

A DELICIOUS, WITTY, TONGUE-IN-CHEEK COLLAGE

DEN HAAG- The final event of the Holland Dance Festival took place on Sunday afternoon in the Korzo Theater. The celebration was called "'N BESCHADIGD SPROOKJE" (A Faulty Fairytale) and was a dance performance for all age groups by Arthur Rosenfeld. Based on Roald Dahl's poems about Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Snow-White and all those princes who are really toads, he has made a delicious dance collage for six dancers full of wit and big winks at the audience.

Whether or not the youngest members of the audience recognize all these figures is not the point. Much more important is that Rosenfeld has managed to get his six dancers to creep inside of children's skin, and has given them a great childlike voice. They react to each other in a spontaneous, humorous way: sometimes rough and cruel, at other moments poetic and tender, like children, who do that so much better than adults.

Finally do we see a performance in which the dancing does not go over children's heads, but plays with their imaginations. The princes croak like frogs and howl like wolves, and, when they have to kiss Snow White awake, end up choking themselves on her apple. The girls' jealousy turns nasty when Cinderella goes to the ball, and they continue arguing when the wolf wants to eat them. The reactions from the bleachers made it clear just how well their cries of help touched a chord with the audience. Another very telling moment is the game of charades in which Cinderella is transformed into a cat in heat who sees stars and gives princes asthma.

Highpoint

For me the highpoint was Juan Kruz Diaz de Geraio's solo with a glimmering synthesizer and a giant red balloon. It has been a long time since I have seen such an amusing, tastefully dressed and well-timed dance performance for children. Warmly recommended. After the performance, I saw a little girl dancing in the hall, who appeared to have just walked out of fairytale.

Eva van Schaik/TROUW/Amsterdam, 26 October 1993