



# SPEED OF LIGHT

**ANDONIS FONIADAKIS**  
*SELON DÉSIR*

**WILLIAM FORSYTHE**  
*IN THE MIDDLE,  
SOMEWHAT ELEVATED*

**ALEXANDER EKMAN**  
*CACTI*



SUPPORTED BY



NATIONAL TOURING PARTNER



SUPPORTING EDUCATION



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

# Introduction

Speed of Light, three captivating international contemporary classics by Andonis Foniadakis, William Forsythe and Alexander Ekman, is a programme that the Royal New Zealand Ballet is immensely proud to share with New Zealanders. All three works are new to the RNZB's repertoire, and it is a privilege to bring them to audiences in Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin this summer – a high energy start to the RNZB's performing year.

## Contents

---

CURRICULUM	3
------------	---

---

<i>SELON DÉsir</i> – NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE	4
---	---

<i>IN THE MIDDLE, SOMEWHAT ELEVATED</i>	9
---	---

<i>CACTI</i> – NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE	13
-------------------------------------	----

---

### ACTIVITIES FOR SPEED OF LIGHT

<i>SELON DÉsir</i>	18
--------------------	----

<i>IN THE MIDDLE, SOMEWHAT ELEVATED</i>	20
---	----

<i>CACTI</i>	21
--------------	----

### PHOTO CREDITS:

*Selon désir* and *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* photos by Bill Cooper  
*Cacti* photos by Rahi Rezvani, courtesy of NDT2

# Curriculum

In this unit you and your students will:

- Learn about the elements that come together to create a theatrical ballet experience.
- Identify the processes involved in making a theatre production.

## Curriculum links in this unit

### Values

Students will be encouraged to value:

- **Innovation**, inquiry and curiosity, by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively.
- **Diversity**, as found in our different cultures and heritages.
- **Community and participation** for the common good.

### Key competencies

- **Using language, symbols and text** – Students will recognise how choices of language and symbols in live theatre affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond.
- **Relating to others** – Students will develop the ability to listen actively and share ideas regarding theatrical ballet performances.
- **Participating and contributing** – Students will be actively involved in their cultural community, understanding the importance of creative environments.
- **Thinking** – Students will reflect on their own thinking and learning after the personal experience of attending a live theatre show.

## Learning Objectives for Levels 7 & 8

### Level 7 students will learn how to:

- **Understand dance in context** – Investigate and evaluate the effects of individual, social, cultural, and technological influences on the development of a variety of dance genres and styles.
- **Develop practical knowledge** – Extend skills in the vocabulary, practices, and technologies of selected dance genres and styles.
- **Communicate and interpret** – Analyse, explain, and discuss aspects of performance and choreography in a range of dance works.

### Level 8 students will learn how to:

- **Understand dance in context** – Investigate, analyse, and discuss the features, history, issues, and development of dance in New Zealand, including the contribution of selected individuals and groups.
- **Develop practical knowledge** – Extend and refine skills, practices, and use of technologies in a range of dance genres and styles.
- **Communicate and interpret** – Critically analyse, interpret, and evaluate the artistic features and the communication of ideas in a range of dance works.

## NCEA

*Speed of Light*, and the use of this resource, is ideal for NCEA Dance teachers and students who are learning to analyse and appreciate a dance performance.

# SELON DÉsir

## New Zealand Premiere

CHOREOGRAPHY AND DESIGN

**Andonis Foniadakis**

COMPOSITION AND SOUND DESIGN

**Julien Tarride**

LIGHTING DESIGN

**Jason Morphett**

REHEARSAL ASSISTANT

**Harris Gkekas**

The Royal New Zealand Ballet first performed *Selon désir* in November 2015 as part of a contemporary mixed programme presented in Leeds, Canterbury, London and Rome.

### Andonis Foniadakis



Andonis Foniadakis, native to Greece, began his dance training at the local dance school in his hometown, prior to studying at the State Dance School of Athens.

A recipient of

the prestigious Maria Callas scholarship, he continued his studies in Rudra Béjart Lausanne, in Switzerland, until 1994.

During his successful dancing career, Foniadakis performed with four major companies: Béjart Ballet Lausanne (1994-1996), Lyon Opera Ballet (1996-2002), Saburo Teshigawara / Karas Co. (2004), as well as with his own dance company, Apotosoma.

