

CHEVALIERS SANS ARMURE
Choreography Paco Dècina
Creation 2006 at the Théâtre de la Cité internationale



Photo : Raphaël Pierre

Creation background
Choreographer's note and distribution
Biographies of Paco Dècina and his collaborators
A text to reflect upon
The Company and the Théâtre de la Cité internationale in Paris
Available repertoire and calendar

Contacts : Mareï Schultze 00 33 1 69 41 26 25 – vschultze@club-internet.fr
Catherine Monaldi 00 33 1 43 13 55 02

Creation background

Paco Dècina and his Company have begun a three year residency at the *Théâtre de la Cité internationale*. Their first step is the creation of *Chevaliers sans armure (Knights without armor)*.

Paco Dècina, choreographer, originally from Naples, has been living in France since the 1980s, and has participated in the explosion of French contemporary dance by adding his Mediterranean culture. For 20 years, his memory of the south, the countryside, and the body has been the material used for his choreographies.

From the first pieces (*Tempi morti, Circumvesuviana, Ombre in rosso antico, Scilla e Carridi, Ciro Esposito fu Vincenzo...*) whose lush stage designs preceded the pieces in the late nineties (*Lettre au silence, Neti-Neti, Soffio, Intervalle...*) where the stage's radical drawing established itself through a carnal dance experiencing something spiritual.

The selection of Paco Dècina's dancers is determined by his perception of their capacity to listen to their bodies and to find the state of abandonment needed in order for the soul to dance. Passionate about silence and immobility, Paco searches for the underground waves that animate us.

As he enjoys helping the buried memory reemerge, and conscious of the fact that one needs time for it to rise to the surface, he now returns to the stage with Valeria Apicella, also from Naples and a wonderful performer who incarnates the profound essence of his work in *Chevaliers sans armure*. The aim of this volcanic complicity is to give dance more space as well as perform the dance as an exploration, as a breath to be shared at one point in time.

Choreographer's note

In a world that uses the pretence of security to impose "truth" upon us at every instant, I prefer to propose a walk through the heart's silence.

Within this intimate space where time, law or the stock market do not exist, we can finally be in tune to the true breath of a world that seems to be becoming terribly uniform.

As an offering without holding back, a presence without one's self, or the presence of absence, *Chevaliers sans armure* offers the possibility to watch the theatre of our emotions; our feelings and our passions play freely.

Paco Dècina

Chevaliers sans armure

Duo/ 1heure



Photos : Laurent Philippe et Raphaël Pierre

Choreography

Paco Dècina

Performers

Valeria Apicella and Paco Dècina

Music

Winter Family

(Ruth Rosenthal : texts, voice / Xavier Klaine : great organ, piano)

Lights

Laurent Schneegans

Costumes

Regina Martino

with the help of Lycée de Nogent-sur-Marne students in DMA costumiers/ réalisateurs

Production

Karine Fernandez and Catherine Monaldi

Coproduction

A Paco Dècina Company and Théâtre de la Cité internationale
co-production

With all our thanks to the CND

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Paco Dècina

Paco was born in Naples on the Chiaja overlooking Mount Vesuvius and Capri. Although his studies were scientific, he discovered dance when he met the American choreographer Bob Curtis who introduced Afro-Cuban techniques to him. In Rome he studied classical dance with choreographer Vittorio Biagi and contemporary dance through American techniques. He very rapidly joined other dance companies and went on to Paris where he began yet another life.

Paco Dècina and the Company

Paco Dècina settled down in Paris in 1984, where he founded his dance company, Post-Retroguardia. In 1987, he received the choreography prize for his piece *Tempi Morti* at the *Ménagerie de Verre*, and the following year *Circumvesuviana* brought him national acclaim.

Following over a dozen creations among which, *Scilla e Cariddi* in 1990, *Ciro Esposito fu Vincenzo* in 1993, a poetic meditation on death, *Fessure* (1994), *Mare Rubato* (1996) and the solo, *Infini*, a tribute to Christian Ferry-Tschaeglé in 1997.

In 1998 Paco Dècina worked on a new solo piece, *Lettre au Silence*, resembling a visible crossing of time, a sort of essay on weightlessness. *Neti-Neti* (Neither this Nor that), duet created in 2000 for two dancers is conceived as an overture to the silent countryside of our being.

Researching the writing of movement prevails in these two pieces, who will be presented in Paris at the *Théâtre de la Ville* and on several provincial stages as well as abroad, mostly in India and Central Africa thanks to the support of the AFAA.

