



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

An Odyssey of Imagination and Reflection

ImpulsTanz Vienna, 21.07.2024 [ENA]

William Kentridge's latest work, "The Great Yes, The Great No," is a breathtaking amalgamation of historical fact, imaginative fiction, and poignant commentary on contemporary crises. As a cultural critic, it is both a privilege and a challenge to distill the essence of this complex and deeply evocative performance. This surreal-realistic chamber opera, blending elements of dance, film, oratorio, and drama, embarks on a metaphorical voyage from Europe to Martinique, guided by Charon, the mythical ferryman of the Greek underworld.

Kentridge's choice of Charon as the ferryman is a stroke of genius, immediately setting the tone for a journey that transcends the physical realm. This ancient figure, who traditionally transports souls across the River Styx, now navigates a ship brimming with some of the most influential and enigmatic figures of the 20th century. Among the passengers are historical luminaries such as the writer Anna Seghers, surrealist André Breton, and anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who indeed fled Marseille in 1941 to escape the Vichy regime's collaboration with the Nazis.

However, Kentridge's narrative does not confine itself to historical accuracy. He introduces an eclectic mix of additional passengers, including Frida Kahlo, Josephine Baker, Joséphine Bonaparte, Stalin, and the founders of the Parisian Négritude movement, Aimé Césaire and the Nardal sisters. This deliberate blend of real and imagined figures allows Kentridge to explore the intersections of history, politics, and art in a uniquely layered narrative.

The setting of a ship—a metaphorical "Ship of Fools"—becomes a microcosm where reality and fiction intermingle. Kentridge uses this confined space to provoke questions and seek answers, creating an environment where dialogue and reflection are paramount. The ship itself becomes a stage upon which the complexities of human experience and the crises of today are played out.

Kentridge's aesthetic, known for its distinctive blend of the surreal and the real, permeates every aspect of the production. The visual design is marked by his signature use of charcoal drawings, animated sketches, and collages, which are projected onto the set, creating a constantly shifting backdrop that mirrors the fluid nature of the narrative. This dynamic visual landscape is complemented by the hauntingly beautiful score, which incorporates elements of traditional chamber music with modernist dissonance, reflecting the tension and harmony of the diverse characters on board.

Redaktioneller Programmdienst: European News Agency

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service.....

The choreography is equally compelling, with movements that range from the frenetic to the contemplative, embodying the emotional and psychological states of the characters. The dancers interact seamlessly with the projected images, creating a dialogue between the physical and the virtual, the tangible and the intangible. This interplay underscores the themes of connection and disconnection, reality and illusion, which are central to the performance.

The inclusion of oratorio elements adds a powerful vocal dimension to the work. The sung passages, delivered with both classical precision and raw emotional intensity, amplify the themes of exile, identity, and resilience. The oratorio, traditionally a large-scale musical composition with a religious or dramatic theme, here becomes a vehicle for both personal and collective storytelling, giving voice to the hopes, fears, and aspirations of the characters.

Kentridge's script is a masterclass in blending historical dialogue with contemporary relevance. The conversations between the characters—both those based on real individuals and the fictional additions—are rich with philosophical and political undertones. These dialogues reflect on the nature of escape, survival, and resistance, while also touching on broader themes of colonialism, cultural identity, and artistic expression.

One of the most striking aspects of "The Great Yes, The Great No" is its ability to resonate with current global crises. While rooted in a specific historical context, the themes of displacement, authoritarianism, and cultural hybridity are poignantly relevant today. Kentridge does not shy away from drawing parallels between the past and the present, using the historical setting as a lens through which to examine contemporary issues.

The performance culminates in a powerful reflection on the nature of yes and no—the choices we make, the paths we take, and the resistances we mount. It is a meditation on affirmation and negation, on acceptance and rejection, on hope and despair. Kentridge's ability to weave these dualities into a cohesive narrative is a testament to his skill as a storyteller and a visionary artist.

In conclusion, William Kentridge's "The Great Yes, The Great No" is a tour de force that defies easy categorization. It is a work that challenges the boundaries of genre and medium, offering a richly layered experience that is as intellectually stimulating as it is emotionally resonant. Kentridge's unique vision, combined with the talents of the performers and the creative team, has produced a performance that is both timeless and urgently relevant. This is a piece that demands to be seen, discussed, and reflected upon—a true testament to the transformative power of art.

[Bericht online lesen:](#)

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service.....

https://culture.en-a.eu/kunst_kultur_und_musik/an_odyssey_of_imagination_and_reflection-89474/

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:

V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDSStV: Dr. Nadejda Komendantova

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.