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PRELUDES

A diptych in situ for 20 dancers

Sylvain Emard DANSE

PRELUDES

The origin of this project is **Rhapsodie**, a stage piece for 20 performers inspired by the ritual aspect of dance and its multiple manifestations. The current crisis has traced new contours for these bodies in movement. The world première was to have been presented at Danse Danse last November, but has been postponed until the 2021-22 season.

In response to the pandemic the choreographer conceived Preludes as a performance event, harmonized overtures that announce Rhapsodie, using current constraints to explore the very essence of the piece, now deeply shaken. The 20 intertwined, dancing bodies of Rhapsodie, often clutched in an embrace, now avoid coming into physical contact. Like a sudden, unexpected change of course, Preludes have propelled the choreography into new territories.

Prelude #1 – The Circle

The dancers' movements unfold in ambulatory fashion to form a big circle in the public space. The circle represents the cycles of nature. It evokes ritual, a spirit of communion, unity. Prelude #1 reconsiders the notion of ritual in a context where the very idea of people gathering together is being called into question. – 23 minutes

Prelude #2 – The Square

A symbol of a fixed, balanced world, the square is a human invention, an attempt at stabilization echoing the urban world around us, where the right angle reigns unopposed. The square suggests more regulated, more orderly behavior than the circle, even if the two forms are, in a way, complementary. With Prelude #2, the quadrilateral comes to life, pulsating in the heart of the townscape. – 22 minutes

Clip - Preludes

CREATIVE TEAM

Choreographer Sylvain Émard

Dancers Rodrigo Alvarenga, Sophie Breton, Charles Cardin-Bourbeau, Matéo Chauchat, Félix Cossette, Marilyne Cyr, Marie-Michelle Darveau, Kimberley De Jong, Kyra Jean Green, Janelle Hacault, Sara Hanley, Jee Lam, Christopher LaPlante, Alexandre Morin, Erin O'Loughlin, Nicolas Patry, James Phillips, François Richard, Cara Roy, Camille Trudel

Rehearsal coach Daniel Villeneuve

Original score Martin Tétreault & Poirier

Costumes Marilène Bastien

ON TOUR

In this period of physical distancing, it is more than ever apparent that dance responds to a fundamental, irrational human need, and its roots extend back to the dawn of humanity. Art is necessary now, more than ever. Like the rhapsodes of ancient Greece, the dancers reach out to their fellow citizens by performing in public spaces. Structured so that the audience encircles the dancers, these Preludes reveal a dance that is decompartmentalized.

Presented as diptychs or individual pieces, these in situ shows are adapted and transformed according to the constraints of the presenter and the host city. Sylvain Émard will direct the rehearsals. For example, the number of dancers can vary and feature the Montreal original cast or local dancers.. In addition, local teams will also have access to tutorials and a notebook outlining the choreography. Flexibility is particularly important in times of crisis (and post-crisis).

This touring structure is inspired by **Le Grand Continental®** and its multiples offshoots. That gigantic contemporary line dance piece has been bringing hundreds of local amateur dancers together all over the world since 2009. Preludes are available for touring.

PARTNERS

Danse Danse is an invaluable partner in Rhapsodie and Preludes. The creation of Preludes was made possible thanks to support from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

It must also be mentioned that Preludes exists thanks to Rhapsodie, which received support from the National Art Centre's National Creation Fund, the Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie, the Centro de Producción de Danza Contemporánea (CEPRODAC) and the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y de Literatura (INBAL) in Mexico. The piece also benefited from an exploratory artistic residence at FringeArts in Philadelphia.

SYLVAIN ÉMARD DANSE

A prolific and internationally respected artist, Sylvain Émard created his own dance company Sylvain Émard Danse in 1987, quickly establishing a reputation for a very original style. Highly theatrical at first, his work soon evolved into a more formal approach to dance. Ever since Ozone, Ozone (1987), his first solo, up to Preludes (2020), he has been exploring the territory of human nature through the force and strength of the body. His repertoire now includes over thirty original pieces that have had a resounding impact all over the world.

Renowned for his refined style and precise movement, his presentation in 2009 of Le Grand Continental® at the Festival TransAmériques must have come to some as a surprise. Inspired by line dancing and contemporary dance, this unique piece has featured 3,000 local non-dancers in over 20 editions across Canada, the United States, Mexico, South Korea, New Zealand, Chile and Germany, attracting some 120,000 spectators. In September 2017, **Le Super Méga Continental** boasted 375 dancers in Montreal to celebrate the city's 375th anniversary in monumental fashion.

Sylvain Émard's unique style has led to invitations to work as guest choreographer in theatre, opera and cinema. These collaborations include his joining forces with Robert Lepage in 2005 to work on the opera 1984 by Lorin Maazel, presented at Covent Garden in London and La Scala in Milan.

Sylvain Émard has received numerous prestigious awards, such as the Jean A. Chalmers Choreographic Award. Sylvain Émard is also co-founder of the Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique.

The dancing body does not lie,
and truth is too rare to be ignored.

Sylvain Émard

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