

# THE Arts

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## DANCE REVIEW

### *Japanese and American Impressions of Isolation*

By JOHN ROCKWELL

The two short halves — 20 minutes and 25 minutes — of the dance program Thursday night at the Kitchen, repeated last night, made for a curiously harmonious pairing. Despite the cultural gulf between the Butoh-inspired Japanese duo before the intermission and the workaday natural movement of the American septet afterwards, they conveyed a similar mood of Minimalist isolation and anomie.

Put together, or “curated,” by the choreographer Yasuko Yokoshi, the evening offered Kakuya Ohashi and Dancers in the first half and a piece “constructed and directed by Beth Gill in collaboration with the performers” in the second.

“And dancers” meant, in this case, Mr. Ohashi and a woman named MiuMiu. His “Wish You Were Here” was a study in parallel detachment. She trudged on in her underpants and a T-shirt, stared at the back black-brick wall for a while, drank some water and ate a rice cake wrapped in seaweed, spat out the mess onto the floor and then spent the rest of the time contorted in splayed positions. At the end she cried/laughed and then trudged off.

Mr. Ohashi came on shortly after her entrance in stylish black pants and a black shirt and sat impassively in a folding chair, staring straight ahead. Gradually he began grimac-

Beth Gill/Kakuya Ohashi

Kitchen

ing, then slid off the chair, then stood up with the now-folded chair over his shoulder, then ran in place, grimly smiling and mouthing words.

After she walked off, so did he. Neither acknowledged the other’s presence at any time. All this supposedly reflected the aura of contemporary Tokyo, Ms. Yokoshi wrote in the program, and was accompanied by live electronic sound by a musician who calls himself Skank.

Ms. Gill’s “wounded giant,” in which she herself did not dance, offered seven men and women walking about glumly. The first one out, a woman toting an electric fan, proceeded to a side brick wall and stared at it for a while. The stage was gradually divided into sections by blue and white extension cords. Dancers walked about, slumped on the floor, lay there. Once a man lifted a woman, but the movement looked utilitarian, and everything else was floor-bound. There was soft steady-state sound from Chris Peck.

Mr. Ohashi’s piece had a little more incident, more overt contrast between the two dancers. But Ms. Gill’s purposeful blankness was at least conceptually intriguing, too, implying tension without really conveying it. Neither the Japanese nor the Americans appeared for a curtain call, and the audience filed out.