

## « Puissances Seules » aux Brigittines : deux corps en transe entre ombre et lumière \*\*\*

Pour la deuxième étape de ce Temps fort, Louise Vanneste et Shantala Pèpe livrent chacune un solo étourdissant, physiquement éprouvant et visuellement fascinant.

■ Article réservé aux abonnés



S'extrayant de sa gangue, Shantala Pèpe apparaît peu à peu dans un tourbillon étourdissant. - Stéphane Jossart.



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Par [Jean-Marie Wynants](#) ([2094/dpi-authors/jean-marie-wynants](#))

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### “Puissances Seules” at Les Brigittines: Two Bodies in Trance Between Shadow and Light

*For the second stage of this special program, Louise Vanneste and Shantala Pèpe each present a dizzying solo—physically demanding and visually captivating.*

In the Mezzo hall at Les Brigittines, a circle of red chairs surrounds a tall figure barely discernible in the semi-darkness. This unusual arrangement matches *exUTERO*, the breathtaking performance by Shantala Pèpe who, for nearly half an hour, spins endlessly, much like a whirling dervish.

There is not a moment of stillness or rest in this continuous rotation that begins under a heap of fabric from which the dancer and choreographer gradually emerges. Stretching out her arms, speeding up her spinning motion, she pushes the fabric away, makes it float through the air, stretches it toward the sky, creating mesmerizing images where color and movement combine to hypnotic effect.

Layer by layer, she sheds these fine skins that cover and imprison her. The speed, the lighting, and the limits of our perception sometimes make us doubt what we’re seeing—as if the young woman were literally vanishing into the movement, like magic. Yet little by little, a shoulder emerges from this human tornado, then a face, a head of spinning hair. Stripped of all her trappings—even the chain around her waist—the dancer, now finally liberated, can slow her movements and ultimately come to a halt, turning one last time to meet the gaze of each spectator.

Still reeling from this striking performance, we move on to the chapel to discover another universe steeped in shadow. Here too, the soundtrack and lighting are essential partners for Louise Vanneste in *3 Days, 3 Nights*. Emerging very slowly from complete darkness, her silhouette unfolds through the space, moving diagonally like a fencer mid-duel. Her body is fully grounded, her feet firmly planted, her arms creating a multitude of movements in the space. Her face, however, remains invisible, hidden by her hair used like a mask, giving her the appearance of a creature from another world.

Yet she is clearly inspired by our world—specifically the Earth, its geological reality, color variations, temperatures, and movements—all narrated by a voice-over throughout the performance. Amidst a tumult of creaks and various sounds, she deploys vivid, trance-like gestures, as her body struggles at the heart of it all like a wild spirit. Her arms cross, flail, strike, twirl, slice, push, and slap the space in an explosion of untamed energy. Her fingers begin to crawl, as if animated by a life of their own. Her body weaves back and forth, carving up the space, occasionally returning to human-like postures before plunging back into a storm of organic movement. Finally, all goes quiet. Kneeling at the back of the stage, in a pose reminiscent of certain ancient sculptures, her movements slow, allowing our gaze to settle—and letting us, once again breathless, catch ours.

*exUTERO* by and with Shantala Pèpe at 7:00 p.m., *3 Days, 3 Nights* by and with Louise Vanneste at 8:30 p.m., March 20–22, Les Brigittines, [brigittines.be](http://brigittines.be)