

EVIE DEMETRIOU

**The more you dance the more you get**

Museo Nacional de las Artes Decorativas Madrid

*The order of things is not a natural order against which nothing can be done, but a mental construct, a world view with which man satisfies his thirst for domination.*

*Synopsis of Masculine domination, Pierre Bourdieu*

*The more you dance the more you get compels, encircles, delimits. Therefore, let's limit ourselves to the language and its definitions.*

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**Human being.** Individual, indivisible unit endowed with soul and spirit whose mind functions rationally. **Objectification.** A human being used as a body that simply exists for the use and pleasure of others, i.e., reducing a human being to an object. **Object.** An inanimate material thing that can be perceived by the senses. **Senses.** The ability to perceive internal and external stimuli through the use of specific organs.

If we assume Kant's foundation of ethics, humanity should never be treated as a tool. Thus, in this work, the woman's body (human being) is the inanimate object (thing) that another perceives with his senses (seeking only his own stimulation). One touches, retouches, abuses, forces, violates, defiles the thing, but the thing is a human being, a human being that is a woman... A woman without eyes, with a red wig and feet on heels.

Through dance, this work denounces an inequality that is strictly linked to sexual objectification. By ceasing to solely exist for the other, by being only a body "made" to be looked at or used, it becomes a thing for the other, a passive and manipulated body in the hands of another active and manipulative body.

The dancer Evie Demetriou, through her intricate ideas, forces a display of the objectified female gender. She is an anonymous woman, but, as all that is anonymous, she is a crowd; her body could be that of any one of us. In the battered body-object and with that giant spider climbing her face, Demetriou tells us that sex workers are neither looked at nor have the right to look. They are simply used. Sexual exploitation explodes in the hall of the museum. An animated painting that reminds us of the commercialism that exists in every corner. That is the equation. Something in exchange for money.

It is very hard to see how a body equal to one's own is turned upside down when it is a commodity in other hands. Here, the forced use of women is at the mercy of another, dealing with the unkind side of sexuality, of gender. Drawing from lap dancing, the dancer transforms what initially appear to be sensual movements into mechanical movements devoid of reason and heart. From lap dancing we could go to belly dancing, although for most Egyptians, by all accounts, female dancers are no better than prostitutes. What initially appears to be a lap dance becomes, movement by movement, an aggressive activity where the woman's already objectified body exposes its marks of mistreatment.

There is no oscillation here between relative freedom and real coercion. It is all coercion, force and incoordination. Sexual objectification implies that one person acquires the role of a subject and the other the role of an object, and one cannot forget that this objectification is one of the many faces of symbolic violence, since, when the person becomes a simple object, dehumanisation becomes a great collateral damage.

A very educational work that can help young and not so young people to understand the distinction between concepts that are not only sexual, but also expand to all areas of inequality. We talk about the power that one exercises over another. About domination. It is strange how, through Demetriou's dance, one can experience abuse in the front row and witness a dance that denounces it.

After a physical exercise that reaches unsuspected limits, Demetriou ends up self-objectifying herself so that we can feel the objectification with the utmost clarity. After revealing her face, she takes command of the audience's pulse. She looks directly at it saying: my sweat is your sweat. I am not a thing, I am a person. I'm a woman with eyes, fingers, heart and feelings. Holding her gaze, she throws us the "Facts" in figures, the reality of the trafficking of women and girls. In the sea of data that falls into our hands comes the denunciation. The rejection in the eyes of the public mobilises us and we dial seven numbers on our mobile phones to report the abuse.

Congratulations to the provocateur Demetriou for bringing criticism to the dance and enshrouding the word *commercialism* with the word *dance*, participating and making us participants in a critical-feminist point of view.

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**Nuria Ruiz de Viñaspre**