

**THE BALLET OF THE
OPÉRA DE LYON:
A BALLET OPEN TO THE WORLD**

As soon as Louis Erlo became director at Opéra Nouveau de Lyon in 1969, he gave dance a place at the heart of the organisation. For the first time, an opera house outside of Paris devoted entire events to dance and its ballet company.

Ever since, it has been committed to open its doors to any source of inspiration, be it a stream or a river, close or far, harmonious or stormy. Particularly invigorating for the Ballet was the opening to the world through its first directors, the Italian Vittorio Biagi, then the Yugoslav Milko Šparemblek and the New Zealander Gray Veredon, who were all at the forefront of the avant-garde dance of the time.

But, as of 1985, it was Françoise Adret who gave the company a resolutely plural turn. 'Mère Adret' as her dancers affectionately called her, had an eye, the gift of the gab and a large address book. Above all, Françoise had travelled widely and her mission was to give the troupe a national and international dimension. She built up a repertory based on a twofold spectrum: great international choreographers, who at the time were still up and coming (including the likes of Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, Nacho Duato or William Forsythe) and an opportunity given to "young French dance" (Mathilde Monnier, Maryse Delente, or Angéline Preljocaj).

Most ballet companies have had their magic moment—in Lyon, it was a veritable lightning bolt that was to change the course of history. In 1985, no one imagined that a magical doll (from Maguy Marin's production of *Snow White*) would present the company with a world tour with no fewer than three trips to the USA in 1987 alone... Three years later, Lyon did it again with Angéline Preljocaj's famous rereading of *Romeo and Juliet*—a new challenge (and the choreographer's first important commission), and another memorable piece. The die was now cast...

When, in 1991, Greek ballet-master and director Yorgos Loukos succeeded Françoise Adret, the extremely open-minded choreographic palette was a trend that was set and continues to this day. Maguy Marin, who became resident choreographer, set off even more sparks when, in 1993, she inaugurated the new Opéra de Lyon



Image: Bertrand Stoffleth

with an offbeat version of *Coppélia* set in a popular bar in the suburbs of Lyon.

The company continually looks back to the history of dance, at the contemporary scene, and at what it will be tomorrow. Together with a plethora of styles and choreographers of different ages, origins and backgrounds, the strength of the Lyon Opera Ballet comes from the very absence of any particularity—unless it is just that: the highly diverse repertory as sought out by Yorgos Loukos. It goes without saying that it attracts a novelty-loving public and today's young dancers, who like and are used to changes of style. Even the teachers are in constant motion, changing every month, so as to avoid any routine.

Today, the company has a repertory of 117 pieces, over half of which have been new commissions. A list of the choreographers who have worked in Lyon is a reminder of the importance of the pioneers of new French dance (Mathilde Monnier, Jean-Claude Gallotta) and its young cousins (from Jérôme Bel to Christian Rizzo, Alain Buffard or Rachid Ouramdane). It also means meeting the guiding lights of modern American dance (Trisha Brown, Merce Cunningham, Lucinda Childs), from post-classic energy (William Forsythe, Benjamin Millepied) to the "next wave" (such as Otto Ramstad). It means exploring Belgian musicality (De Keersmaeker) Swedish theatricality (Mats Ek), Czech lyricism (Jiří Kylián), or Israeli power (Ohad Naharin, Emanuel Gat). It means getting to work with new talents (Tânia Carvalho, Alessandro Sciarroni, Marina Mascarell...). It means...being at the confluences of dance that has never been more open to the world.

Ariane Dollfus

Lyon Opera Ballet

Trois Grandes Fugues

OPÉRA DE LYON / General Director SERGE DORNY
Ballet Director JULIE GUIBERT

GRANDE FUGUE - PIECE FOR 12 DANCERS

Choreography Lucinda Childs
Assistant Caitlin Scranton
Music Beethoven, Die Grosse Fuge, Op. 133
Recording Lyon Opera Orchestra – Bernhard Kontarsky, Conductor (2016)
Stage design, lighting and costumes Dominique Drillot
Created by the Lyon Opera Ballet on November 17, 2016

DIE GROSSE FUGE - PIECE FOR 8 DANCERS

Choreography Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker
Music Beethoven, Die Grosse Fuge, Op. 133
Recording Debussy Quartet (2006)
Production Jean-Luc Ducourt
Sets and lighting Jan Joris Lamers
Costumes Rosas Company
Created by the Rosas Company at the Halles de Schaerbeek in 1992

