

A NEW OPERA FOR DIDO

MARZENA KRZEMINSKA



Amor me Mess



GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

A New Opera for Dido by Marzena Krzeminska is a 'pop' version of Henry Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas* for 4 eccentric characters.

The creative process will integrate a precise study of the original Baroque composition of the opera: dramatic declamations, short arias, polyphonic songs, traditional English songs and comic elements. Those forms will be reinterpreted: the dramatic declamations will take a form of «slam», the traditional song might be coming not only from England but also from Eastern Europe, short arias might be performed as pop songs. We will try to keep comic elements.

Marzena Krzeminska:

I am interested in many different styles of singing. I have already worked on aria 'When I am laid' from the opera of Henry Purcell, when I created a solo called «5-7-5 Haiku» in 2012. I have learnt some of traditional polish and ukrainian songs, I sang in a gospel choir and recently I was initiated to katajjaq, a practice of inuit throat singing. I am interested in a spiritual aspect of the act of singing together. I am also interested in the transformation of the bodily sensations, the change of one's state and a way of perceiving the self with different ways of breathing and singing. I would like to counterpose those different styles of singing, to understand what image they bring, what kind of association. Gospel songs, traditional songs, pop songs, punk songs – each of those styles has a cultural background, a way of positioning oneself towards the World.

In this project I want to focus more on

questions on 'queer'. What is 'queer' nowadays?

Queer culture and gay culture flirts with kitsch, a form despised by dominant aesthetics. However, kitsch has taken an important place among the general public, Would not it be interesting to look for a new side of queer? Originally meaning 'strange' or 'peculiar', queer is a term to be used to describe everybody and everything that is out of norms and escapes easy categorization. I would love performers of *New Opera for Dido* to be queer, looking magically strange and peculiar.

With this in mind, we will begin with the collection of resources: *Dido's* last tune, Sylvia Plath's poem *Crossing the water* and other texts dealing with the theme of nature, disappearance and sex. I began by taking up the challenge of classifying identity through the «biological genre» or the «cultural genre». However, a simple verbalization of thoughts is not enough, it should still be passed through the body. We will therefore work with «biological femininity» and with different women, examining their attitude towards their own body. We will examine the attributes of femininity interpreted by a man, in the spirit of play with the femininity of Drag Queens. However, this will not prevent us from asking more universal questions about the essence of humanity, nature and disappearance. I am convinced that we should not determine everything by the lens of sex and gender, whether it is «biological» or «cultural». This creation is an opportunity to take an interest in the sensual potential and the richness of the expression of a sensual body. The study of sexuality, sensuality and sensitivity is part of the body experience that can be expressed in different ways through dance, and this is not just about dances from pop culture.



LIST OF 3 ISSUES THAT I WISH TO AVOID IN MY WORK

Superficial process

I would like to avoid the promotion of the superficiality of contemporary culture by involving myself in the process that pretends to talk about something without taking responsibility to genuinely question the reality we are living in.

Easy to consume product

I would like to avoid preparation of 'easy to consume' performance based on one idea, sort of 'jumping piece' or 'shaking piece', that would be extremely simple in the form and very explicit in the description. I think that we live in a very complex world or maybe better, that our experience of life might be very complex and it should be expressed in the complex form. The ambition to create such a form includes taking risk of entering into the chaos and finding the way back out of it, enriched by this journey.

Writing a smart text with a quotation of famous philosopher and creating a movement-image illustration to it, as many choreographers do, doesn't interest me. I have been taking my time to understand and to learn what are the processes, that one has to pass through in order to create a performance where we can find new energies, learn from our bodies, let the emotions speak...Well, I keep learning.

False democracy or a collective work, where nobody wants to take the responsibility

I have participated recently in the collective project. It was not initially a collective project, but a workshop given by the artist in collaboration with an art theoricien and a curator. During the week a workshop became somehow a collective project because the original leaders where smoothly passing the work to their assistants (that didn't have the same qualifications as original leaders, neither the desire to fully take responsibility for the group and the work) and there was some openness towards 'sharing their

practices' among the participants. I was observing how easily people were giving up on the initial agreement (which was a work with a famous artist) and adapting to the situation of 'sharing practices', that except the word 'practice' and a duration time, didn't consist of research question, clear intention or embodied practice! We were all getting bored, following the rules, that we have created for ourselves, fearing to break the atmosphere of a social politeness. I definitely don't want people to be rude. But the artistic process is usually a collective process with shared responsibility. I would like to avoid a situation where one (usually

a choreographer) is put in the position of 'knowing everything' and the dancers are put in the position of 'the puppets in her hands'. It is important for me that each participant of the project keeps his 'identity' and any dancer is not treated as a 'carte blanche', that choreographer can project on, whatever idea she wants. Creation is a process of negotiation between the choreographer and the dancers, between all the participants of the project. The aim is to find new agreements, new ways of organizing within the group, to find new theatre, new rituals and new ways to achieve katharsis.