As a freelance choreographer he has collaborated with many dance companies around the globe; National Ballet of Greece, Sydney Dance Company, Lyon Opera Ballet, Ballet Jazz de Montreal, Maggio Danza, National Dance Company of Wales, Dansgroep Amsterdam, Cia Sociedade Masculina Brazil, Helsinki Dance Company Finland, Washington Ballet and Copenhagen International Dance amongst others.



Immensely versatile, in addition to creating and performing, Foniadakis established his own dance company Apotosoma in 2003, collaborated as a movement coordinator with Darren Aronofsky on his new film *NOAH* and has been commissioned to choreograph for three major opera productions.

*“Selon désir [‘according to desire’], premiered by the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève in February 2004, attempts to tap into the structures of the opening choruses of both the St Matthew and St John Passions for the inspiration of its movements and interactions. The idea of Heaven and Earth, as well as the pictorial representations of faith, martyrdom, agony and ecstasy found in Renaissance paintings, brings me to juxtapose the elevation of the heavenly spirit, synonymous with lightness and fluidity, with the earthly energy represented by the bodies intertwined with each other, and perhaps even with visions of Hell.”*

— ANDONIS FONIADAKIS

## Music

### Julien Tarride



Born in France in 1979, composer and visual artist Julien Tarride studied at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Lyon, and at the Conservatoire de Musique de Lyon,

winning the Prix Linoissier, the school's first prize for fine art, in 2002. From 2004 – 2006 he undertook additional studies at the Studio National des Arts Contemporains du Fresnoy in Tourcoing. His works combine performing arts with technologies such as music and computer-generated scores as well as video and 3D computer-based images, and his music is mostly inspired by classical and contemporary music, French *musique concrète* and American repetitive music.

Since 2002, Julien Tarride has worked as a composer and stage designer for the choreographer Andonis Foniadakis, with whom he has a long-standing and close working relationship.

## Composition

*“The recordings of the St Matthew and St John Passions by the Bach Collegium Japan, under the direction of Masaaki Suzuki, were probably the best sound quality we could find when we made Selon désir using this magisterial work of art. The interpretation of Maestro Suzuki was so beautiful, precise and clear, that it enabled me to construct a great multi track mix as part of the performance. The staging includes 16 speakers moving up and down above the dancers throughout the work. At the premiere at the Grand Théâtre de Genève in 2004, the sound of the orchestra, and the instruments were split by frequencies all over the stage, front, back and sides, together with the moving speakers.*

*In addition to Bach’s music, I composed an introduction for Selon désir. My intention was to give the audience entering into the world of Bach the incredible impression, when it begins after electronic sounds, that Bach’s music is still powerfully contemporary and compelling.*

*Following the electronic introduction and the opening chorus of the St Matthew Passion, an electronic transition section leads into a further electronic introduction to the opening chorus of the St John Passion. In the end, this work is a succession of four introductions that (I hope) will bring us close to the work of Bach, with the great help of Andonis Foniadakis and all the dancers.”*

— JULIEN TARRIDE



## Production

### Staging

Unlike other performances, which generally use wings, all three works of the *Speed of Light* programme are using pan masking, which runs up and down the stage.

Each piece has its own scenic elements; *Selon désir* has some flying speakers, *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* has two small cherries, and *Cacti* has wooden boxes, cacti and a roll of white dance floor.

## Lighting

### Jason Morphett



Jason Morphett's professional career started in London's West End, London's theatre land, during his college years. He soon graduated from follow spot operator to

charge hand electrician to programmer, and onto Chief Electrician. Moving out of the West End he started touring, first nationally then internationally, and hasn't really stopped since. In that time he has run the lighting departments for Birmingham Royal Ballet, London City Ballet, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, and New Zealand Opera amongst others. During his tenures with these companies he would design the in house productions and deal with all the relighting of the company's repertoire on tour.

Over the years he has toured all over the world with shows as diverse as *The Chemical Brothers* in New York, *Holiday on Ice* throughout Europe, *CA Awards Show* at the Pyramids in Egypt, Birmingham Royal Ballet in New York and Royal Galas at London's Ritz Hotel, in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen.