More recently, Paco Dècina created a quartet, *Summa Iru* (2001) and a solo, *Non era giorno, non era notte* (2002). *Soffio*, a piece for 6 dancers, premiered in January 2003 at the *Théâtre Paul-Eluard* in Bezons for the Company's last year of residency in the Val d'Oise. In October 2004 he created *Intervalle*, two duets for the dancers in his company. He then completed *Cherchant l'inspiration poétique*, a piece for the Junior Ballet of the *Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris*.

And once again thanks to the support of the AFAA, these three pieces continue to tour Europe and Central America.

In September 2005 in Prague, Paco Dècina created a work for 5 Czech and Slovak dancers entitled *Salto nel vuoto*.

Since November 2005 and for a period of 3 years, the Company is in residency at the *Théâtre de la Cité internationale* thanks to the support of the *Conseil régional d'Ile-de-France*. He created a duet which he dances himself along side Valeria Apicella, entitled *Chevaliers sans armure*, to be premiered from May 15 to 19, 2006 at the *Théâtre de la Cité internationale* in Paris. *INDIGO*, created in 2007, is a piece for 6 dancers on the theory of light.

Valeria Apicella, dancer

Born in Naples, and from classical and contemporary training (Cunningham, improvisation contact) Valeria Apicella developed her relationship with the body and with dance throughout a long association with the Paco Dècina Company, which has proven to be a major encounter for her professionally. She continues her research by collaborating with several artists who question the body such as the audiovisual director, Laurent Goldring, the graphic designer Michal Batory or Justina Tuha.

Since 1997 she has danced all of Paco Dècina's pieces : *Cinq passages*, *Hua*, *Neti-Neti*, *Summa Iru*, *Soffio*, *Intervalle*, *Chevaliers sans armure*. Some, like *Neti-Neti*, have become central works for her development as a performer and for her creations.

She has also founded her own company, *3.14*, with film critic Cyril Béghin, and has successively created events for the TNB, *Tiede*, and her own solo, *L'Assise*.

At this point she began to reflect on the relationship between the body, dance and film with works like *Stalker* by film director, Andreï Tarkovski, whose physical and visual atmosphere allowed her to begin a theoretical discussion on dance (publications and conferences).

Laurent Schneegans, light creation

In 1983, Laurent Schneegans debuts as light engineer and stage manager for theatre, dance and street theatre. Passionate about photography, he ran a studio for several years.

He met Joël Hourbeigt, and soon became his assistant.

He also assisted Philippe Lacombe, Dominique Bruguière, Patrice Trottier, Marie-Christine Soma.

He created the light design for Jean-Louis Martin Barbaz, Guy-Pierre Couleau, Brigitte Jacques Wajman, Suzanna Lastreto, Jean-Pierre Andréani, Jean-Pierre Nortel, Jean-François Matignon, Guillaume Dujardin, Emmanuelle Laborit and Paco Dècina.

He regularly organizes light workshops for amateurs and professionals alike.

Regina Martino, costumes

From Italian descent, Regina Martina is a costume designer living in Paris since 1989. She began her training at the Beaux-Arts in Florence where she studied stage design and costumes (1978-1982), and then in Milano where she studied design and fashion with Gianfranco Ferré at the Domus Academy. She followed the contemporary dance scene in Italy closely. In 1987 she met Paco Dècina with whom she began a long association both as performer and costume designer.

Their collaboration continued on to Paris (1989) during several productions (*Ombre in rosso antico*, *Scilla e Cariddi*, *Vestigia di un corpo*, *Ciro Esposito*,...) where she established her aesthetic sense by audaciously mixing pictural references and body experiences with movement and always using pertinent reference to the contemporary clothing.

Regina Martino has been researching and exploring various fields such as cinema with Sigrid Alnoy and Guy Deslauriers as well as theatre with Hubert Colas, Jean Louis Hourdin et Serge Hureau... She pursued her experience with dance with Francesca Lattuada, Philippe Saire, Luisa Casighari et Dominique Rebaud...

She presently created the costumes for Rachel Salik and Valeria Moretti's last show. Today, her path crosses once again Paco Dècina's for the costume design of *Chevaliers sans armure*.

Winter Family (Rosenthal / Klaine), music

Graduated in piano and chamber music from the Conservatoire National de Région of Nancy (class of Odile Ledieu), Xavier Klaine is a musician and a composer.

He has been working with the Israeli artist Ruth Rosenthal within the "Winter Family" duet (Sub Rosa Records) since January 2004. Since then, Winter Family has composed the music of Paco Dècina's creations and has performed more particularly in Paris, New-York, Gent, Milano, Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv.

To question the body is to question the world

I believe that in order to dance one has to forget one's self, let go of ideas, and make the body available to the danced movement.

