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Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Cute and Awkward

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In CUTE & AWKWARD, Wojciech Grudzinski crafts a tender, quietly radical “solo for two” that understands change as something that happens not in language, but in the charged, fragile space between bodies. The piece leans into Annie Lennox’s melancholic No More “I Love You’s”—with its line “changes are shifting outside the word”—and asks what it means to inhabit that zone of the unsaid.

In this zone desire, fear and social pressure rub against each other without ever fully becoming speech. Onstage, Grudzinski and Lucas Lagomarsino meet on a dance floor that is also a negotiation table. The work takes “Fantom,” the first gay cruising bar in post-communist Warsaw, as a cultural reference point, and you feel that history in the texture of their encounters: tentative, hopeful, sometimes playful, sometimes edged with danger. The choreography oscillates between dream-like escapes into two-person intimacy and the magnetic pull of the surrounding world, which never entirely lets them disappear into each other.

One of the central questions—“How to disappear and at the same time remain present?”—is played out in their shifting proximities, glances and hesitations. Crucially, CUTE & AWKWARD follows “a gesture of being moved rather than of moving.” The emphasis is less on virtuoso steps than on micro-shifts: a hand that almost but not quite touches, a body that leans in and then tilts away, a shared rhythm that falters under an invisible external weight. You sense that the choreography is tracing what the two are subject to—the currents of atmosphere, memory, social norms—rather than what they decide in a straightforward way.

The dance floor becomes a field where pressures register: the pull of the crowd, the echo of cruising codes, the lingering residues of post-communist attitudes towards queerness.

The “cute” and the “awkward” in the title are not simple opposites; they are intertwined states. Moments of genuine sweetness—mutual swaying, soft laughter, small gestures of care—are frequently interrupted by awkwardness: misaligned timing, an overly long gaze, a sudden withdrawal. This oscillation gives the piece its emotional honesty. Grudzinski refuses both idealised romance and pure victimhood; instead, he shows how queer connection in a charged environment is constantly being adjusted, re-negotiated, patched up.

Lennox’s song, with its hypnotic refrain and circling harmonies, deepens this sense of suspended resolution. Its repetitions mirror the way the two performers return to similar configurations with slightly altered emotional textures, as if testing whether a gesture can feel safer, freer, more present the second or

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third time. The choreography's modest scale—two bodies, a floor, a set of references carried largely in tone rather than explicit narrative—becomes its strength: it allows small details to speak loudly.

Ultimately, CUTE & AWKWARD offers a finely tuned study of queer relationality under pressure, where the most radical act is perhaps not a grand proclamation, but the insistence on staying in the room—visible, vulnerable, adjusting—when both disappearance and over-exposure are constant temptations. It is a piece that lingers like a half-remembered night on the dance floor: full of almost-touches, half-spoken thoughts, and the quiet courage of letting oneself be moved.

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