

Matthias Sperling: Klingon text from ‘Dances with purpose’ (2012)

12 dancers enter, all wearing curly black wigs and traditional English Morris dance costume. They perform an adapted, chaotic, Morris dance, while several performers move amongst/interact with the audience. All verbal communication is in Klingon. As the dance concludes, one performer, Michael Kitchin, emerges from the group to address the audience.

Klingon

English

[Michael:]

Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!

**nuqneH pe’el! nuqneH pe’el!
nuqneH pe’el!**

We bid each person welcome.

**maH Pong Hoch yoq nuqneH
pe’el.**

Join together with these fine young people in boldly hunting for Purpose.

**muv nItebHa' boq SaH chong
Qup Pe’ghot Dab jaq chontay
nej ngoQ.**

Join them in employing every cell of their being and the tools of those who came before us in hunting, here, amongst us, in this moment and the next, where the feast will be richest.

**muv chaH Dab lo' Hoch ‘ay’ –
chaj Porgh je 'oH lurDech vo'
chaH ‘Iv nung maH-pa' Dab
chontay naDev joj maH Dab
vam lup je 'oH veb nuqDaq 'oH
'uQ'a'
law' mIp.**

[The other dancers concur:]

Will be richest!

law' mIp!

[Michael:]

Behold as we use the helpful words of one who goes before us* to discerningly practice our relationship with space...

**legH vIS maH lo' 'oH QaH
mu'mey vo' wa' ‘Iv jaH maH-pa’
Dab Val qeq ma' DIvI' boq
logh...**

[Others, attending to space:] logh!	Space!
[Michael:] poH...	time...
[Others, attending to time:] poH!	Time!
[Michael:] jIH...	self...
[Others, attending to themselves:] jIH!	Self!
[Michael:] je Lath.	and other.
[Others, in a knowing tone, while attending to the audience and one another:] je Lath.	And other.
[Michael:] je muv maH Dab...	And join us in...
[All together, declamatorily:] ...Hochlogh pol 'oH laH Hagh wIj Ghaj Sagh Hech 'ach vIS bIH Hech ratlh Sagh!	...always retaining the capacity to laugh at my own serious intentions, even while those intentions remain serious!
The dance continues with a mournful folk song, sung by the dancers in Klingon, and concludes with a whirling Rapper Sword dance.	

'Dances with purpose' (2012), a work by Matthias Sperling, commissioned by EDge, the post-graduate company of London Contemporary Dance School/The Place.

Performers: Tim C J Chew, Jessica Hatfield, Erin Johnson, Michael Kitchin, Thomas Meyers, Simone Mousset, Alexandra Pickering, Jacquelyn Price, Elisabeth Schilling, Katie Webster, Nicole West, Gracelynn Whyte.

Text written by Matthias Sperling and translated into Klingon using klingska.org

*Deborah Hay (whose words are quoted, with gratitude, in the final two sentences).