He is currently dividing his time between running the lighting departments of New Zealand Opera and his own design company, Three Seven Design Ltd as well as teaching lighting design at Te Whaea: the New Zealand National Dance and Drama Centre. Previously for RNZB he has designed *Dear Horizon*, *Salute*, *Passchendaele*, *Coppélia*, *Of Days*, *The Anatomy of a Passing Cloud*, *Verge*, *Si Superias* and *Equisses*.

The design was created in close conjunction with Adonis, the choreographer, during the RNZB's recent UK and Italy tour.

The piece has four distinct sections; the start, as a single dancer arrives in the world of the piece via a corridor of light and as she turns upstage we build through into the world proper. The second section is a mixture of duets and ensemble work played within a lit 12m box that fades away to nothing at the back and sides. The third section is a pas de deux for which we move to a very different space before returning to the original space for the fourth and most frenetic section.

The second and fourth sections are lit with a bright, 25 point down wash which allows us to light the whole space but vary the intensity in any given area. Lighting the dancers from the top, as opposed to from

the side, adds intensity and a sculptural quality. The concept for this is clouds scuttling across the sun and varying the amount of light coming through. It evolves and changes constantly but without being obvious. The pas de deux is much dimmer and highlighted with multiple slashes of white light that the dancers work in and through.

The cueing follows the rhythm of the dance being slower in the second section and ramping up in the frenetic fourth section. We also create highlight pools for certain moments when all the dancers come together at centre to accentuate these high points.

## Costumes

All 16 dancers are dressed similarly; female and male dancers wear a loose drape top with a pleated skirt – all pieces are in various bold colour. All the dancers are barefoot and the women's hair is loose, as an integral part of the choreography.





# IN THE MIDDLE, SOMEWHAT ELEVATED

CHOREOGRAPHY, STAGE, LIGHTING AND  
COSTUME DESIGN

**William Forsythe**

MUSIC

**Thom Willems  
in collaboration with  
Les Stuck**

STAGING

**Thierry Guiderdoni**

TECHNICAL SUPERVISION

**Tanja Rühl**

With thanks to Alexandra Scott,  
Forsythe Productions

*“Originally created for the Paris Opera Ballet, In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated is a theme and variations in the strictest sense. Making use of academic virtuosity, it extends and accelerates these traditional figures of classical ballet. By shifting the alignment of positions and the emphasis of transitions, the enchaînements begin to tilt obliquely and receive an unexpected drive that makes them appear at odds with their own origins.”*

— WILLIAM FORSYTHE

## The work that changed ballet forever

*In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* was the second work commissioned by Rudolf Nureyev from William Forsythe, for a once-in-a-lifetime generation of young dancers at the Paris Opera Ballet. It was premiered at the Palais Garnier in 1987. The first cast included Sylvie Guillem, the company’s youngest-ever *étoile*, Laurent Hilaire, Isabelle Guérin and Manuel Legris: dancers possessing fearless yet impeccable classical technique and profound artistic intelligence. Forsythe himself described them as *wunderkinder*.

Although it is most often performed as a stand-alone work, *In the Middle* was conceived as the central abstract act of *Impressing the Czar*, a full evening triptych of eclectic dance works exploring the decline of western civilisation. Forsythe staged *Impressing the Czar* in Frankfurt in 1988; the commission for in Paris enabled him to create the central portion of the work in advance, reducing rehearsal time and costs for his company in Frankfurt. However, while *Impressing the Czar* is infrequently performed in its entirety, *In the Middle* has become a part of the classical ballet canon: a work which companies and dancers the world over aspire to perform.

The work's tight theme and variations structure, vocabulary of extended and accelerated ballet positions which have over the years become iconic, and fierce power of the solos, duets and ensembles, show ballet in a new, bright light. Almost 30 years after its creation, *In the Middle* is as modern as the day it was made. As Agnès Noltenius, one of the few répétiteurs empowered by William Forsythe to teach his work said in 2015: 'After this emblematic piece, classical ballet was not the same any more. For 25 years, people have been inspired by it. And they still are.'

The title, *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated*, refers to the placement of a pair of golden cherries suspended above the austere lit and otherwise bare stage. According to Thierry Guiderdoni, early rehearsals for the work took place in one of the more floridly decorated studios at the Paris Opera, with an elaborate, gilded Baroque frieze bordering the ceiling. Forsythe was very taken with the juxtaposition of the extravagant decoration with his choreography, and wanted to replicate the setting in the set designed for his new work. Unfortunately, as the piece was to be staged as part of a mixed bill, there was no time between acts to erect an elaborate set. He had to choose one small element, and chose a pair of gilded cherries. When asked by the technical director where the cherries should go onstage for his yet-untitled work, he responded, 'In the middle, somewhat elevated.'

