-festival. Out of this emerged the artists' network Sweet&Tender Collaborations, towards which Pieter still contributes. For the twentieth birthday of Vooruit Arts Centre in Ghent, Pieter created *Kiezen is Verliezen* (2003-2004). He also appeared as a dancer in *Cirque Danton* by the stage director Jan Decorte. He collaborated with the

performance duo United Sorry (Frans Poelstra & Robert Steijn), with the artist Roland Seidel and with choreographer Anne Juren. He was also one of the dancers in *The Song* by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker & Rosas.

Since 2009 Pieter Ampe is artist in residence at CAMPO. Apart from creating new work, he also takes the time for research and collaboration with other artists. In CAMPO he created, together with Guilherme Garrido, the duet *Still Standing You* (2010), the successor of their piece *Still Difficult Duet*. *Still Standing You* was selected for Circuit X of the Belgian Theaterfestival 2012. In November 2011, Pieter Ampe had the première of *Jake and Pete's Big Reconciliation Attempt For The Disputes From The Past*, which he created together with his brother Jakob Ampe and mentor Alain Platel. This piece, as well as *Still Standing You*, is still touring all around the world. In May 2012, Pieter Ampe presented a *coming community* during the Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels, another CAMPO-production that he made with Gui Garrido, Hermann Heisig and Nuno Lucas.

Besides his own artistic work Pieter also contributes to the works of others as a dance & movement adviser. Earlier collaborations involved the theatre collective het KIP and Toneelhuis actors Benjamin Verdonck and Abke Haring.

In 2013, Pieter Ampe was involved with Robert Steijn & United Sorry for *The Forest Project*, and researching his first solo, *So you can feel* (premiere November 2014). In 2015 Pieter will continue to create another duet (*We don't Speak to be Understood*) with Flemish actor and performer Benjamin Verdonck –(premiere in April 2015).

To be continued ...



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