

THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO THE CITY SINCE 2001

MARIA HASSABI: SoloShow



Maria Hassabi completes diptych at P.S. 122 as part of Performa 09

Performa 09

Performance Space 122

150 First Ave. between Ninth & Tenth Aves.

November 12-15, \$15-\$22

www.ps122.org

www.mariahassabi.org



(out of four)

Maria Hassabi premiered SOLO, the first part of her "dance diptych,"

September 29 – October 3 at P.S. 122 as part of FIAF's Crossing the Line

festival. Hassabi is now back at P.S. 122 with the second work, SOLOSHOW, a highlight of the Performa 09 biennial. In SOLO, the Cyprus-born, New York-based dancer and choreographer interacted with a Persian carpet to the sounds of ambient city noises. For the companion piece, Hassabi is already balanced on a hard black rectangular platform as the audience enters. Slowly she begins moving her limbs, twisting her body, and stretching her neck into almost impossible positions. As a small speaker emits tinny sounds as if someone is turning an AM radio dial, snippets of recognizable words and music creating a kind of background white noise, Hassabi makes her way around the platform with awe-inspiring skill and dexterity, her muscles and veins bulging as her body shakes, often held slightly above the platform by hands that leave disappearing sweat prints on the dark surface. Her elbows and knees form ninety-degree angles, contrasting with her spiraling torso and exaggerated back arching. Her arms become architectural struts supporting her upper body as her legs pivot out on the fulcrum of her pelvis and hips. As she twists, turns, and rolls across the platform, she occasionally dangles parts of her body over the edges, but she does so not to titillate the audience into fearing she might fall off but instead to demonstrate that there are no boundaries; in fact, when she does completely get off the platform, only to get back on it, the audience is forced to reevaluate the "rules" they had formed in their head. Whereas there seemed to be a limitless amount of things Hassabi could do with the comforting, malleable carpet in SOLO, she refuses to let the dour, unchanging platform limit her imagination in SOLOSHOW. Hassabi will be performing the forty-five-minute piece on November 13, 14, and 15 at 8:00, with Hristoula Harakas taking over on November 14 at 10:00 and November 15 at 6:00.