

## **"Fish" – Review**

Divadlo Ponec, Husitská 24a, 130 00 Prague 3, +420 222 721 531, [www.divadloponec.cz](http://www.divadloponec.cz)

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**By Whitney Highum**

How do fish dance? Three members of the Provokátor team found out Monday evening at the opening of Divadlo Ponec's "Fish" or "Ryba".

"Fish" tells the story of the journey of a fish through the ocean. It transitions back and forth between the shore and the depths in the place that is called "the end of the world".

I couldn't seem to catch the genre of the performance - is it contemporary dance? gymnastics? a magic show? With elements of each, I often vacillated between feeling as though it were an opening to a circus act or a stirring portrayal of modern art. However, in any genre, I was not disappointed. The performers were flawless; effectively transitioning from involving the audience through an ongoing game of "BINGO" to withdrawing into a world of expression only possible through the channeling of real emotion into movement.

The tale of the fish was often difficult for me to follow - whether it be due to my lack of Czech language skills or simply that (I admit) I am an amateur theatre-goer. But I didn't fail to catch on to the charming mating dance, the dramatic death dance, and the feeling of a journey. The performance incorporated minimal props, but all were carefully planned out and used to their full advantage - some strikingly so; the wave in particular seemed almost ethereal.

I was shocked to find myself at times wanting to burst out laughing (but modestly chuckled out of self-consciousness), to wanting to bop around to the fun, latin-inspired soundtrack, to gasping with anxiety at the moments of crisis. Not to mention the brilliant "rolling credits" at the end!

In the case of "Fish", I was pleasantly surprised. I was not sure what to expect, and was far from disappointed by the enchanting story and the inspired performances of the dancers. I was not the only one - the audiences' applause demanded not 2, or even 3 rounds of bows - after 5 I lost count!

Choreographer & director: Lenka Bartůňková

Performers: Lenka Bartůňková, Johana Matoušková, Eliška Kašparová, Jan Březina, Karel Kratochvíl.