## William Forsythe



William Forsythe is an American dancer and choreographer resident in Frankfurt am Main in Hessen who has been active in the field of choreography for over 45 years.

He is known internationally for his work with the Ballet Frankfurt (1984–2004) and The Forsythe Company (2005– present). His work is acknowledged for reorienting the practice of ballet from its identification with classical repertoire to a dynamic 21st century art form. Forsythe's deep interest in the fundamental principles of organisation has led him to produce a wide range of projects including installations, films and web-based knowledge creation.

Forsythe's most recent works were developed and performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier pieces are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including the Mariinsky Ballet, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Semperoper Ballet Dresden, The Royal Ballet and the Paris Opera Ballet.

In collaboration with media specialists and educators, Forsythe has developed new approaches to dance documentation, research, and education. His 1994 computer application *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*, developed with the ZKM /

Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, is used as a teaching tool by professional companies, dance conservatories, universities, postgraduate architecture programs, and secondary schools worldwide.

As an educator, Forsythe is regularly invited to lecture and give workshops at universities and cultural institutions. He is an Honorary Fellow at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London and holds an Honorary Doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York. Forsythe is a current Professor of Dance and Artistic Advisor for the Choreographic Institute at the University of Southern California Gloria Kaufman School of Dance.

In 2015 Forsythe was appointed Associate Choreographer of the Paris Opera Ballet.

## Music

### Thom Willems



Thom Willems' music is predominantly created for ballet. Since 1985 he has worked with William Forsythe, first with Ballet Frankfurt, until 2004, and from 2005 with The

Forsythe Company. Together they have created more than 65 works.

His music was used in the creation of many of the most celebrated dance theatre works of our time, such as William Forsythe's *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* (1987) and *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991).

His music in connection with William Forsythe's work is featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world including the Bolshoi Ballet, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Paris Opera Ballet, The Royal Ballet among many others – in total 66 companies in more than 25 countries.



## Production

### Staging

As often happens in a contemporary piece, the stage is bare with the exception of one scenic element – two small golden cherries the size of Christmas decorations. The floor is black allowing for the colour of the costumes and the lighting to do all the work.

### Lighting

The lighting for this piece is based on creating a space for the choreography to take place in and bring out the dancers and the movements.

### Costumes

The costumes of the nine dancers are forest green coloured.

The three male dancers wear a green leotard with footless green tights, and flesh-coloured flats.

The six female dancers are divided in three different leotard styles; with a high collar and keyhole back, long sleeves or with spaghetti straps. All the female dancers wear sheer black footless tights and pointe shoes.



# CACTI

## New Zealand Premiere

CHOREOGRAPHY, SET AND COSTUME  
DESIGN

**Alexander Ekman**

LIGHTING AND CO-SET DESIGN, TECHNICAL  
SUPERVISION

**Tom Visser**

MUSIC

**Joseph Haydn, Ludwig van  
Beethoven, Franz Schubert**

**Performed by the  
New Zealand String Quartet**

TEXT WRITTEN AND SPOKEN

**Spenser Theberge**

STAGING

**Ana Maria Lucaciu**

With thanks to Patrick Marin, Stepping  
Grounds Arts/Culture Management

Alexander Ekman created *Cacti* for  
Netherlands Dance Theatre 2. The first  
performance took place at the Lucent  
Danstheater in The Hague, on 25 February  
2010.

In *Cacti* Ekman turns his keen eye upon the  
scene that nurtured him: contemporary  
dance itself. A gleeful and knowing parody  
of the art form's greater excesses, *Cacti* is  
an affectionate, pointed and often hilarious  
deconstruction of the affectations of  
dance.

Sixteen dancers stand, seemingly trapped,  
on oversized Scrabble tiles. While a string  
quartet plays, and spoken recordings give  
tongue-in-cheek narration of the action,  
the dancers run, fall, writhe and try to  
escape their invisible prisons; eventually  
– and this is the important bit – they each  
acquire a cactus. But what does it all  
mean?!

