



House of The Double Axe - The Meeting of Two Worlds

By Nina Gram

House of the Double Axe (1998) can be described as a meeting between two contrasting worlds – a pop-world and a medieval universe. The former is defined by the music in the show, the Dicte songs, some neon-colored costumes, glittering miniskirt dresses, soap bubbles, and similar props. The medieval universe is expressed through the Latin texts and the illuminated tableaux on the stage floor that show old maps, ground plans for churches, and indefinable patterns. The contrast is also seen in the color polarization between the gray, silent woman who constantly moves at the brink of the illuminated square on the stage and dark, singing Dicte appearing in a square spotlight corresponding to the spot so familiar from traditional rock / pop concerts. These worlds are assembled not in a continuous narrative or narrative structure, as is often the case in the theater. Instead, it is precisely the absence of semantic content that appears striking in the immediate encounter with the performance. In this context, in particular the use of sound is interesting. The medium of sound, for example via dialogue, is a tool for the dissemination of semantic content and thus a factor in the performance's development. In *House of the Double Axe* sound initially has the opposite effect. The lines are presented as fragments constantly puncturing the possibility of context, and the Latin lyrics are also inaccessible. Yet formulated in sound, music, and speech a lot of content, moods, and information come across, which means that as spectators we can still relate to the performance, and that we can take something home with us from our meeting with *House of the Double Axe*: an expanded notion that theater can be an expanded understanding of what sound, music, and dialogue mean for our perception, and, finally, a greater understanding of our own perceptual apparatus and habits.

House of the Double Axe 1998 (Roberto Fortuna)