BIOGRAPHIES

Marzena Krzeminska

Artistic director

Choreographer and performer, graduated from SNDO (School for New Dance Development) in Amsterdam and Theatre Academy in Warsaw.

She lives in Brittany (France) for few years now.

She teaches in the Musée de la Danse and participates in their different projects, like Fous de Danse or Permanence, where she performed in Kiss, a performance choreographed by Tino Sehgal.

Her solo work „Too Beautiful” was presented in march 2017 in the frame of Festival 360 degrés in Saint-Brieuc, France.

She is currently working on a new project „Nature & Queer, a new opera for Dido” which is an extension of the research of her first solo «5-7-5 Haiku» created in the 2012 in the frame of the solo project program in Poznan.

Marzena worked as a performer with such choreographers as: Deborah Hay, Benoit Lachambre, Rob List, and as assistant to the choreographer with Maria Hassabi in New York and Jeanine Durning in Amsterdam.

She collaborates with choreographer Simon Tanguy and Compagnie Propagande C. She danced in a piece choreographed by Simon Tanguy People in a Field. She also worked as dramaturge for the piece Championnat that he created with circus artists, the duet Digging with the British collective NORA and his last piece I Wish I Could Speak in Technicolor.

In 2017, Simon Tanguy and Marzena Krzeminska have co-signed „Cabaret précaire”.



Simon Tanguy

Performer

Choreographer and dancer, based in Rennes. Since the age of 18 he has been creating his own shows within a youth circus company that performs in the street and traditional circuses. In 2005, after ten years of practising judo, he obtained a philosophy degree in Rennes. Having taken up contemporary dance, he enrolled at the Samovar School in Paris, training in physical theatre and clowning, where he developed his ideas around burlesque, buffoonery and grotesque performance. In 2011, he graduated from the School for New Dance Development in Amsterdam. He explores motion intensity, extreme emotional states and the shifting musicality of an alert body. He also adds to contemporary dance an energetic background that derives from theatre and he transposes into the former the wildness and openness of clowning.

He has worked both as a dancer and performer for international choreographers: Boris Charmatz, Maud Le Pladec, Deborah Hay, Ame Henderson. His solo “Japan” received the ITS choreography award 2011. The trio «Gerro, Minos and Him», made in collaboration with Aloun Marchal and Roger Sala Reyner, received 2nd prize Danse Elargie in 2010 at the Théâtre de la Ville-Paris and the theaterhaus prize Stuttgart in 2013.

In 2013, the company Propagande C was created in Saint-Brieuc. Three pieces got produced since then : « People in a Field » (2014), « Inging » (2016), « I Wish I Could Speak in Technicolor » (2017). In Brittany, Simon Tanguy collaborates frequently with the Musée de la Danse, with the choreographers Marzena Krzeminska, Éliisa

Le Merrer and with others partners from the department of Côtes d'Armor.

His piece always features a flow (bodies, qualities, words) to which the performer has to surrender. Passing through all this multiplicity of states, Simon Tanguy reflects on the unpredictable velocity in which we are living.

Karolina Kraczkowska

Performer

Dancer and performer, she graduates of the Linguistics Institute University of Warsaw and of the Laban Center in London.

Member of the Polish Dance Theater from 2004 to 2007. As a dancer, she participated in Jasmin Vardimon's productions as well as Fin Walker, Michael Keegan-Dolan, Kirstine Kyhl Andersen, Sally Marie, Christoph Winkler, Riccardo Buscarini, Leila Mcmillan, Janina Rajakangas, Ben Riepe, Marten Spangberg and Tino Sehgal.

Currently associated with the community of Warsaw experimental choreographers of the younger generation, she participated in the productions and research of Magdalena Fowler, Alex Baczyński-Jenkins, Renata Piotrowska, Ramona Nagabczyński and Marysia Stokłosa. She holds a Danceweb 2016 Scholarship with Tino Sehgal and Louise Hojer as mentors.

