

Claire Dessimoz

CURRENT CURRENTS (2021)

EN 1

**danse / self-representation and current social concerns /
to uncategorize / chorality / oneself and the others**

Premiered at Arsenic - Centre for contemporary performing arts in Lausanne



TRAILER

<https://vimeo.com/561568578>

FULL VIDEO

<https://vimeo.com/588888989/6a62a92627>

Created in French.

Can be performed in English.

CURRENT CURRENTS seeks how to facilitate the coexistence of different individuals without them necessarily forming a group. Through a collage of intimate tableaux in which performed actions mix with documentary scenes, the five dancers use their bodies and the song that traverses them to evoke current social issues.

CURRENT CURRENTS strives to go against the current of the perpetual spectacle making and hyper-exposition of oneself by proposing moments of non-representation, calm, tenderness and fragility. And if the sum of the parts was greater than the whole?

Claire Dessimoz

CURRENT CURRENTS (2021)

EN 2



“...He said that he'd like to show himself differently, and subsequently he opens a new Instagram account... That she found herself super beautiful that morning and regretted not posting anything... And it wouldn't be a bad idea if I activated parental control over his screen time... That he'd love to be liked, that that girl in his class liked him. That everyone in his class liked him too... And that sometimes she had a hard time understanding the expectations of others. And that she'd like to be a little more coached, in general, in her life... And that he'd like to have a boss in these uncertain times. A classic boss... And that we've always had a tendency to compare ourselves to others, even if we know it makes us unhappy... And that there's a study that shows that silver medallists are often more unhappy than bronze medallists.”

Concept: Claire Dessimoz.

With: Simon Crettol, Éléonore Heiniger, Jenny Lacher, Valentine Paley, Yuta Ishikawa.

Assistance: Anouk Werro.

Artistic collaboration: Louis Bonard.

Stage design and lights: Florian Leduc.

Costume: Safia Semlali.

Musical collaboration: Louis Bonard, Éléonore Heiniger, Christian Garcia-Gaucher, Dragos Tara.

Administration: Arythmie – Marianne Caplan et Artemisia Romano.

Communication: Jonas Parson.

Coproduction: Arsenic – Centre for contemporary performing arts, Lausanne.

Residency: Oriental Vevey, Dansomètre – space for choreographic creation, Vevey.

Support: State of Vaud, the City of Lausanne, Loterie Romand, Nestlé foundation for the arts, Fondation Nicati de Luze, Fondation Ernst Göhner, SSA for the composition of music for theatre arts.

Duration: 2h10

Claire Dessimoz started creating work at the Théâtre de l'Usine and at Sévelin 36 and benefitted from support from YAA! – Young Associated Artist (18 – 20) an initiative of Pro Helvetia. She was an associated artist with the Arsenic (17 – 20) and is currently a recipient of structural subsidies from the State of Vaud (21 – 23). She lives and works in Lausanne.

Claire Dessimoz

CURRENT CURRENTS (2021)

EN 3



CURRENT CURRENTS marks the second phase of a creation cycle (after TRAVERSER TOUT ENTIER) in which the body is considered as a medium for communication. Through their bodies and voices the performers strive to examine the varying impacts that different current social issues have upon them. The piece aims to indulge in the luxury of nuance and complexity that the realities of the daily struggle for survival or human dignity often render impossible. A sensitive experience rather than a manifest one, the piece is an attempt to keep intact an ensemble of contradictions and paradoxes without necessarily trying to resolve them.



CURRENT CURRENTS goes against the current of the perpetual spectacle making and hyper-exposition of oneself by proposing moments of non-representation, calm, tenderness and fragility.

Watching, dancing, waiting, resting, being at times extraordinary and at others pathetic: the dancers follow their individual trajectories, intermingle and separate, existing simply on the stage before the spectators' eyes. For the audience, the distinction between the centre of the stage and the side-lines is blurred; they have just as much access to the dancers when they are consciously performing in the centre of things as when they seem to forget themselves, or at least forget that they are still visible in margins.



CURRENT CURRENTS is a collage of different individual tableaux, punctuated by choral gatherings that evoke a collective solitude.

At different moments the performers come together like an awkward Greek chorus, looking for the possibility of harmony without always achieving it. They embrace the dissonance as much as the euphoric unisons.



CURRENT CURRENTS brings different beings together for a potential moment of coexistence, without necessarily striving for consensus.

Through its ensemble of heteroclite performers and their actions on stage, the piece offers up a space in which we as audience members can confront ideas or actions that we may find disturbing and thus puts us in an uncomfortable position rather than comforting us in our certitudes.



CURRENT CURRENTS incorporates the notion of rushed judgement in order to immediately test it.

If the piece begins by a clear and binary invitation to judge the propositions made on stage, the repetition and accumulation of examples finally encourages a re-questioning of the solidity of our own judgements.



CURRENT CURRENTS questions the very notion of inclusivity and multiplicity.

Fragments of text – non-exhaustive lists, monologues or awkward attempts at speech – punctuate the piece and lead to such questions as: How can one speak of the other? How to name the other, even in an incorrect way? Would it simply be better, in certain cases, to not give names at all?

CURRENT CURRENTS examines our identities and their fabrication before the eyes of the others.

The personal propositions follow in succession before the eyes of the other performers and the audience, and touch upon all of our identities, which are composed of that which we like and that which we understand others to like or fashioned by values that we develop or by the changing values of society at large. The piece questions the necessity that possesses us in this day and age to unwaveringly affirm our identities.

