

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2002

**A Silent Solo
In Colorless Space***Xavier Le Roy
The Kitchen*

Xavier Le Roy has worked with several sacred monsters of modern dance, among them Yvonne Rainer and Jerome Bel, who is, like Mr. Le Roy, a leading French dance experimentalist. But Mr. Le Roy is a somewhat stealthier iconoclast. Trained as a biochemist, he approaches dance intellectually, but with a wry humanity in "Self-Unfinished," a solo he created in collaboration with Laurent Goldring and performed on Wednesday night.

The hourlong piece demands much of its audience. It is performed in silence. No coughing, sneezing or program riffling here. The setting is a dazzling white space that is empty except for a white table and a chair. Various things almost happen, including contact with the back wall and the turning on of a boombox at the edge of the stage. "Self-Unfinished" is a distillation of possibility.

The solo begins amusingly with Mr. Le Roy, dressed in a shirt, pants and sneakers, sitting at the table. He begins to tilt and bow, and crook his arms slightly and jerkily, escalating gradually into an upright stance and robotic forward and backward walks. His moves look propelled by snorts and other odd noises that he makes with utmost seriousness and concentration, sounding like a small boy imitating cars and sirens.

Calmly and neatly, Mr. Le Roy seems to divide himself in half for a charmingly awkward duet by tugging at a stretchy dress that he wears under his shirt. His skirted torso suggests the lower body of a female dance partner. Later, fully nude, he suggests other characters and situations.

On his way out, Mr. Le Roy bends down and finally turns on the boombox. There is no curtain call. Instead, he hovers in the lobby afterward.

Rigorously simple and wildly imaginative, "Self-Unfinished" is an invigorating theatrical experience.

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The New York Times