Katarzyna Sitarz

Performer

She studied Slav philology at the University of Wrocław and graduated from the CODARTS / Rotterdam Dance Academy in the Netherlands, where she trained in dance and choreography. In 2007, for her show *When the last candle is blown out*

... she received the public award of the 8th Solo International Dance Festival in Budapest and the double performance and choreography prize at the 11th SoloDanceTheater International Film Festival in Stuttgart. Holder of a grant from the Dutch Ministry of Culture and Education (Huygens Program), the Polish Minister of Culture and Education (Young Poland), and several times from the Mayor of Szczecin. In 2010, she was nominated for The Rolex Mentor and Protected Arts Initiative (USA / Switzerland), where she had the pleasure of knowing and working with the American choreographer Trisha Brown. Holds a DanceWeb scholarship at the ImPulsTanz Festival in Vienna.

She cooperated with, among others, La Fura dels Baus (ES) and Kud Ljud (SI) Maas Theater in Rotterdam, Rui Horta (PT), Cecilia Moisis (FI / NL), Marta Ziółek (PL), Marysia Stokłosa (PL) or improvisers Andrew Morrish and Lisa Nelson (United States). In 2016, as part of a Solo Project residency program in Poznań, she created a Per-sone solo, which also initiated in-depth research into the relationship between body and voice movement in contemporary choreography.

Vera Mantero

Outside Eye

Studied classical dance with Anna Mascolo and danced in the Gulbenkian Ballet between 1984 and 1989. Mantero started choreographing in 1987 and, since 1991, has been presenting her solo and group work all over Europe, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Canada, Singapore, South Korea and the USA.

Of her solo work mention goes to "Perhaps

she could dance first and think afterwards" (1991), "Olympia" (1993), "one mysterious Thing, said e.e.cummings*" (1996), "What can be said about Pierre" (2011), "The Caldeirão Highlanders, exercises in fictional anthropology" (2012) and "Rich bread" (2017). Her group pieces include "Under" (1993), "For Boring and Profound Sadnesses" (1994), "Poetry and Savagery" (1998), "k() su'p t i s () pa i kō t j u doj mu'du i ō'dul " (2002), "Until the moment when God is destroyed by the extreme exercise of beauty" (2006) and "We are going to miss everything we don't need" (2009).

In 2013 and 2014 Mantero created the performance installations "Shadows on offer" and "More or Less, but Less than More", this last piece presented in two different versions: occupying the whole space of the auditorium - seating and proscenium - in 2013, and at urban vegetable gardens created for the final presentation of the project in 2014. "More or Less, but Less than More" was created in partnership with Culturgest and Maria Matos Municipal Theatre under the scope of the Create to Connect project financed by the European Commission. These projects, as well as the artist's new creation "The Clean and The Dirty", premiered in April 2016 at the Maria Matos Theatre in the framework of the cycle "The Three Ecologies" co-commissioned by Vera Mantero with Mark Deputter and Liliana Coutinho, clearly reflect the choreographer's concerns for fundamental issues such as the environment, economic sustainability, social cohesion and inclusion, and Citizenship.

Her artistic work has been recognized with institutional prizes such as the Prémio Almada (Ministry of Culture - 2002) or the Prémio Gulbenkian Arte for her career as

creator and performer (2009), as well as through initiatives such as the retrospective organized by Culturgest in 2009, entitled "Month of March, Month of Vera", or the Portuguese representation at the 26th São Paulo Art Biennale (2004) with a work co-created with the sculptor Rui Chafes, entitled "Eating your Heart Out". The influent Brazilian newspaper O Globo elected "The Caldeirão Highlanders, exercises in fictional anthropology" as one of the best 10 dance pieces presented in 2014.

The city of Fundão dedicated a year to the artist (April 2015- April 2016) with the project "Passage #2", which included the presentation of several performances, the work with local school students and the recreation of "Eating your heart out" for a treetop walkway in Fundão. This new version, entitled "Eating your heart out in the trees" was presented in 2016 at the Mermaid Garden in Coimbra, for which Rui Chafes created a new sculpture.

Since 2014, Vera Mantero integrates, together with Jorge Andrade and Pedro Penim, the cast of the Portuguese version of "Quizoola!" by Tim Etchells/Forced Entertainment.

Vera Mantero was invited by Boris Charmatz to be part of "20 Dancers for the 20th Century", a living archive of the defining choreographic solos of the 20th century, that took place at Tate Modern (London) and at the Paris Opera/Palais Garnier (Paris) in 2015, and at the Staatsoper, in Hannover (Tanzkongress), and at the Museo Reina Sofía (Madrid), in 2016.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR : MARZENA KRZEMINSKA

PERFORMERS : MARZENA KRZEMINSKA, KAROLINA KRACZKOWSKA,
KATARYNA SITARZ AND SIMON TANGUY

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