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Daniel Linehan/Hiatus,
Alain Franco & Jean-Luc Plouvier/Ictus
Un Sacre du Printemps

23>24/03/2018 • 19:00 + 21:30 • Kaaitheater
dance/music • 45 min.

EXTRA Meet Linehan and Franco on **Friday 23/04**, in a post-performance discussion after the show of 21:30.

UN SACRE DU PRINTEMPS

For this ambitious group choreography, Daniel Linehan is delving into Stravinsky's masterpiece *Le Sacre du Printemps*. He has opted to stage the beautiful version for two pianos, which will be performed live by Jean-Luc Plouvier (from Ictus) and Alain Franco. Rather than focusing on the story of a young girl who has been selected to be sacrificed dancing herself to death, Linehan engages in an exploration of musical structure. As a viewer, you will be seated near the thirteen dancers and the pianists. This proximity results in a collective shared energy. You can hear the dancers' breathing and feel the air brush past your face. The performers must find a way to keep moving to the changeable patterns of the musical composition. 'How should we deal with this ever-changing world?' seems to be the score's imperative question.

- Dancer and choreographer Daniel Linehan left the United States in 2007 to study at PARTS. He has appeared at the Kaaitheater over the last few seasons with *Zombie Aporia*, *Gaze is a Gap is a Ghost*, *dbddb*, and *Flood*, among others.



INTRODUCTION BY DANIEL LINEHAN

Linehan, 2015.

I can find no relevance in the story of Le Sacre du Printemps (The Rite of Spring) as it is traditionally understood: a community demanding that one of its members be sacrificed. When I listen to the music, I don't hear this tale of sacrifice; I don't hear death. I hear vibrancy, a word which could also be defined as aliveness.

Asked what he loved most about Russia, Stravinsky once replied, 'The violent Russian spring that seemed to begin in an hour and was like the whole earth cracking open. That was the most wonderful event of every year of my childhood.' There are many sharp interruptions in the score of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, which seem to recall this 'violent Russian spring', as the music leaps from one motif to the next, often without apparent transition, without the sense of progression or resolution found in more traditional music. Many commentators have made a link between the 'violent' cuts in Stravinsky's score, and the violence that would erupt one year after the Parisian premiere of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, when Europe would be ravaged by the outbreak of World War I.

In his book *Violence*, Slavoj Žižek's proposes that in addition to the visible forms of violence (war, shootings, riots), there is an invisible form of violence inherent to the status quo. When the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems is left to follow its inevitable course without interruption, this constitutes a form of invisible violence against certain groups of people. For example, many of those in the world who live in abject poverty have almost no chance to escape from disease, malnutrition, and early death under the current global distribution of wealth and power.

In light of this concept of the invisible violence of the status quo, we can consider Stravinsky's score and its many jarring interruptions to be a form of anti-violence, an attempt to disrupt the invisible violence of smooth and efficient flow, helping the listener become accustomed to the idea that in his music, there is no status quo. What if the course that we are on can be interrupted at any moment? The perpetuation of the current state of affairs need not follow its unrestricted progression until we arrive at a truly violent resolution. The possibility of interruption – that is what is still exciting about Stravinsky's score, one hundred years after the fact. It's a music that constantly cuts the flow of one musical pattern in order to start something new, again and again. It is a score that is filled with beginnings.

In this choreographic interpretation of the score, *Un Sacre du Printemps* is a dance with a multiplicity of beginnings. The dancers repeatedly let go of one state of being so that they can find a way to continue in a new state of being. Many other dances are built on patterns that gradually evolve, but here the dancers must find a way to keep going even though there is no dominant underlying pattern. They must continue, and yet they cannot depend on a sense of continuity. Instead, they must cultivate their ability to keep confronting a situation even when there is no ongoing predictable pattern.

We can see that these principles contain relevance for many of us today. We do not live in a time of stable patterns. We cannot predict what is coming next. There are multiple destabilizing factors outside of our individual control: changing climates, unreliable currencies, biogenetic manipulation, etc. How do we keep finding new strategies to deal with rapidly changing conditions? How do we find continuity in a time that valorises the act of breaking from the past? How do we create communities without a sense of shared history? Are we just living together as a disconnected group of atomized individuals, each of us treating ourselves as a special 'chosen one'? Maybe what we will have to sacrifice is our own sense of the importance of our individuality.

THREE QUESTIONS TO ALAIN FRANCO

Interview by deSingel, 2015. English translation by Hiatus.

