

## Don't Judge the Dog by Its Fur

Elle Sofe Henriksen's *Don't Judge the Dog by Its Fur* opens with a confrontation of the female gaze. The three dancers move into problematizing the expectations of a female body with deliberate, bold leaps and harshly determined falling to the stage and rising powerfully. Impressively seeking the limits of the female body, just short of abusing it.

On the whole, the performance stayed within the existing and limited power structure of the gender duality, exchanging what is expect of a woman for what is expected from a man's physical engagement with the other and the world.

However, two actions moved beyond the traditional power structure into a new space of where the female body can go. In the first, Henriksen places the female body among the set designer, Joar Nango's stone installation turning backwards cartwheel-like motions over the stones. The dancer tossed her body across the stones, turning her body into a powerful, enduring form and floating figure. The second was an interaction between two dancers where one slapped and beat the other's body, highlighting the sounds different contact make with different parts: arm, chest or head. This was an exploration of the limits of the female body in sound and endurance, finding a space outside of assigned gender roles.

Vanessa Albury

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