*I created Cacti about five years ago for the  
Netherlands Dance Theatre in The Hague.  
This work is about how we observe art and  
how we often feel the need to analyse and  
'understand' art. I believe that there is no  
right way and that everyone can interpret  
and experience art the way they want.  
Perhaps it's just a feeling that you can't  
explain or perhaps it's very obvious what  
the message is.*

*Cacti was created during a period of my  
life where I was very confused and upset  
every time someone would write about my  
work. I did not find it fair that one person  
was going to sit there and sort of decide  
for everyone what the work was about. I  
have stopped reading my reviews, but still  
question this unfair system mankind has  
created.*

*While creating Cacti, for the first time I had  
the chance to create a work with musicians  
in the studio, which was a new way of  
working for me. Together with a string  
quartet we created a rhythmical game  
between dancers and musicians which  
became the score for the work.*

*Cacti demands high concentration both from dancers and musicians, which makes it very exciting to observe. I have always been fascinated by human capability during highest concentration and our way of acting in a state of emergency.*

*I have made around 40 pieces to date and Cacti is definitely one of those works for which I will always feel a certain love. It is extremely hard to create a piece which feels complete and finished from beginning to end. I think with Cacti we somehow managed to arrange the pieces of the puzzle in a way so that the curve feels complete.*

*I hope that you will enjoy watching and experiencing Cacti and that it will continue to spread its message across the world.*

— ALEXANDER EKMAN

## Alexander Ekman



Alexander Ekman is an international choreographer and director creating pieces for theatres, opera houses and museums. He also directs films and creates live performances

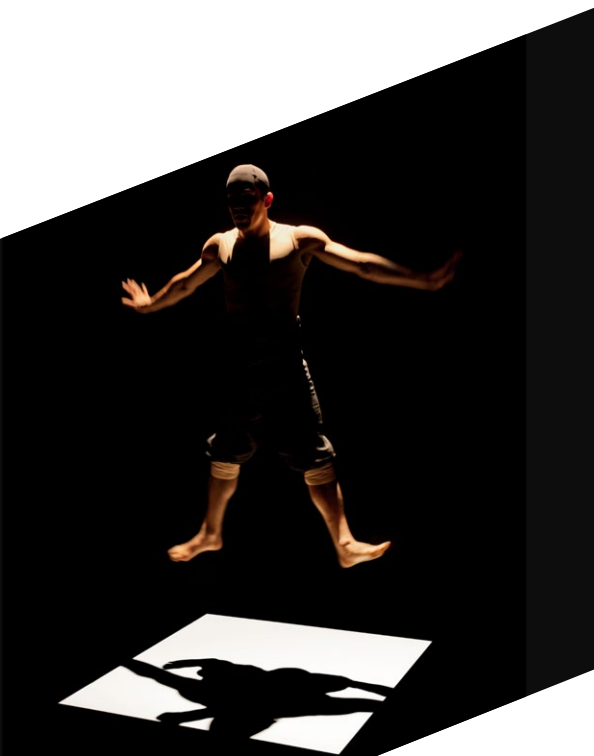
and events in pop up locations around the world.

Ekman is known for his fast paced timing and witty humour and clever transitions. He aims to create work which the majority can relate and connect with. Since 2006 he has devoted his time creating pieces which both entertain and question the observer. He aims to transform the atmosphere in the audience and to always surprise the audience.

Ekman has created and collaborated with around 45 dance companies worldwide. These include among others the Royal Swedish Ballet, Compañía Nacional de Danza, Ballet de l'Opéra du Rhin, Boston Ballet, Sydney Dance Company, Royal Danish Ballet and Vienna Ballet.

*Cacti* has become a worldwide hit and has been performed by 15 dance companies. *Cacti* was nominated for the Dutch dance prize Zwaan in 2010 and for the Critics' Circle National Dance Award (UK) and an Olivier Award in 2012. *Cacti* continues to entertain audiences around the world with its important message.