The danced movement - dance - is a vital flow perpetually in movement and in transformation.

By this intensive aspect, and by creating new space to spread out in at each instant, the dancer's body can then become the medium by which the shape is formed, and the spectator's eye, the witness enabling the dance to look at itself. So, who then is dancing ? Is there truly a separation between the dancer, the piece and the spectator ?

By listening to this vital flow, constantly in metamorphosis, the dance itself appears to us. Whether we are sitting and watching or standing on one leg, ready to welcome it.

A fiery alchemy of the memory, a fugitive "space" for the unthinkable, supple, mobile, instantaneous, escaping possessiveness, criterion and concepts, dance allows the buried memory of our body to become visible. By redistributing it in another time space, dance gives it the possibility to come untied.

It is as if for those having difficulty finding their place in this world of "the understandable" could now exist in the qualitative flow of the dance's movement. This individual and collective memory necropolis that forms our body constitutes its depth and opacity. How can they find the flight that is needed in order to flow and give in to the danced movement, if the movement itself flees at its first stumble and disappears like a wild animal at watch ?

Dance. How does it work ? What marks the difference between bodily agitation and the danced movement ? How can one distinguish the mechanical body from the dancing body ? Do they have the same expansion, the same limits ; do they discover the same spaces, the same time span ? You must sharpen your eye in order to perceive the limits of the biological figure from the anatomical synthesis and meet the dancing body. Dance is not filling up the traveled space but is the movement in the process of "becoming".

It's the nakedness that lies under the cloth of the coded movement, the life of the moment in recognizable form that appears. To question the body is to question the world.

Paco Dècina, Introductory text for the danced conference, which took place at the *Université de La Rochelle* on November 22, 2000 during the "premières rencontres internationales « Art, Science et Technologie »".

The Company and the Théâtre de la Cité internationale in Paris

Today, the choreographer Paco Dècina and his company, *Post-Retroguardia* - Valeria Apicella, Orin Camus, Jorge Crudo, Rodolphe Fouillot, Carlo Locatelli, Noriko Matsuyama, Emilie Praud, Takashi Ueno (dancers), Xavier Klaine (composer), Laurent Schneegans (light creation, technician), Catherine Mondali (administration) - is associated with the *Théâtre de la Cité internationale*.

The relationship between the Theatre and Paco Dècina has been growing ever since the presentation of *Neti-Neti* in February 2001, at the *Presqu'îles 2001*. The revival of *Soffio* in 2004 gave them the opportunity to interact with the public by setting up artistic and stage-technique workshops with the *Lycée La Source* and the *Académie Fratellini* both before and after the productions. They made the decision to continue their collaboration on a long-term basis in February 2005 just following the presentation of the two duets in *Intervalle* with the support of the *Conseil Régional d'Ile-de-France*.

Paco Dècina's dance is like a written composition of movement : pure, limpid, readable, concentrating only on what is essential. It is a dance of maturity.

Paco Dècina, choreographer marking the history of dance by his open approach for over twenty years says : "It is time for me to pass on all that I have received along the way. This is why this building this shared space parallel to the creations will become a trampoline for new discoveries. My work as choreographer is more and more in need of a homeland, a place to be anchored to, and a space where dance as well as its uncertainties can settle down. A shared space, a meeting place, a land bearing the fruit of "collective thinking".

This concern was in perfect timing with the *Théâtre de la Cité internationale* and its desire to privilege artistic activity. This residency will have two fields of action : creation (one piece per year) and public-artist interaction through the workshops. The *Post-Retroguardia Company* and the *Théâtre de la Cité internationale* have several propositions for the public to discover the "dancing body" : workshops, meetings, conferences, internships, interventions... inciting the reflection on dance and its accessibility.

The Company's available repertoire

2006 - Chevaliers sans armure

with Valeria Apicella and Paco Dècina

Music by Winter Family (Rosenthal / Klaine), Lights by Laurent Schneegans

2004 - Intervalle

with Valeria Apicella, Orin Camus and Noriko Matsuyama, Rodolphe Fouillot

Music by Xavier Klaine and Olivier Renouf, Lights by Laurent Schneegans

2003 - Soffio

with Valeria Apicella, Orin Camus, Jorge Crudo, Rodolphe Fouillot,

Noriko Matsuyama and Emilie Praud

Music by Christian Calon and Olivier Renouf, Lights by Laurent Schneegans

1996 - Infini, 1999 - Lettre au silence and 2002 - Non era giorno non era notte

Solos by Paco Dècina

2006 - Cartes de visite chorégraphiques

Four specific creations by the Company's dancers

2 solos and 2 duets available and adapted for all spaces - interior or exterior

Press kits available upon request