

“Along the White Line” A journey of faithfulness and departure

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A bird in a cage, a woman kissing frogs, two monkeys fighting in the sand, a Phoenician princess, a blue man and watermelons painted in white. These seemingly random and unconnected elements were all part of the performance that took place on the AUB-beach, on Friday, May 20.

Directed by German artist and choreographer Cornelia Krafft, more than 30 AUB students took part in this show that started before sunset and concluded at sunset. Based upon the ancient Greek mythology of Zeus' abduction of Europa, the story combined an old Greek fable with Arab wisdom.

The journey started on the

stairs leading to the beach tunnel. A man covered in white paint appeared, asking the audience to keep their phones shut. After crossing the CHSC tunnel, whose floor was covered in bubble-wrap, the spectators attained the beach, where a combination of mythic characters was dispersed on either side of a white line.

The spectators were an integral part of the show; as they walked along the white line, the characters came to life and the drama slowly unfolded.

The first figure to appear was a white statue gracefully standing on a pedestal, as if welcoming the audience. On the next “island,” the audience witnessed a martial arts fight in a pool of mud between two mon-

key-like figures. When human masks were placed on them, the fighting stopped. The following scene consisted of a tall black character, shouting in Arabic “I assure democracy.” Next to him, a veiled girl entirely covered in black was removing layer after layer of black clothing, to finally appear in white attire.

The performances were very abstract, leaving the art of finding meaning to the audience's imagination.

For instance, the woman sitting on the shore who was piling cubes that kept falling could be interpreted as a cross-reference to the myth of Sisyphus. In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was a king condemned to repeatedly roll a gigantic rock to the top of a hill, only to see

it rolling back down.

A wolf-like creature first appeared fighting and cursing. He was later seen peacefully blowing bubbles, his head resting on a woman's lap. According to Maria Ashkar, Studio Arts junior, “this transition from animal to man reminded me of The Epic of Gilgamesh. Enkidu, one of the characters is a man-beast, living in the forest with animals. Only after discovering the tenderness of a woman does he become a real man.”

The theme of faithfulness appeared in the final scene, where a bull and a Phoenician princess sat together on the shore, staring at the sea, reunited forever in the island of paradise.

The performance was accompanied by a lament sung by the AUB Choral So-

ciety, conducted by Thomas Kim. The singers were in black, wearing silver hats reflecting the sun.

After the performance ended, audience members and actors mingled around cupcakes and drinks. The public was generally enchanted with the presentation. Ramz Sahuri, a Sociology Junior, thought the performance was “very abstract and required a lot of imagination to understand. The scenery was beautiful, with the sunset and the sea.”

For those who missed the performance, a documentary about “Along the White Line” accompanied by performed fragments of the actual seashore event will be screened on June 20 at Theatre Tournesol in Tayyouneh.