

Rehearsal Notes...
by Claudia La Rocco

It's so dark in here. These dim overhead lights, and the witchiness of what happens onstage—women crawling, one shrouded, a black ghost, Molly oscillating her pelvis in a slow sexual grind. The low hum of voices, the catlike crawl. Gillian, Jennifer and Nicole reach Rebecca, in the audience. Molly still is onstage, head thrown back, pelvis figure-eighting. The women hum, louder. Luciana sits in the audience, still, concentrating. Rebecca is lifted. Ritual. What the crowd can do that the individual cannot.

Ummdiyaaaaoniaaa.

The quartet falters, falls, dissolves into giggles. The spell is broken. The witches reconstitute themselves as women.

They are talking about nudity—the vulnerability of it, J. not wanting to be naked here but not minding at NYLA. Thinking about how things transfer, how they don't.

The pounding is incredible—you don't see G. in the back of the theater from this angle, just this big slow rhythmic banging, and it then becomes uneven; meanwhile J. and M. are oscillating and repetitively boring into these slow, sexual grinds. And just this cavern space—there is something really violent and menacing. This cave-like maw in the back, and then these openings of the legs and hips ... It's now silent. Just the quiet rhythmic sliding of M on the floor, her feet and legs circling. And now N. and G. crawling out slow, N. in a black shroud

They reach the others, rise and circle, R's head falls back, they nuzzle, her mouth open she sinks back hinging somewhat. Now the women are silent, the audience chanting, even with three people chanting it's quite something

Quick rapid stamp of feet forward, G. amazing slow working into jeans, not that slow, really, what the body can do, and then the idea of form and function, that all of a sudden this movement of hips and pelvis and legs and belly can be the same thing, but utterly different, as those ridiculous ads for women trying to get into jeans. All the stupid ideas about us that are foisted on us...

Luciana says: "Everyone is in their own world, but there is a sound happening, you cannot not respond. It feels like something, like the feet. A very primal, obvious lifting of energy, the heat picks up. It might be that it's too obvious, but ..."

The super detailed slow slog—the work that has to be done . . . how many hours it takes, how fast those hours disappear, even when the work is tedious. “The boring stuff” I think someone said.

Now this crazy warm-up, feet rapid fire stamping forward with uneven downbeat, tiny steps, into this wide-legged stance and then finally the lift back up from that plié stance to feet together. Until—the structure collapses

“You just do it until you can’t get back up. And then—you fall,” luciana says, out of breath.

The impossible task of trying to swim after you’ve just fish-flipped across the floor.

Artists-in-Residence at Vermont Performance Lab, October 2013

luciana achugar, Hilary Clark, Nicole Daunic, Mike Kiley, Jennifer Kjos, Molly Lieber, Michael Mahalchick, Gillian Walsh and Rebecca Wender