As a musical dramaturge, you played an important role in the creation process of *Un Sacre du Printemps*. Could you tell us how the collaboration came about and how you worked together?

The collaboration started in the frame of a workshop that Daniel led with final year students of P.A.R.T.S in 2013. That was also the anniversary year of *The Rite of Spring*. We made a thorough analysis of the score but also discussed the different versions (Nijinsky, Béjart, Bausch, Le Roy, etc.). Stravinsky was a dispassionate mind, rather opposed to the idea that music would mean something outside of itself at all. But his so-called objective approach has led to scores (in addition to *The Rite of Spring*, among others *Petruschka*, *the Firebird*, *Symphonies for Wind Instruments*, *Oedipus Rex*) that have been strongly stimulating a new theatricality and physicality and, in that sense, had an important influence on the development of the performing arts.

Daniel Linehan is very aware of a legacy that is loaded with a multitude of views on that composition. At the same time, we also started with a blank slate to only follow the composition processes in the score. We came up with some remarkable ideas, in particular that the designation of the chosen person does not necessarily represent a dramatic moment, and that, consequently, consideration can be given to the proportionality between the decision-maker and the executor. Everyone can determine that this is a statement about a policy of division.

How do you, as a contemporary musician, see Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*? What is the value of the work for you?

The Rite of Spring remains unique in music history. Stravinsky has succeeded in creating a new aesthetic, and at the same time in achieving its apotheosis: sketch, fragment, and development have the same status. On the one hand, this meant a radical rupture with a tradition that he did not particularly appreciate - I am talking about the German tradition - on the other hand he made a phenomenal synthesis of what was happening right before the outbreak of the First World War.

The industrialization on a large scale, the urbanization and the birth of the modern metropolises, the end of a craft-based society, the emergence of a 'technical' human being, and the alienation that arose as a result, these are but a few elements with which Stravinsky was not only faced, but also managed to deal with creatively. I think it is mainly the realization that a composer can literally and figuratively deliver 'ground breaking' work that continues to resonate today. The idea that an artist (as is the case for Picasso, whom Stravinsky is often and rightly compared to), creates new foundations, and speculatively deals with what the course of history makes available as 'the digestion of Time'.

You collaborate regularly with choreographers, including Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker. What is it like for you to work as a musician on a dance creation? And how do you see Daniel's approach to choreography?

My interest in dance and choreography can be regarded as a logical continuation of my reflection on performing arts and on the concept of 'performance'. The birth of the dance - I am talking about the fully fledged and autonomous art domain, not ballet - is not much older than *The Rite* (1913). I note that dance formulates important propositions about the development and renewal of principles of language and political models. It has a practice of permanent research on collective action. In that sense, dance is also a testimony to acceleration and civilization. Descartes once speculated about the separation of body and mind; today it is recognized that that this separation is non-existent - which does not mean it is renounced. Daniel Linehan, in any case, works on that ontological shift and succeeds in developing an aesthetic that raises questions about the origin of subjectivity, about autonomous action and the status of decision-making, the level of responsibility that lies in a gesture, actually the total body as a variation of totality.

BIOGRAPHIES

Daniel Linehan, Hiatus

Linehan's choreographic work is intent on softly obscuring the line that separates dance from everything else. He approaches performance-making from the point of view of a curious amateur, testing various interactions between dance and non-dance forms, searching for unlikely conjunctions, juxtapositions, and parallels between texts, movements, images, songs, videos, and rhythms.

Linehan first studied dance in Seattle and then moved to New York in 2004. As a performer, Linehan worked with Miguel Gutierrez and Big Art Group, among other artists. His own choreographic work first came to public attention in 2004 with the solo *Digested Noise*, presented in Fresh Tracks at Dance Theater Workshop. In 2005 and 2006, he worked with a team of four other dancers to create *The Sun Came* and *Human Content Pile*. Linehan was a 2007-2008 Movement Research Artist-in-Residence. In 2007, he premiered the solo *Not About Everything*, which has since been presented in over 75 venues internationally.

In 2008, Linehan moved to Brussels where he completed the Research Cycle at P.A.R.T.S. in 2010. His works created in Belgium include *Montage for Three* (2009), *Being Together without any Voice* (2010), *Zombie Aporia* (2011), *Gaze is a Gap is a Ghost* (2012), *Doing While Doing* (2012), *The Karaoke Dialogues* (2014), *Un Sacre du Printemps* (2015), *dbddb* (2015), and *Flood* (2017).

