

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: desire amaiya

a circular relationship between capitalism and death

by desire amaiya

our journey begins at the site of two yet-to-be-dug graves. performers Emmett Wilson and Rose Luardo start at an era i like to call, “hard boiled eggs and grapefruit,” where they reenact an audition; critiquing diet culture, white superiority in movement vernaculars, ageism, and the judgemental nature that has become widely accepted as foundational in auditions. through this, littered commentary prods into the high cost of large tombstones and i’m thinking about the inherent classism of tombstones, as the tallest ones i’ve ever seen surrounded us, and the tallest one in the cemetery is directly behind us. this becomes the center of the next scene.

the next era, “you want a job, slob?” comedically expresses the mysteries of the market: pay rate, responsibilities, the troubling normalcy of using chat GBT, and heavy cocaine use in corporate workplaces. they perform methodical, machinist sequences of movement, marking their first synchronized phrase work. they twist and tangle in two separate ropes, characterized by wiggles and shaking. importantly, this scene is placed on top of the grave of Edwin H. Fittler, whose company was the largest rope manufacturer in the united states in the 1800s. this union-sided white man supplied ropes to the country in a time where enslavement was rampant and racism a customary value. the audience is invited to fly across his grave, arms as wings, feet gliding across the grass.

they comment on gender, marriage, and sexuality in the “daddy’s titty” era, with the self referential Wilson as “daddy.” they get married and Luardo pleads for the children to be put in private school as Wilson stutters around an engagement. we see the engagement ring pop Wilson used to propose to Luardo become a pacifier, used to quiet them in a different way than it was used to quiet her. they pull her to their chest, eyeball to breast, and inquire, “what do you see, Rose?” to which she replies, “daddy’s titty,” as if it’s the most comforting idea in the world. she instantly relaxes. the similarities of marriage and the previous capitalist environment showcase how the ideologies of capitalism infect our lives: a fixation on classism in education, and an emphasis on broadcasting a happy picture of their marriage— rooted in the nuclear family structure. this gleaming against the gender debate seems to minimize the importance of daddy having a titty as daddy “having a 401k” becomes most vital.

the last era, “the undertaking,” marks what transcends the satire of the piece, reaching a truly tender place in the moments of a final duet to *lonely lonely* (by Feist). it ends with them burying themselves in the open graves, an ultimate commentary on the partnerships, and ideologies, as well as the stuff we acquire, not able to join us in death. i sense a larger message: to enjoy the nonsensical world and live a true life, because at the end of the day, nothing makes sense, and then, you die. but not before you “show fosse your pussy.”

[An Undertaking](#), Emmett Wilson and Rose Luardo, Laurel Hill East Cemetery, Philly Fringe Festival, Sept. 18-19.

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