A critical look through rose-tinted glasses

Between International Women's Day and Equal Pay Day we will be presenting a second edition of WoWmen!, our focus on gender, society and art. Because it is still necessary to take a critical look at the world through rose-tinted glasses without immediately undertaking a Femen action. We do this in theatre and dance performances, an exhibition, films, debates and research.

Research: Gender distribution in the arts sector

Four years ago Kaaitheater and the VTi, the institute for the performing arts, carried out a small-scale study: is the performing arts sector as feminine as it is generally assumed? Well, the results were disappointing! To give just one figure: of the 32 directors of civic theatres and arts centres only seven were women. Four of them worked in youth theatres. Together with the VTi and the Performing Arts Social Fund we have now carried out more thorough gender research, ranging from the 1992-93 season to the 2012-13 season. In addition, we have examined performing arts education. You can read all about the results here.

Debate: Case study: Turkey and feminism

Gender issues continue to stir the emotions, as we see in the newspapers almost every day. For the two WoWmen! debates we chose themes that have been hot topics in the past year. In the opening debate we are zooming in on Turkey. This country appears to apply a double moral standard: is the dichotomy between tradition and renewal that you sense in East and West Istanbul exemplary of what is happening on a gender level? We end the debate with a dance duet by Ilyas Odman.

On Friday we shall be hearing a number of experts and activists on the role of women in protest movements and how the use of nudity plays a part in this. From the 'boss of your own belly' actions of the past to the part played by women bloggers during the Arab Spring. With, among others, the young Tunisian activist Amina Sboui.

Performances: Hysteria, exoticism and re-enactment

Ilyas Odman portrays the impossibility of and the urge to stay together with a man. Charlotte Vanden Eynde and Dolores Bouckaert start out from the supposedly female nineteenth-century illness of hysteria and talk about deceptive bodies. Anne Juren and Annie Dor森 look at several feminist performances of the sixties from a completely different angle. In her performative talkshow BAUER HOUR, Eleanor Bauer examines contemporary feminism with a number of guests including Emily Roysdon. In his performance the choreographer Pere Faura confirms and undermines the voyeuristic gaze of the spectator. And Ragna Aurich presents a visual performance with three pregnant women.

In addition to these varied approaches to gender, before and/or after the performances you can see the video exhibition, which includes work by the French-American film-maker Marie Losier, who also provided the cover picture. And on the final day we invite you to get busy yourself, in a workshop led by Marijs Boulogne; we’ll also treat you to a concert and a cocktail.
In collaboration with VTi, 0090 and deBuren

WoWmen! - From 2011 to 2013 Bettina Knaup travelled the world to discover unknown feminist, gender and queer performing artists and make their work accessible. The result is a mobile archive with more than 250 videos, photos and other documents of 180 performance artists. Bettina Knaup explains the project and presents visual material that shows previously unknown performances.

In English

dance/performance

Charlotte Vanden Eynde & Dolores Bouckaert

Deceptive Bodies »

12-13-14/3/2014

WoWmen! - Actress and visual artist Dolores Bouckaert and dancer Charlotte Vanden Eynde are fascinated by the deceptiveness of the body as an expressive medium. In this show they explore how to manipulate the theatrical body and how to unmask it.

In English

theatre/performance

Pere Faura

Striptease »

13/3/2014

WoWmen! - The Catalan dancer and choreographer Pere Faura is fascinated by the mechanisms of sexual arousal; the connection between dance and eroticism is the basis of the twofold programme that he will be presenting during WoWmen. In Striptease, he compares the art of stripping with theatre.

In English

debate

WoWmen!

Shevolution! »

14/3/2014

WoWmen! - What role do women actually play in today's protest movements? If women want to make their voice heard, can they do so as part of existing protest movements or do they have to start their own? Do women have to bare their breasts to bring about change? A debate between 5 women.

In English

Kaaitheater & Kaaistudios

ULB

Collaboration entre l'ULB et WoWmen! »

15/3/2014

WoWmen! - Autant de questions dont les réponses supposent que « comprendre » la performance et ses formes irrégulières, cela s'apprend notamment à l'Université libre de Bruxelles mais surtout que cela se vit. Des étudiantes en Master 1 Arts du Spectacle vivant s'y risquent en grande complicité avec les artistes et le Kaaitheater durant WoWmen! #2, explorant les liens complexes entre art de la performance, féminisme et genre.
**workshop**

Marijs Boulogne

*A Tiny Sex Change Workshop*

15/3/2014

**WoWmen** - A workshop by Marijs Boulogne about the depiction of other gender forms than men and women. The initiators are the performing artists James Mayhew and Kanarinka (USA).

In Dutch and English

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**theatre/performance**

Ragna Aurich

*Lifting Mountains With My Belly*

15/3/2014

**WoWmen** - In *Lifting Mountains with My Belly*, or The Pregnancy Project, three heavily pregnant women talk about their experience of pregnancy. Three different views on what it's like to have something in your belly, and what it's like to be inside the belly of something bigger.

In English

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**performance**

Anne Juren with Annie Dorsen

*Magical*

15/3/2014

**WoWmen** - Choreographer Anne Juren and director Annie Dorsen collaborate on *Magical*, a solo dance piece performed by Juren, which uses the canon of feminist performance art and the rituals of a magic show. In the process they themselves become the object of a manipulation. Is *Magical* performance, magic, pornography or something completely different?

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**dance/music**

Sabina Toll

*Closing concert: Sabina Toll*

15/3/2014

**WoWmen** - Sabina Toll describes her music as 'electro with spacy dimensions'. Her influences range widely, from Edith Piaf through Kraftwerk to Nina Simone and Dead Can Dance. And she explores at least as many different directions in the universe with her own sound. She brings WoWmen! to a close with a big bang!