Linehan also developed *Vita Activa* (2013), a participatory project for 40 unemployed people culminating in a final public performance, co-directed with Michael Helland; the book *A No Can Make Space* (2013) which gathers and organizes the traces of Linehan's ten years of choreographic practice, created in collaboration with graphic designer Gerard Leysen (Afreux); and *untitled duet* (2013), a work streamed live as part of the Performance Room Series at Tate Modern in London.

Linehan is regularly invited as a guest teacher and mentor at dance institutions worldwide. Linehan was Associated Artist at deSingel International Arts Campus (Antwerp, BE) and New Wave Associate at Sadler's Wells (London, UK), and he was Artist-in-Residence at the Opéra de Lille (FR).

Since 2015 Hiatus is supported by the Flemish authorities. Daniel Linehan is Creative Associate at deSingel International Arts Campus 2017-2021.

Alain Franco

Alain Franco was born in Antwerp, and currently lives in Brussels and Berlin. He graduated in Piano and Music theory in Belgium and Tel-Aviv and obtained a post-master's degree in 20th century Musicology at IRCAM-EHESS in Paris. His genuine interest for contemporary music and art - both as pianist and conductor - resulted primarily in collaborations with leading ensembles and musicians in Europe, among others Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt), Ictus ensemble (Brussels), the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Liège, the Lyon Opera Orchestra, La Monnaie Chamber Music Ensemble (Brussels), and the Oh ton-ensemble (Oldenburg).

In addition to that – and as an aesthetic and artistic extension to his practice - he progressively developed an original and overall reflection on representation and performance. This led to artistic collaborations with performers, choreographers and theatre directors such as Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, Meg Stuart, Thomas Plischke, Katrin Deufert, Jan Lauwers, Romeo Castellucci, Isabelle Schad, Benjamin Vandewalle, Arkadi Zaides, Daniel Linehan, and Karim Bel Kacem.

Alain Franco is currently lecturing at and curating the P.A.R.T.S Research Department (Brussels). He is a regular guest lecturer at among others the HZT Berlin and works as musician, performer, and music dramaturg on several stage and choreographic projects.

Jean-Luc Plouvier

Jean-Luc Plouvier was born in 1963. After his studies in Piano and Chamber music at the Conservatory in Mons, he concentrated primarily on 20th and 21st century contemporary music. As a soloist he created works by Thierry De Mey, Brice Pauset, and Philippe Boesmans. As a chamber musician, he worked with Bureau des Pianistes, in duo with Jean-Luc Fafchamps, with the Ictus quartet, and currently with the Ictus ensemble of which he is also artistic coordinator. Jean-Luc Plouvier is part of the crew of the Brussels Cinematheque, where he accompanies silent movies. He taught 'Music and Culture' at the Institut Marie Harp in the frame of a musicotherapy programme. He wrote music for stage productions by choreographers such as Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, Nicole Mossoux, Iztok Kovač, and Johanne Saunier.

credits

A choreography on the music piece *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky (version for two pianos), played live by Alain Franco and Jean-Luc Plouvier (Ictus).

choreography Daniel Linehan | **music** Igor Stravinsky (version for two pianos) | **music performed by** Alain Franco, Jean-Luc Plouvier (Ictus) | **dance & creation** Jeanne Colin, Andrés Déri, Alexandra Dolgova, Erik Eriksson, Taha Ghauri/Daniel Linehan, James McGinn, Charles Ngombengombe, Krišjānis Sants, Christoffer Schieche, Hagar Tenenbaum/Anneleen Keppens, Roman Van Houtven/Víctor Pérez Armero, Katie Vickers, Tiran Willemse | **musical dramaturgy** Alain Franco | **styling** Frédérick Denis | **lighting** Elke Verachtert | **sound** Jeanne Debarsy | **production** Hiatus (Brussels, BE) | **in collaboration with** P.A.R.T.S. (Brussels, BE) | **tour planning** Belgium Hiatus | **international tour planning** Damien Valette (Paris, FR) | **executive production** Caravan Production (Brussels, BE) | **coproduction** deSingel International Arts Campus (Antwerp, BE), Opéra de Lille (FR), Festival de Marseille (FR) | **with the support of** the Flemish authorities | **thanks to** Vincenzo Casale | **Daniel Linehan/Hiatus is** Creative Associate at deSingel International Arts Campus (Antwerp, BE) **and supported by** the Flemish authorities 2017-2021

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