Dancing Review

**ANECKXANDER – Alexander Vantournhout & Bauke Lievens: Jackson’s Lane, London, 22 January 2016**

Posted on January 23, 2016 by Gerard Davis

**The body bootiful**



Flipping heck. Alexander Vantournhout shows us what he’s made of in Aneckxander. Photo by Bart Grietens

This show was so odd that no-one realised when it had finished. Except that it hadn’t. After the bows **Alexander Vantournhout** carried on as people started leaving. I stayed for a good fifteen minutes afterwards and he was still skipping merrily around in circles. He might still be for all I know.

Within two minutes of the start of *Aneckxander,* Vantournhout was naked. His is a slender, wiry body with an elongated torso and a long neck, as referenced in the show’s title. To be frank, the first ten minutes or so was pretty dull as he ambled around the stage looking like various animals. This, however, was just the warm-up.

From the moment he tapped a plaintive little tune into a keyboard things got strange. He started to flip his body up and around the floor with some elegant twists and beautifully controlled handstands. Then he put on a pair of ridiculously high and heavy-looking platform boots and repeated the same series of flips and handstands. And did them just as well.

Then he popped on a pair of boxing gloves and really started throwing his body about – slamming it to the floor with frighteningly loud thumps. After fitting a giant ruff round his neck (and with the boots and boxing gloves still on) he whacked through a breathtakingly dangerous series of somersaults. He hit his landings with such force that our wonder in what he was doing was poisoned with discomfort over what damage he might be doing to himself.

There was humour too though, such as when he landed a huge jump with the splits and protected his private parts from certain ruin at the last second with a happily positioned boxing glove. There was also a neat trick with his tongue. The show ‘ended’ with him using the weight and height of the boots to lean into all sorts of impossible angles and positions.

*Aneckxander* created an extraordinary world all of its own. Brilliantly constructed its key was nevertheless a superbly measured performance from Vantournhout who’s an engaging character as well as a fine athlete. It was awkward, uncomfortable, funny, dangerous, baffling and completely compelling.

*Aneckxander* is part of the *London Mime Festiva*l and runs at **Jacksons Lane** in Highgate, London until **24 January 2016**. Tickets can be found on the Jacksons Lane website.

**Gerard Davis**

Source: <https://dancingreview.wordpress.com/2016/01/23/aneckxander-alexander-vantournhout-bauke-lievens-jacksons-lane-london-22-january-2016/>