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Grazia Capri: Beyond

An astonishing work that is more performance art than dance

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By Rachel Donnelly | Tuesday 14 August 2012 | 10:06:54 UTC



Venue: Whitespace

Dates: 09 Aug - 11 Aug

Starts at: 21:30

Ends at: 22:15

Price(s): £10.00

A dance performance that renders the body secondary may seem counter-intuitive, or even impossible. However, Grazia Capri achieves this with her piece *Beyond*, a minimal, anguished work inspired by the self-portraits of Francesca Woodman. Staged down a side street off a quiet square in the venue Whitespace, this is the so-called 'White Block' version of the piece, an adaptation for performances in smaller spaces.

Against a backdrop of three white walls, Capri manipulates and positions her near-naked body as though it were something separate from her self. The absence of colour or features (apart from a metal chair and a roll of plastic) on stage creates the impression of visual white noise that overwhelms the figure in front of the audience.

Particular moments in the choreography underscore the feeling that the performer is trying to put herself outside her body, as when Capri swings a limb rhythmically whilst the rest of her remains motionless, highlighting the function of our joints as hinges and reducing her living flesh to a mechanical thing. At another point, the dancer wraps herself in the plastic as though her body is a commodity.

There are moments when the spell of detachment is broken and Capri exhibits a transient tenderness towards her body, stroking her own hair with a dreamy smile. This fluctuation between the dancer alternately inhabiting her body and then seeming to manipulate it from an external perspective is astonishing, having a sort of voodoo quality to it. More performance art than dance, this is a remarkable work that masterfully manipulates the audience's perception of the body.