

# Endless Medication

## Selected excerpts from the performance reviews

*Endless Medication* is a story about women, told and performed by two women looking for their own language, their own madness and their own truth in a patriarchal society. In this show Marijs Boulogne and Manah Depauw are looking for their own voice: a different way to talk about women, a creative approach that surpasses the endless discussion about female and feminine. They feel out the possibilities of an art that gives a hearing to the loud birth of this different voice. A voice that has often been oppressed and that wants to explore its own language and past. An artistic sound that is fundamentally different than that of the prevailing norms. An art that goes straight against everything logical and against all dogmas that exist about "so-called" reality. A voice that starts from an intuitive-intellectual search for "what is real?", "what is true?" according to "my" experience, based on a chaotic view on reality, a not-understanding, a not-knowing.

**Marijs Boulogne** (Mysticism, life-art and a different voice)

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Endless medication, created as a graduation project for the RITS in Brussels, stages theatre makers with strong personalities who develop an unusual logic, passionately and without compromising. Boulogne and Depauw make up a strong team that sucks the audience effortlessly into its unbridled – female – fantasy.

**Jury report**, Theater aan Zee, 2002

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For *Endless Medication*, Marijs and Manah have investigated other manifestations of these voices. They have looked into the mysticism and corporeal ecstasy of the Beguines of the Middle Ages and the contemporary practice of female 'performance art'. Each in their own way, these two manifestations come from attempts to express the unspeakable, to explore and provoke it in order to place the body in an extreme physical situation. "Life-art" or 'performance' tries to incorporate the unspeakable, chaos and reality in an ultimate confrontation between the idea and the body, non-movement.

Medieval corporeal mysticism seeks to attain what is ultimately unspeakable - God as absolutely nothing - by self-denial through mortification and asceticism. Denial and mortification are based on a dynamic combining the fantasy of innocence with the temptation of supreme harmony. Accompanied by acts of penitence, it is staged in a fantastical way, undertaken to intercept emotions barely conscious of guilt, uneasiness and indecisiveness.

The story of *Endless Medication* is inspired by the life of one of these great mystics, Saint Rosa of Lima (1586-1617). Plagued by a painful illness, this nun suddenly became lost in recurrent ecstatic visions. Impervious to the extreme pain, she lived as a penitent, praying and fasting in a cell in the middle of the family garden, continually insulted by all around her.

With Saint Rosa in mind, Marijs and Manah began writing and improvising and the story of Rosa was born, first as a performance artist then as a fakir. Given a Belgian tinge, this story is stained by Catholicism, troubled by erotic infantile-abominable fantasies and perturbed by tunes from a melancholic accordion.

**Kunstenfestivaldesarts**, Brussels, May 2005

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**Media:**

*It is remarkable that Boulogne and Depauw seem to follow an almost childlike logic, a logic that most people lose little by little in life, but from which emerges a poetic and plastic force that leads to strong images and strange associations. At a second level Endless Medication contains a lot of traces, which lead amongst others to the relation between femininity and (religious) mania. All this staged in the most personal and daring way.*

**Sally De Kunst** (Een klassiek parcours met weerhaakjes), **De Morgen**, 31st July 2002

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*The universe that is brought to life in Endless Medication is one of mythological dimensions, religious exaltation and laconic un-involvedness. The unsavoury abortion and mutilation practices cannot destroy its innocence. Boulogne is the Amélie Nothomb of Flanders, undoubtedly she will bring a wind of change into theatre.*

**Elke Van Campenhout** (Hellenimfen in Oostende), **De Standaard**, 31st July 2002

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*Endless Medication, a theatre piece by Marijs Boulogne under her own direction, is an eruption of vitality in transgression, a flush of religious and erotic hallucinations, which brings to mind the mythology of the insane. Shortly summarized: in this piece we experience how an insane virgin is impregnated by God. Far from intellectualism Boulogne has felt deep into her own unconscious and drawn richly from the tradition of innocence fancies from women's mysticism. It is daring, at times obscene, scatological and blasphemous, but always authentic and of a terrifying lightness. The delirium alternates with ballads on the accordion, which subsequently links the piece to Dario Fo and medieval mystery plays. The minimalist frame fits this genre of scabrous travelling theatre, with very functional stage props, like the watermelon representing the pregnant belly, which is then bloodily emptied out for the eyes of the spectator. The performer that mangles the Dutch language in the most erotic way (which enforces the idea of psychotic delirium) embodies the virgin that is impregnated by God in a very convincing, almost natural way. A moving, at times hilarious delusion. Mysticism of the flesh. The cosmos on the inside of cut open fruit.*

**Lieven De Cauter**, philosopher (A psychotic mystery play)

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**Lieven De Cauter**

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*This black-comedy seasoned with Flemish grotesque, offers to the viewer a powerful delirium pregnancy with an edge.*

**Katja Praznik**, (Ideology, pregnancy, children and excrement), **Dnevnik**, Slovenia, 15 October 2005

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*The lavish, grotesque performance hides a theatrical but yet discomfiting sharp of some elements of the female role. Not yet 50 years have passed since a young girl at home once ran away to the woods to be gone for months because she was terrified due to her first menstruation. It should also suffice to mention that eating disorders, at times life threatening anorexia, are increasing among young women. So the horror story of Buelens Paulina about young women, perverted Eros and mental illness unfortunately still is of current interest. So much of current interest many young girls should be allowed to see Endless Medication during school hours. Besides, the performance lasts exactly for a school class.*

**IdaLou Larsen**, *To kvinner* (Two women). IdaLou Larsen, <http://www.idalou.no>, Norway, 31 January 2009

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