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A well used hour

ABDUCTED BY THE MOUNTAIN

With: Johanna Hongell (choreography, dance and storytelling) Marlon Tepedino and Sazed Ul-Alam (music) Teater Bava (Rorsjogatan 26)

The performance is born out of a big calm, a mythical stillness. The two musicians take their places at the sitar and tabla, at percussion and guitar. Johanna Hongell lights candles.

The musical preludes go in the style of Ralf Lundgren, the echoes of nature synthesized. The nature mythological ballad begins in the form of the Nordic folk song, while the gentlemen Tepedino and Ul-Alam with their instruments connect to other cultural spheres. Johanna Hongell recites a rune song in Finnish and in Swedish, and the musicians give versions of the text in their own languages. The play is woven into a multi cultural net.

This crossing of borders becomes especially clear in Johanna Hongell's mime and dance, which is the furthestmost ingredient of the performance and which emanates from her skillfulness and knowledge of Indian forms of movement.

The story, about the young girl who goes into the mountain and is imprisoned by the King of the Mountain, is well known from several cultural spheres. Abducted by the Mountain is part of the medieval ballads of Sweden and is known in scriptures from the 1810s and forward. Johanna Hongell uses a version from Osterbotten with an unusually intricate melody, but she also lets the story continue in other tracks. She tells with words and song but also non-verbally, with pure body language.

There is a strong atmosphere emanating from her telling with the body: the graceful hand gestures, the stamping of the feet, the tinkling from the percussion instruments around her ankles, the rolling dynamics of the character.

But also the two musicians add important atmospherically value to the experience.

But in the middle of the strong atmosphere a question remains: What kind of story is told. Even if Johanna Hongell works with clear mimic means and complements with the help of words it is difficult to really catch the details of the myth. Here the individual imagination of the spectator has to help in the process.

The performance of Abducted by the Mountain takes one hour. A well used hour for the person who lets himself be taken in and keeps an open mind and gives Teater Bava the chance to recreate a mythical world with its exclusive scenic and musical method, at the small, small stage by the prosaic Rorsjogatan.

Carl Hakan Larsen