GROSSE FUGE - PIECE FOR 4 FEMALE DANCERS

Choreography Maguy Marin
Music Beethoven, Die Grosse Fuge, Op. 133
Recording Quartetto Italiano 1968, 1969 ©1996, Philips Classics
Lighting François Renard
Costumes Chantal Cloupet
Created by the Maguy Marin Company at the Espace Jean Poperen de Meyzieu on March 17, 2001

Ballet Masters Pierre Advokatoff, Jocelyne Mocogni, Amandine Roque de la Cruz
Technical Manager Rudy Parra
Stage and Tour Manager Alexandre Mesta
Carpenter Christophe Reboul
Light Manager Yohann Fourcade, Jérémy Steunou
Sound Manager Jean-Pierre Barbier
Dresser Chantal Frick-Cloupet
Physiotherapist Pierre Michou-Saucet

The Opéra National de Lyon is supported by the Ministry of Culture, the City of Lyon, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes council and Lyon Metropole.

Evening performance danced by Maeva Lassère, Edi Blloshmi, Julia Carnicer, Tyler Galster, Chiara Paperini, Raúl Serrano Núñez (6 Mar) Eric Sosa Sanchez (7 Mar), Kristina Bentz, Marco Merenda, Jacqueline Bâby, Giacomo Luci, Katrien de Bakker, Léoannis Pupo-Guillen

Matinee performance danced by Elsa Monguillot de Mirman, Albert Nikolli, Anna Romanova, Roylan Ramos, Lore Pryszo, Samuel Pereira, Coralie Leveux, Alvaro Dule, Caelyn Knight, Yan Leiva, Abril Diaz, Paul Vezin

Evening performance danced by Kristina Bentz, Coralie Leveux, Tyler Galster, Adrien Delépine, Raúl Serrano Núñez, Albert Nikolli, Léoannis Pupo-Guillen, Paul Vezin

Matinee performance danced by Caelyn Knight, Kristina Bentz, Ricardo Macedo, Adrien Delépine, Raúl Serrano Núñez, Albert Nikolli, Léoannis Pupo-Guillen, Edi Blloshmi

Evening performance danced by Jacqueline Bâby, Dorothée Delabie, Merel van Heeswijk, Elsa Monguillot de Mirman

Matinee performance danced by Julia Julia Carnicer, Coralie Leveux, Merel van Heeswijk, Elsa Monguillot de Mirman



Image: Bertrand Stoffleth

DANCE / FRANCE

Lyon Opera Ballet

Trois Grandes Fugues

THREE GRAND FUGUES

Three great women of dance confront Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, the final movement of his Quartet No.13 in B-flat major. The "now free, now elaborate" score – in the words of the composer – was finished in 1825, a year before his death, when he was already profoundly deaf.

The controversial score can be read in very varied ways, as demonstrated by the interpretations of the three legendary choreographers Maguy Marin, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker and Lucinda Childs, whose diverse talents make this an unforgettable evening of exclusively female work.

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All photos:
Bertrand Stofleth

A highly nuanced *Grosse Fuge* by Maguy Marin

Originally created for four dancers of the company in 2001, Maguy Marin's *Grosse Fuge* entered the repertoire of the Ballet of the Opéra de Lyon on 12 February 2006. This piece is deployed like a constant wave of backward and forward flows. Four bright red flames spring up, leap then flatten out, the better to occupy the air and absorb the space. The dance is precise and rigorous, written and calculated and, despite everything, imposes itself as a life force, a joyful, despairing freedom. As the choreographer has written: "an imbrication is embodied between the rising life-force of the female being and the state of enthusiasm and despair of this music. Caught in this teeming effervescence, we advance in an unbridled race". Without any respite, the dancers inhabit the music, each following their own score, drawing the public into a swirl of forbidden sensations.

Born in Toulouse, dancer and choreographer Maguy Marin studied classical ballet at the Toulouse dance academy. She then joined the Strasbourg Dance Company and later Mudra, Maurice Béjart's multi-disciplinary school in Brussels. In 1978, she founded the Ballet-Théâtre de l'Arche with Daniel Ambash, which was to become the Compagnie Maguy Marin in 1984. The Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne followed in 1985: its unremitting artistic work spread worldwide.

