

POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

In a voluble, daring solo, Latifa Laâbissi “gets” colonial France and its grand speeches. Well done.

ONE WOMAN SHOW
SELF PORTRAIT CAMOUFLAGE

Nude, except for an American Indian headdress, the body of Latifa Laâbissi is no longer just that of a woman, with its slow movements contorting and distorting her with little regard for modesty or aesthetic, the oddly flat sound of flesh hitting the ground. Facing this forty-something woman, we too feel rather uncomfortable, we're rather like voyeurs whose intentions are not exactly on the up and up. Whether we want to or not, we are hypnotised by this strange, foreign, grotesque creature grimacing behind her museum ropes, on a reflecting white floor lit by the brutally direct lighting, four rows of fourteen instruments at full strength. Nadia Lauro's setting is clever, the images and scenes reminding us more than a little of those universal and colonial expositions, or the exotic exhibits of a certain “Venus Hottentot.”

In the midst of the “crisis in the suburbs” and unlikely “repentances,” Latifa Laâbissi wanted to create a political solo. She has done it, and well. This contemporary dancer shifts into a chatty mode, riffing on her own mother, Mina, a popular Moroccan figure – down to the accent – queen of the terse press review. Latifa Laâbissi teaches a lesson to the ranking members of French politics, Nicolas [Sarkozy], Ségolène [Royal], Jean- Marie [Le Pen], Marie-George [Buffet], Olivier [Besancenot], and their consorts. Moving from mute speechifying to a few exotic-looking *vahiné* poses, this “fourth-generation immigrant” says, with a charming false naiveté, “It's weird, there is always a moment when I get just a little paranoid.” She wears her red white and blue flag alternately as a scarf, a *bustier* or a *pareo*, depending – and there is not a Kleenex or a thong in sight.

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SCÈNES
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