Hear Alexander talk about *Cacti* including some video clips of rehearsals with the RNZB dancers: <https://www.facebook.com/nzballet/photos/a.10151213481141863.443188.294387341862/10153362172201863/?type=3&theater>



## Music

Music for the first part of *Cacti* was collectively assembled, improvised and composed by Tinta Schmidt von Altenstadt, David Marks, Saskia Viersen, Artur Trajko and Jan Pieter Koch, musical coordinator. The original musical score includes live and recorded performances of the following works:

### Joseph Haydn

Sonata No. 5 'Sitio' ('I thirst') from *The Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on The Cross*, Opus 51, Hoboken XX/1B;

### Ludwig van Beethoven

String Quartet No. 9 in C, Opus 59 'Razumovsky', section from Andante con moto quasi allegretto;

### Franz Schubert

Presto from String Quartet No. 14 in d (D810), 'Death and the Maiden'. Symphony in d minor 'Death and the Maiden' IV Presto by Franz Schubert arranged and orchestrated by Andy Stein. 'Death and the Maiden' orchestral recording courtesy of Naxos

### Joseph Haydn

Allegro from String Quartet No. 16 in A, Opus 9 No. 6, Hoboken III:24



## New Zealand String Quartet

The RNZB are fortunate to have secured the New Zealand String Quartet to perform on stage with their dancers. The string quartet is an important integrated visual effect of the work. All the members of the group also move around while playing which can be tricky for the cellist who is using a special harness to hold his instrument.



Since 1987 the New Zealand String Quartet has been New Zealand's leading chamber ensemble, with a distinguished record of international touring success. Much-loved by audiences at home and around the world, the Quartet performs over eighty concerts to popular and critical acclaim each year.

Career highlights have included highly-praised debuts in London at the Wigmore Hall, in New York at the prestigious Frick Collection and in Washington's Library of Congress. In recent years the group has toured to Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom on a regular basis as well as performing in Mexico, Curaçao, Korea, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Sweden and China.

The Quartet's extensive discography includes the complete Mendelssohn, Bartok and Berg string quartets, works by Ravel, Debussy, Beethoven, Schubert, Dvořák and Wolf, as well as the premiere recording of the remarkable Zoltán Székely quartet. Their latest CD release features

the complete chamber works for strings by Douglas Lilburn and they are currently engaged in recording a three-CD Brahms set for Naxos.

The ensemble has been Quartet-in-Residence at the New Zealand School of Music at Victoria University since 1991, where the current members are Associate Professors. Violinist Helene Pohl, violist Gillian Ansell and cellist Rolf Gjelsten have each been awarded the MNZM honour for services to music in New Zealand. They are joined for this tour by guest violinist Rachell Wong from the USA.

You can listen to a movement of Beethoven quartet no. 8 played by these talented musicians here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uM-7qZvzDjo>

## Production

### Tom Visser

Lighting Designer Thomas Visser grew up in the countryside of west Ireland. At the age of 18 he started working in musical theatre through his theatrical family. After six years he started working in dance through the Netherlands Dance Theatre. Since 2005 he has created original designs for choreographers Crystal Pite, Alexander Ekman, Johan Inger, Stijn Celis, Lukas Timulak, Sharon Eyal and Peeping Tom, just to name a few. Recently Tom has been creating his own projects through art installations and interactive media.





