

Moving Into Dance, Mophatong presents

INCEPTION

**Choreographed & Performed
by Sonia Radebe**

Design and Video Projection: Thabo Sebatilelo



Inception is choreographed and performed by Sonia Radebe, a young, talented and promising dancer/choreographer. **Inception** is an intensely physical and psychological journey into a female artist's psyche.

All living things have a beginning or what is perceived as its origin... The beginning of life, an idea, a journey or self realization. What if this changes? And if it does do we still call it what it originally began as? If something changes perhaps my name, friends, shape, sexual preferences, attitude, ideology or priorities - would society still regard me as... myself? After all is said, done and written would I still be called, a woman?

See the following link for a full set of images:

www.midance.co.za/inception_gallery.html

See the following link for a recording of the piece:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osLgp3VfciM>

Spatially surfing imagination

Iol: October 27 2011

By Adrienne Sichel

A full-length dance solo is a notoriously demanding art form. The dancer and choreographer, and often the dancer as choreographer, is given the licence and the freedom to express artistic visions, histories, dreams or desperations via aesthetic ruminations.

In a sense, the solo is the artist's manifesto underpinned by creative risk. South African dance repertory has been blessed with a number of important contributions to this genre, especially in the past five years. Sonia Radebe's complex and textured work (**INCEPTION**)— which debuted on the 2011 Dance Umbrella, toured to Germany with Dada Masilo's solo *The Bitter End of Rosemary*, last week — has evolved into a classic.

Before describing this sterling addition to the repertory it is important to look at Radebe's history. She began dancing in Soweto when she was eight years old as one of "Arcos kids" in White City.

Little Sonia was trained by the self-taught Griffiths Arco Matlala who proudly took his high energy young students every year to dazzle at Dance Umbrella's community dance showcase.

Her love of movement also took her to Jackie Mbuyiselwa Semela's children's classes at the DOCC/ YMCA in Orlando which led her to working with Soweto Dance Theatre.

At MIDM where she completed the teachers Training Community Dance Course in 2003, she has established herself not only as a principal dancer but as a teacher and choreographer. It would have been so easy to stay in her comfort zones. But she hasn't. In 2009, highly pregnant, she collaborated with the inimitable American arts activist Rhodessa Jones in the cells at Johannesburg's women's prison.

Last year the Afro-fusion queen, who was an associate choreographer for Sylvia Glasser and Lebo Mashile's *Threads*, donned a tutu for Dada Masilo and appeared in the (topless) corps de ballet in Masilo's profusely neo- African *Swan Lake*. That startling revelation of another facet of Radebe's professional persona was matched this month by her exuberantly dramatic performances in Mark Hawkins's *Hotel* and her commanding site specific *In & Out* installation performances in the streets of Diepsloot.



In contrast ***Inception*** (birthed in the dancer-choreographer-teacher's lounge) is an intensely physical and psychological journey into an artist's and a woman's psyche.

As the brooding sound of the Taj Mahal Travellers' music reverberates around the darkened Dance factory stage a presence emanates from the wings. The splash of light exposes a beautiful body which is lit from headgear. This is where the work's intriguing ambiguities and dualities begin.

The figure in the mining helmet/ straw hat/diving gear turns out to be a woman whose gazelle-like slow motion walking pulls her into a succinctly layered universe of experience.

Spasms of despair and pain wrack this travelling warrior who follows her own inner rhythms and emotions, which are translated into mesmerising undulations of the body and the heart.

Embellished by Suzette le Seuer's lighting (which is part of the text) and challenged by Nhlanhla Mahlangu's techno whale song score, this gloriously graceful being spatially surfs reality and imagination.

Finally, breathing and screaming, she runs on the spot, fighting her destiny.

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