

Dance review

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## **From Denmark, moves with meaning**

By [Thea Singer](#)

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Tim Rushton's dances strike like a thunderclap. The four pieces performed last night by his remarkable Danish Dance Theater messed with your head as much as they rattled your bones. But they also left you thinking: Rushton's is a world of kinetics in which not just gestures and steps, but dynamics, too, yield meaning.

### **DANISH DANCE THEATER**

Boston Debut, presented by Celebrity Series of Boston

At: Paramount Theatre, Boston, last night; program repeats tonight

The themes ranged from what comprises communication — words? movements? — to the meaning of death — for both the one dying and those left behind.

The impeccably structured “Shadowland” is a true multimedia production. It commingles video designer Signe Krogh's words projected on the floor, recited text from writers such as Allan Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, and jazzy sound from artists including Morphine and Maggie Estep & the Splitters.

To Ginsberg's recitation of everything “Holy! Holy!” (he blesses typewriters to Peoria), the six dancers plunge into deep squats, jut into side lunges, and amble by in slouchy walks. In an amazing sequence, the powerful Minna Berglund mouths

Kerouac's words while simultaneously "speaking" them in sign language and dancing full-out. It's like watching the art of communication in three dimensions.

"Kridt," the Danish word for chalk, glistens with a dark, oil-slick kind of beauty. A paean to the traces we leave behind, and the people left grappling with them, it opens with a dancer writing those famous words from Ecclesiastes on an upstage chalkboard: "A time to love, a time to hate, a time to mourn." Another comes along and wipes the slate partly clean. To the anguished strains of Peteris Vasks' music, the dancers tug at their clothes (we leave this world essentially bare, they seem to say), trace chalk outlines of the dying man, and stretch. In the riveting final scene, a column of golden sand pours from the heavens on the body of the deceased. It's as much an evocation of "dust to dust" as of his soul ascending.

The remaining two dances had their high points but didn't bring the catch in your throat of the other two.

"Enigma," with music by J.S. Bach and Mathias Fiis Hansen, sets moving bodies against their reflections in a silver panel above. The eight dancers come and go, as their smudged images follow them and evaporate. Issues of control abound as one dancer directs another, marionette-like.

"CaDance," with music by Andy Pape, features five men, and movement motifs tie together the action: a cupped hand plastered onto a face, a splat into a sit with one leg fore and the other aft. The intensity nearly makes you sweat. ■