## Staging and lighting

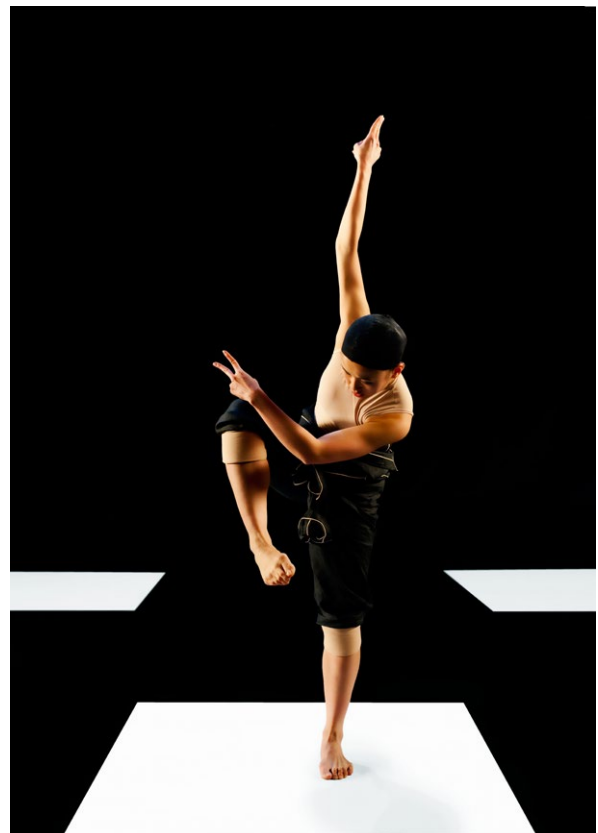
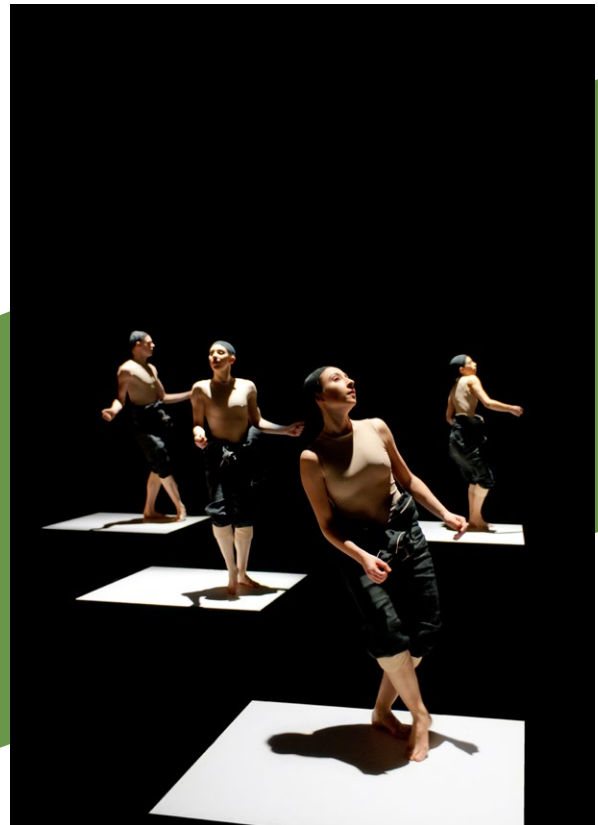
Like the two previous works, the staging is a black panorama box with masking which is much bigger than usual; it gives us 20 metres width of dance floor (standard dance floor being 12x12 metres).

This highly visual work relies heavily on light effects; a total of six lighting bars are used – four bars which fly in and out live using the contra weight and two bars that are animated using an automated flying system.

Props includes 16 square boxes of various heights as well as 16 handcrafted cacti. When Alexander was asked “why cacti,” he simply replied “it’s a flower with attitude!”

## Costumes

The 16 dancers (eight couples) all wear a flesh-coloured leotard and a black boiler suit which are all slightly different in the details, creating the effect that we can’t differentiate the male from the female dancers. All the dancers are dancing barefoot and wear a cap covered with flour reserve for a special effect moment relating to the movements of the choreography.



# Activities for Speed of Light: *SELON DÉsir*

## Dance elements: relationships, space and body awareness

This task requires a loco-motor movement phrase. If you have one already choreographed you can use that, if not use the exercise below to create one.

Ask the students to walk around the space and when you clap your hands they have to make a shape using different body bases, e.g. knees, bottom, one foot and one knee. Call out the base you want them to use each time. (You can do this with music like musical statues if you prefer.) After a couple of goes of walking, ask them to find different ways of travelling around the space in between their shapes.

Individually, get the students to choose four of their favourite shapes and four loco-motor movements. They are going to put these together in any order they want. To make the shapes and travelling flow nicely together, ask students to transition into their shapes in different ways, e.g. do a turn into a shape, jump into a shape, roll into a shape, slide into a shape. Once they have created their sequence ask them to find a partner.

With their partner they are going to put their sequences together in any order but they must be in unison. These duos can be

shared with the rest of the group, and this can be the end of this activity. Or you can try some of the ideas below to create a whole class piece.

After watching the duos choose two or three that you like, and ask the pairs to teach the rest of the class their movements. You will need to decide what order they will be in and you might have to make small modifications to make the duos flow together comfortably. This will make up a unison section of the group piece.

Split the class into small groups (3, 4, or 5), and get them to perform the unison phrase in canon. You can decide how many counts between each group and what formation they will be standing in. This will make the canon section.

Using the same small groups as the previous activity, give each group a different section of the unison phrase to perform. If the unison phrase is not long enough for each group to have a decent length of material, just split the class into three medium sized groups, and give them a section each.