Claire Dessimoz

CURRENT CURRENTS (2021)

EN 4

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE SUBJECT MATTER

Sexy/not sexy. Playing with judgement

In one of the opening scenes in CURRENT CURRENTS, two of the dancers play at classifying ideas, actions, fantasies or movements into two distinct categories: “sexy” or “not sexy”. This seemingly simple, binary and reductive game lasts about 25 minutes. Beyond the amusement created by watching two people perform an activity that one could easily imagine in a schoolyard at recess, its mechanism is truly revelatory of the intentions behind the piece. By accepting the expeditious judgements of another as they come and abandoning a verbal jousting match, the two individuals on stage create a novel space of non-judgement.

The game initially generates a sentiment of empathy on the part of the audience, who identifies (or not) with the pronounced judgements, in a series of satisfactions/frustrations that play with the need for the validation of the tastes-viewpoint-opinions of decisions made on stage. The repetition and accumulation of examples finally encourages a re-questioning of the solidity of our own judgements: we are perhaps tempted to find something sexy just because another has judged it so. We are encouraged to imagine, even temporarily, new perspectives and to reposition our viewpoint in order to see a possible truth in a contrary point of view.

The opposition sexy/not sexy proposes an experience of seemingly low existential stakes and yet opens up the possibility of a more profound re-evaluation of the spectators' certitudes. This scene also encourages a certain kindness in regards to the others, the non-sexy or pathetic, and aspires toward a conclusion for the piece in which the dancers will not be evaluated according to their degree of charisma, the quality of their movements or singing, but rather through an appreciation of the identity of each one, their moments of glory as well as their moments of vacillation. Far from a return to a rampant relativism or post-modern cynicism of “nothing is worth anything anyway”, CURRENT CURRENTS does not try to catch the audience at their own game, but rather to encourage them to draw their attention to the value in each thing, just as it is.

Non-representation

Like the words invoked by Paul B. Prčićado at the end of the piece, in which he wishes that everyone might lack courage or fail at times, CURRENT CURRENTS brings us along in search of a precious place, where force can mingle with weakness, where certitudes can mix with doubts and errors. It's a question of accepting to be nothing special before an audience. Of accepting to demonstrate our vulnerability, of falling asleep in front of an audience. Of accepting to show how we can be pathetic sometimes. Of accepting the fact that we do wish to seem cool sometimes too. And to shine sometimes, by what we do, what we say, by what we try to accomplish. And moreover, of seeking the simplicity in all this, in the fact of constituting one's self in front of the others.

Fight against our desire to be part of a group, stay an individual and attempt to coexist

To be a non-group. To be a non-group as 5, on stage. To be a non-group, with all of those present in the auditorium. And yet, the desire exists for discussion and exchange, with, notably, the presence of a cover version of the song “salut toi” by les Béuriers Noirs, who greet everyone with naïveté and idealism. But without seeking fusion. Quite on the contrary. It's about greeting everyone. Those we know well and those we don't. As well as those we don't really understand. Greeting those who are present and those who are absent, those in the minority and those in the majority. And providing details about different communities present on this list, in order to recognise them and also, more generally speaking, to embrace our status as living beings, beyond our small-time affiliations. To greet oneself and to let oneself live, without necessarily having a desire for coalescence. And yet the desire for coexistence remains, the desire to share space and joy.

This “sharing” remains a fantasy. At a moment in time when diverging theories surrounding the struggles involved in different and very specific causes are available quite everywhere, superficially at least, living together seems impossible. Should we then be trying to imagine a separate country for women, another for misogynists and still another for Afro-feminists? Or is it possible to assure ourselves that notions of non-mixity are just tools and that the goal of everybody at the end of the day is actually happy coexistence? Because even if one talks about the convergence of our different struggles, on the ground each of us defends our own camp, while policing and attacking our fellows for disagreements about terminology, instead of confronting our real adversaries.

Claire Dessimoz

CURRENT CURRENTS (2021)

EN 5

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE SUBJECT MATTER

While focused on our own particular causes, we're certain – each in our own way – of being right while the others are wrong. We assert ourselves as hyper-politicized and yet don't accord the same patience and tolerance to the clumsiness and errors of others as we do to our own learning process. Where are notions of a common good situated? How could we imagine ourselves working together for a better world without leaving room for the possibility of making mistakes or changing our position some times? And where, above all, is the sentiment that moves us, of being part of a group and shouting out loud together? Perhaps it's necessary to abandon the group and attach ourselves to individuals. Resolved individuals, different, brave and fragile all at the same time, who won't be afraid of being excluded from the group, because there won't be a group anymore.

A minor dance

Claire Dessimoz explores a minor kind of dance; a dance of the small and intimate. She opens up a multitude of spaces in which we don't need to be systematically in control of everything we produce or project. She invites us to experience moments of release, emptiness and hesitation. It is a minor gesture because it doesn't aim to impose itself or create a new dominant discourse, but rather to cultivate a fertile kind of doubt, one that leaves room for each of us and our contradictions, disagreements and tensions, all the while attempting to keep the ensemble together, side by side, without seeking to resolve its differences. Minor also because it evokes a certain melancholy, a collective solitude.

Texts: Claire Dessimoz, in collaboration with Jonas Parson.

CONTACT

Claire Dessimoz
www.claire.dessimoz.org
claire@dessimoz.org
+41 77 410 95 94

ADMINISTRATION / PRODUCTION

Charlotte Hillion
charlotte.hillion.pro@gmail.com
+41 78 693 04 06

Association PRAXIS
Av. Recordon 42
1004 Lausanne