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## Movement Complemented by Immobility and Silence

DANCE REVIEW

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A reasonable amount of fanfare usually greets the arrival in New York of a piece by Ohad Naharin, the artistic director of the Batsheva Dance Company of Israel and one of the most fascinating dancemakers on the planet. But “Kamuyot,” which he choreographed in 2003 for the Batsheva Ensemble, the company’s junior troupe, slipped quietly into the city over the weekend as part of the Israel Non-Stop Arts Festival at the Jewish Community Center in Manhattan.

That’s a pity. Although “Kamuyot” was apparently created with children and adolescents in mind (“For adults and kids ages 6 and up,” the program states), it is as inventive and complex as anything Mr. Naharin has ever conceived.

It is also very like other pieces he has made; the program credits his “Mamootot” and “Moshe” as sources. But “Kamuyot” is no less powerful for including the elements characteristic of Mr. Naharin’s work.

There are periods of immobility and silence. There are moments of intimate connection between the dancers and those watching. There are the blank-faced performers, whose movement becomes, over time, a source of profound emotional content. And there is the movement itself, sharply delineated, dislocated, explosive, liquid — an improbable blend of geometric lines and calligraphic curves, propulsive dynamics and mysterious gesture that is all Mr. Naharin’s own.

“Kamuyot” is intended to be shown in the round, without lighting or artifice, in settings like the gymnasium of the Jewish Community Center. The 15 dancers sit among the audience when they are not dancing to music that ranges from reggae to Japanese pop to Bach. Midway through the work they slowly file past the front rows, occasionally taking an audience member’s hand and gazing into that person’s eyes.

Like the sequence in which the dancers lead audience members into the center to copy their poses (I can testify that at the second performance on Sunday this was a lot of fun), the hand-holding and eye contact miraculously bypass contrivance and lead the spectator straight through the theater’s fourth wall and into a mysterious region of shared experience. “Kamuyot” declines to condescend in any way; both the dancing and the demands it makes on its audience are consistently complex. But it’s clear that the immediacy of this contact exerts a particularly powerful appeal upon its younger audiences.

Mr. Naharin’s skill at economically weaving these affecting moments into his dance text is remarkable. So is his ability to construct dances that deftly counterpoint groups and individuals. But due credit should go to the youthful members of the Batsheva Ensemble, who dance like demons and offer an honesty of response, to one another and to the audience, that is both moving and memorable.