Going back to the duos, ask each pair to do their loco-motor/shape sequence but mirroring each other. This will make the mirroring duos.

You can put all the above sections together in any way that you like. You have the original duos, the mirroring duos, the unison section, the canon section, and the medium groups doing a part of the unison phrase. Use walking and running to enter and exit the space and to change places onstage. Not all dancers need to be onstage all the time. The *Selon désir* piece is very busy with plenty of exits and entrances and dancers constantly moving, so the piece will look very full and energetic.

### Example of part of a structure

Start with one or two dancers performing the unison phrase and some of the others gradually walking/running onstage and joining in. Make sure everyone is onstage by the last count of the unison phrase and then all of the dancers will perform the phrase again. Then some dancers walk/run offstage and three pairs remain onstage and perform their original duos – these dancers will probably have to walk to a space onstage. Next, do the canon section so those offstage will have to walk/run on and the dancers onstage will probably have to move so they are in the correct formation.



# IN THE MIDDLE, SOMEWHAT ELEVATED

## Counterbalance and travel

As a warm up get students to walk around the space and when you clap your hands they have to do a counterbalance with the nearest person. Ideally they should do this in pairs, if there is an odd number there will be a group of three. Get them to hold their balances for three seconds, come out of their counterbalance and continue walking around the space. Repeat this as many times as you like, encouraging the students to try using different body parts as the point of contact as they become more confident. Later on in this process, the students will need to find ways to travel around the space (loco-motor movements) that are not walking, so you may want to introduce this here, in-between the balances. Or you can make finding their loco-motor movements a separate task at another stage. Encourage them to try new and different ways of moving e.g. skipping, running, jumping off the spot, leaping, crawling, rolling, walking on different levels.

Ask the students to find a partner (they can work in a three if there is an odd number). In their pairs, get them to play around with different counterbalances – the balances don't have to flow from one to another. Give them some guidelines to help, e.g. try being on different levels, one person can only have one foot on the floor, make a symmetrical counterbalance, and an asymmetrical one, try using different body parts.

Then get the students to choose their four favourite counterbalances – encourage them to pick some contrasting balances. The counterbalances still don't need to link together. Get them to practise them a lot before moving onto the next task.

Now, the students need to find a starting point (A) and a finishing point (B) in the space. Get them to choose a pathway on the floor to move from A to B – initially they can just walk the pathway. This is where they will need to have some loco-motor movements to put in-between their four counterbalances. (If you haven't introduced ways to travel other than walking yet, you can do it now). With their partner they need to choose at least two different loco-motor phrases. They must maintain physical contact with their partner on one of the traveling sections (they can maintain contact for all of them if they like).

To put all of the movement together, they will start on point A in one of their counterbalances. Then they need to use one of their loco-motor phrases to move along part of their chosen pathway towards point B. They can stop where they choose along their pathway and do their second counterbalance, then move along the pathway a little more, then the third counterbalance, then move to point B and finish with the final counterbalance.

Once the students have practised their dances they can present them to the rest of the class.

# CACTI

## Rhythm

As a group warm-up, get the class to stand in a circle. This activity can be done standing still in the circle or keeping a consistent step tap going. One person claps a rhythm that goes over four beats then the rest of the group claps that rhythm back. The next person in the circle claps their rhythm and the class claps it back. Carry on around the circle until everyone has created/clapped a rhythm.

To progress/adapt this, students can make their rhythm using any part of their body and their rhythm can go over eight beats.

Split the class into pairs and get each pair to create a rhythm that goes over eight beats just using claps. You may want to specify that each person contributes four beats worth. Once they have created their rhythm ask them to find as many different ways as possible to sound out their rhythm, e.g. using claps, stamps, clicks, voice and different body parts. Get each pair to choose their two favourite ways of sounding out their rhythm, and remember them for later on.

Then get each pair to find a way to put movements to their rhythm; the movements don't have to make a sound but must have the same timing as the sounded out rhythm.

Next, get each pair to put their three rhythm phrases together – the two sounded out rhythms, and the version using movement. They can put them together in any order, and they can manipulate their rhythm dance any way they want. They can add canon, change or add different levels, they can make their phrases travel, they can repeat a phrase or part of a phrase, and they can change their formation throughout the piece.

When the class has practised enough they can share their rhythm dances with the rest of the group.

