

**From Les Trois Coups
April 15, 2011**

**Festival Anticodes n° 2 à Lyon (« l'Immédiat » et « Supernatural Wife »),
critique d'Élise Ternat**

Spotted during its previous appearance at Les Subsistances with “Comme toujours Here I Stand”, a beautiful tribute to Agnès Varda, Big Dance Theater gets down this time, with as much talent, to Euripide's Tragedy of Alceste. Destined to die soon, this young king gets the chance to have someone else take his place. His spouse sacrifices herself for him and in return, she demands that he be forever faithful to her. Once again, the New York company excels in being a Jack of all trades in this eclectic performance. Each medium is perfectly mastered. Dance, video, theater and song combine in making this tragedy a complete and hybrid form— the ancient aligns with modern technology.

The dance mat creates a central circle that evokes an arena. An alchemy arises from the mixing of dance performances that follow the traditional codes of Greek dance and a music with a metal vibrancy that reminds of some songs of the bands Korn or Ministry. These moments create a true catharsis and thus revive the power of antique theater. The characters' costumes are made of long skirts, aprons and baggy pants that mix Greek costumes and Celtic influences.

Big Dance Theater shows a great mastery in the use of video as well, with multiple interactions between what is happening on stage and what is being played on the different screens. The back screen has an oval shape and broadcasts images that at some point seem to be allusions to David Lynch's work, in particular the rolling out of a road that reminds one of Lost Highway or the red curtains of Twin Peaks, strengthening the mysterious and magic aspect of the story. Thus, taken in hand by the New York company, this antique tragedy is perfectly created so that it truly becomes a rock opera.

Two creations are sufficient to understand and legitimate the name of this festival – Anticodes – because by shaking up conventions and by transforming a classic of antique tragedy into a rock opera, a complete enfranchisement from the codes is happening here, with a memorable freshness and quality.