

**CHRISTIAN SAINT-PIERRE**



**LARA KRAMER : CULTURE DE LA RUE**

**28 MAI 2014**

La chorégraphe montréalaise Lara Kramer présente à l'occasion du OFFTA une pièce intitulée *NGS* (« *Native Girl Syndrome* »). On en parle comme d'une « incursion dans la culture de la rue », une invitation « au cœur de la perte, de l'aliénation et des dépendances de ceux qui la peuplent ». Parce qu'une fois n'est pas coutume, et aussi pour épouser la nature bilingue du OFFTA, je publie les réponses de Lara à mes questions dans leur version originale anglaise.

**Qu'est-ce qui vous a incitée à consacrer un spectacle à la rue? Les gens qu'on y rencontre? Leur situation affective et psychologique? Les enjeux de société que cela soulève?**

My initial motivation for this work came from my grandmother's history/experience of street life. For me it was a personal investigation into her world, understanding the effects of the Indian residential schools, loss of children, addiction, culturally bias systems, cycle of abuse... It's complex. There are a disproportionate amount of First Nation women homeless, dealing with addiction, loss of children to eurocentric systems, dealing with the aftermath of Rez schools trauma... I am addressing something that is present, a part of a cultural genocide in our country.

**Vous faites référence à une culture de la rue. Comment est-ce que vous la définiriez? Quels en sont les codes? Trouvez-vous qu'on est trop souvent sourd à cette culture?**

I'm defining street culture as a symptom of something much larger. A lot of references were made from observing East Hastings in Vancouver and conducting interviews with friends who work(ed) on East Hastings, as well I sourced from my experience working in needle exchange clinics and homeless shelters in my early 20's. Understanding how systems are biased, in health, law, social programs, welfare etc. They are found on values of what dominate society values, a society built on a history of colonial eurocentrism. The invisible

is colonial, like reserves. You don't have to breathe it, so it's for sure ignored. After visiting my grandmother's reserve in the north, I understood the streets were safer for her.

**Les deux personnages de la pièce s'abiment dans la drogue. Quel regard jetez-vous sur la toxicomanie des femmes itinérantes? Comment les phénomènes de dissociation et d'aliénation s'incarnent-ils en termes chorégraphiques?**

It was a collaborative effort in building these two characters. I fed the artists stories, history, research, interviews on street culture and addiction from my family and friends. I had them explore the textures, sensations, smells of the street to embody a state of addiction, internalize a relationship to addiction. Physiologically it's demanding and a big investment for the artists to keep these characters alive. The dissociation is an indication of the trauma the characters have experienced and an effect of the drug use, need for self-medicating. The alienation I feel is more of an external force, a weakness, a sickness in our culture, society.

**En quoi est-ce que ce spectacle s'inscrit dans la lignée de ceux qui l'ont précédé et comment est-ce qu'il se distingue de ce que vous avez fait auparavant?**

I think the work tackles harsh realities that aren't typically depicted in dance. I was really influenced by taking a more documentary approach to my work, minimal sensorship and pushing the realism of the characters. I wanted characters to resonate deeply with the audience, to place the audience in a close proximity to them so they taste their journey and livelihood. I have always dealt with darker content in my work, although I have let go of the formality of dance. By that I mean the physicalization of the characters bodies are informed by their state of high or hunger for a high or burntout, there is always a connection to the drug, addiction. The body reflects that.

**Le OFFTA, pour vous, qu'est-ce que ça signifie? Quel rôle ça joue?**

The OFFTA offers me an opportunity to show this work to a broader community in Montreal and exposure to an international market. I think it's great that this subject matter be presented with the OFFTA.

**NGS (« Native Girl Syndrome »)**

Scénographie et Chorégraphie : Lara Kramer. Avec Angie Cheng et Karina Iraola. Une production de la compagnie Danse Lara Kramer. Au Studio du Monument-National, à l'occasion du OFFTA, les 29 et 30 mai à 21 h.



Karina Iraola