
Shocked nightmare

Danskonst

Franz Kafkas The process has as many interpreters as the Bible. In just the almost one hundred years since it was published in 1925, a year after Kafka's death and against his last will, it has become the classic with great K. In an article published the same day, May 17, which the Royal Opera has premiered on the Process as Ballet thinks the author Jerker Virdborg that Kafka is one of the most important authors of the 20th century. And few authors have given rise to their own adjectives: in addition, kafarta or kafkaisk (after English's kafkaesque) has proved to be very useful, perhaps even more so in our time with accelerating fake news, blue-eyed powers and regimes that cold-blooded murder their peaceful critic.

The labyrinth nightmare that the choreographer Jiří Bubeníček, the stage designer Otto Bubeníček (they are twin brothers) and the costume designer Nadina Cojocarú have created is unexpectedly hilarious and yes, full of energy and eroticism, a dance macabre that is paradoxically life-giving. The beginning of what I associate with three giant insects (or are there three witches like in Macbeth? According to the program booklet, it is Kafka's mother and sisters) dressed in nasty rattling silver foil, and with movements reminiscent of African shamanism, the right nightmarish grant has one No unsuspecting Josef K / Kafka is arrested by two sadistic men, the scene has a rhythm of an S / M rape, "without having done any evil".

Their process is an Gesamtkunstwerk, with a cascade of ideas, music taken from different quarters from Schnittke and Pärt to Jewish folk music with lovely skewed blow and, not least, the Finnish screaming choir Mieskuoro Huutajat, who is a full hit as a researcher, but still feels cohesive and almost incessant absorbing. The dancers performed with an astonishing security at the premiere night. Arsen Mehrabyan as Joseph K. has a grave seriousness in his interpretation, Desislava Stoeva makes a hard and cold Miss Bürstner, Madeline Woo a comical portrait of a juicy landlady and Daria Ivanova is a lyrical but fake seductive caretaker wife, Pascal Jansson intimidates with brutal presence, Jérôme Marchand outperforms himself in his portrait of the vanity judge Titorelli. But the whole ensemble does a stiff job. Nothing now seems to be left to chance at the Opera (except the messy applause)

The longing for love and the sexual fantasies that characterize Kafka's process have been deservedly highlighted in Bubeníček's interpretation which also carries an unmistakable love for the author Franz Kafka. He may also be a kind of autofictive element in the second act, where a correspondence with the father is heartbreaking disclosure. The most unexpected is that you are filled with tenderness and a warm compassion for this beautiful and naivistly colored nightmare.