

***Six Sisters* by choreographer Lea Moro at Tanzhaus explores solidarity and friendship among women.**

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By Maya Künzler

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Female solidarity, female friendship, sisterhood — these are concepts that are becoming increasingly important, discussed, and demanded. Recently, a piece premiered at Tanzhaus Zürich that places these themes at its core. Titled *Six Sisters*, it is choreographed by Lea Moro, who lives in Zürich and Berlin. Dance critic Maya Künzler (MK) attended the premiere and was interviewed yesterday (November 5, 2024) by Annelis Berger (AB).

AB: You attended the premiere. How does Tanzhaus Zürich approach the theme of sisterhood or female friendships?

MK: Lea Moro's dance piece takes inspiration from Chekhov's play *Three Sisters*. However, Moro's version expands the sisters to six. In Chekhov's original, the three sisters are stuck in the Russian provinces after leaving Moscow, facing a harsh and desolate rural life, and clinging to dreams of a better future.

AB: So is the evening of dance a reinterpretation of Chekhov's play?

MK: Not exactly. Chekhov serves as the starting point for the evening, but the result is something entirely unique. The three performers in Lea Moro's piece, much like Chekhov's sisters, reflect on a better future. They quote passages from the original play throughout the performance. But the setting is quite different — an open stage that includes the audience. The spectators are seated on all four sides of the performance space, and the spoken lines are sometimes directed at them.

AB: They reflect on a better future — do they do this through dance, or how does it play out?

MK: Yes, they do it through dance, but I have to say that there's very little dancing during this one-hour performance. The three performers spend most of their time tying ropes together in a way reminiscent of macramé. They call it knotting, and as they do this, they describe the work in great detail — where and how they sit or lie, or even how the light changes.

*(Excerpt from the performance):* "With two large arm movements, we make a knot in front of our torso, the arms extending to the sides like taut ropes."

AB: That sounds like audio descriptions used in films for blind people.

MK: Yes, and that's exactly what it is. It's an audio description to help visually impaired audience members imagine what's happening on stage.

AB: I imagine that could also be interesting for sighted people, as it might shift their perception. What was it like for you?

MK: I found it fascinating. Choreographer Lea Moro uses the audio description deliberately as an artistic tool, creating a heightened awareness of the elements in the space through precise descriptions. Everything slows down and becomes more pronounced. Everyday actions that we usually take for granted, like tying knots, take on significance. In a sense, it draws attention to women's work. It's not just about three or six women — it's about all women. The performers literally and metaphorically weave connections and networks.

AB: You mentioned there's little dancing in the performance. Are the dancers still physically engaged? Do we still see a kind of physical artistry that one might expect from a dance performance?

MK: It is a physical act to tie these heavy ropes together. And there is a moment when the three performers break away from their concrete task. They translate the act of knotting into dance, becoming ropes themselves. They intertwine with one another and then disentangle, yet remain connected. This is what gives the performance its unique quality — they “network” in a powerful, consistent, yet gentle way, without pressure or rivalry. While Chekhov's sisters lose hope as the story progresses, *Six Sisters* is infused with a strong sense of possibility and progress — a work in progress, so to speak.