In 1987, Marin's encounter with musician-composer Denis Mariotte was the starting point of a decisive partnership, which broadened the scope of experimentation. Then in 1998, the compagnie moved into a specially designed building for The Centre Chorégraphique National in Rillieux-la-Pape, suburban Lyon, where the notion of the space as a place for exchange and cohabiting took hold. A space to strengthen the capacity to bring forth "those diagonal forces resisting oblivion" (a quote by philosopher Hannah Arendt).

In the year 2011 saw a remodelling of the framework in which the company's reflection and achievements unfold. After the intensity of the Rillieux-la-Pape years, there emerged a need for a new phase in Toulouse from 2012, however without a permanent workspace for the company. This space was finally found in Ramdam, in January 2015, triggering a new, ambitious project: the creation of RAMDAM, un centre d'art.

MAGUY MARIN

Choreographer

A grand, precise, male fugue by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker

Included at the start of the piece *Erts* (1992), this *Grosse Fuge* has been through several versions. The first one for six dancers, the second for nine and the third, the one that entered the repertoire of the Ballet at the same time as Maguy Marin's take, for one female and seven male dancers.

This *Grosse Fuge* is ardent, corresponding to the frantic, precise dances of the Belgian choreographer. The choreographic composition is parallel to the musical composition, exploring the accents of the score, experimenting with movement of all sorts, through repetitions, changes of rhythm and intensity, and modifications of flows and levels. Thus, a dance is born which is physical and ludic, martial and vulnerable, as can be seen in the rolls executed in black suits which caress the floor, before picking up again the élan of vertiginous pursuits.



ANNE TERESA DE KEERSMAEKER

Choreographer

In 1980, after studying dance at Mudra School in Brussels and Tisch School of the Arts in New York, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker (b. 1960) created *Asch*, her first choreographic work. Two years later came the premiere of *Fase, Four Movements to the Music of Steve Reich*.

De Keersmaeker established the dance company Rosas in Brussels in 1983, while creating the work *Rosas danst Rosas*. Since these breakthrough pieces, her choreography has been grounded in a rigorous and prolific exploration of the relationship between dance and music. With Rosas, she has created a wide-ranging body of work engaging the musical structures and scores of several periods, from early music to contemporary and popular idioms. Her choreographic practice also draws formal principles from geometry, numerical patterns, the natural world, and social structures to offer a unique perspective on the body's articulation in space and time. In 1995 De Keersmaeker established the school P.A.R.T.S. (Performing Arts Research and Training Studios) in Brussels in association with La Monnaie De Munt.



A devilishly classical, arachnoid fugue by Lucinda Childs

In a set of grey shades, which change with the lighting, the minimalist American choreographer delivers a sparse ballet, like a beach cleansed by the rising tide. Six academically dressed couples, who are just as grey, dance in front of a structure of luminous lace, which is as much reminiscent of a mashrabiya as it is of fretted Indonesian shadow puppetry. While the lightness of the dancing irresistibly brings to mind her masterpiece, *Dance*, what is striking is its purely academic vocabulary, made up mainly of *déboulés*, arabesques and other classical steps, coming from a choreographer who is better known for her affiliation with the avant-garde. What emerges is a purity that illuminates this decidedly polysemous score with a different light...

LUCINDA CHILDS

Choreographer

Lucinda Childs discovered her passion for dance and theatre at a very early age. After studying with Merce Cunningham, she joined an artists' collective based at the Judson Dance Theater in Manhattan. In 1963, she choreographed her first work: *Pastime*. She became a leading figure in the U.S. postmodern dance movement, opening her own company in 1973 and developing a signature minimalistic style, based around simple, natural movement. In 1976, she choreographed and danced in *Einstein on the Beach* (Philip Glass and Bob Wilson). *Dance* (1979, Brooklyn Academy of Music) was her first major group ballet. It was followed by collaborations with other artists: *Available Light* (1983), with sets designed by Frank Gehry and music by John Adams; and *Mayday* (1989) with Sol LeWitt. She created *Premier Orage* for the Paris Opera Ballet and *Perfect Stranger* (1990) for the Lyon Opera Ballet. In the opera world, she has collaborated notably with Peter Stein on Moses and Aaron and Luc Bondy on *Salomé* and *Don Carlos*. Lucinda Childs opened, with the help of private investors, a company, now closed, to perform her best-known works: *Einstein on the Beach*, *Available Light* and *Dance*. In 2016, the Paris Autumn Festival presented a retrospective of her work.

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