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It is so beautiful, vast and peaceful here (first diary entry on September,6)

My arrival in Montello felt like the proverbial slamming on the brakes of my usual life, and at the same time, a gift in the form of an infinitely wide space.

The first day: early in the morning, a little rabbit came onto the deck and gently drank the dew from the previous night. I watched it in awe and fascination. This little animal was so delicate and sensitive. Then I danced naked in the studio, searching, seeking but also driven, wildly and loudly, by my inner liberated spirits. Afterwards, I was drawn out of the studio onto the deck, where I continued dancing, feeling the wind on my bare skin and experiencing an irrepressible freedom under the vast sky! At lunchtime, I cooked myself a simple meal; the preparation of which was 'orchestrated' by countless desert flies. I spent the afternoon back in the studio, writing my planned book "Butoh - Between Worlds." In the evening, I enjoyed a wonderful sunset in all its colors and shades. I spent the following days in a similar way!

Actually, why was I here?

In 2010, I spent a few days here on this land with the director of the Montello Foundation and two other artists; at that time, we were still sleeping in a tent, and the house that is now complete was only in the planning stages. During those days, we



Montello Diptych I (detail), 2025, Photo: Stefan Hagen

danced several sessions at different locations, which were documented with photos and videos. Now, 15 years later, I felt the desire to once again, alone and with more time, engage in dance with the harsh nature of the cold desert highland. The goal was to explore how my Butoh dance might change in this environment over such a long period of time, *Create a new and unknown Butohbody* – that was my wish.

To trace these changes, I created a video logbook that contained a dance from each day, filmed indoors and outdoors. Afterwards, I watched the individual videos, and YES, significant changes in the dance sessions could be seen based on the set timeline. This was certainly also due to the ever-present nature, which is - thanks to the clever architecture of the house/studio - visually integrated into the rooms. Even when I danced inside the studio, my eyes were simultaneously taking in the outside nature. My physical antennae immediately registered any new weather phenomena, and I once interrupted my flow because, after a long dry spell, it began to rain continuously for three hours. Over time, this pattering rain became a physically perceptible event, which in turn influenced my repertoire of movements. However, the successive changes in the documented sessions were also related to the conscious decision to stay in solitude. By temporarily retreating to this region, where all distractions and civilization are far away, silence and an intense perception of nature came to the fore. Here, the physical and spiritual were able to move closer together in my own perception, and I automatically experienced a natural spirituality that connected me directly to the space, the animals and the plants here. The earth was so close that my bare feet could touch it constantly, allowing the rest of my body to connect with it organically.

We are nature.

