THE CENTRE CHORÉGRAPHIQUE NATIONAL DE CRÉTEIL ET DU VAL-DE-MARNE
COMPAGNIE KÄFIG
presents

Pixel
A 2014 PRODUCTION

ARTISTIC DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY: MOURAD MERZOUKI

DIGITAL CREATION: ADRIEN MONDOT & CLAIRE BARDAINNE
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We are constantly exposed to images, videos and digital media. Screens are everywhere. One only needs to walk down the streets of big capitals of some countries to imagine what will be the city of tomorrow: a large exposure to images which is now part of our everyday life.

The “Pixel” project is born when I first met Adrien Mondot and Claire Bardainne and from the fascination I felt at that moment: it was just like I wasn’t able to make the difference between both the real and the virtual world and I rapidly decided to try a new association using those new technologies with and for dance.

The first experience mixing dance and interactive video has been breathtaking for the performers who are part of the project. During this new adventure, I will, with the same curiosity and opened mind that inspire me, try to face this impalpable world created by the light projection developed by the Adrien M / Claire B Company.

The challenge of making both worlds interact with each other and of striking a subtle balance between both techniques so that dance and abstract representations answer each other without one getting the upper hand, will again destabilize me with the way I approach gesture. I will follow that quest for motion which I keep developing and improving at each of my creations, with new constraints and new playing partners.

How does the dancer perform in a space made up of illusions on a 3D-set, when video may by turns accompany motion as well as hinder it? Those new discovery paths will allow me to work on this extension of reality and to face an impalpable world, which is odd for a choreographer who feeds off bodies and material. Inhabiting dance in a space where the body only faces dreams, developing gestures in moving landscapes created by Adrien M and Claire B.

We want to open up the way where the synthetic world of digital projection interact with the dancer’s reality. Each of us is playfully immersed in an unknown world, with a sharing mind, relying on hip-hop virtuosity and energy, mixing up poetry and dreams, to create a show at the crossroads of arts.

_Mourad Merzouki_
At the occasion of the first edition of the RVBn Festival located in Bron in February 2013, we staged a short 20-minute show, in collaboration with Mourad Merzouki, for 11 young non-professional dancers, keyed-up with energy and will. Born from the junction of our artistic vision and Mourad Merzouki’s, we entitled the show “Pixel”.

While our creation was being given birth, we were thrilled by two feelings: Firstly, the pleasure of the game, of playing together, which was immediately shared. Just like children, we experienced such a research as a playful and happy time, also in tune with the energy of circus art. Mourad knew how to immerse himself into our abstract graphic universes so easily that he naturally passed on his knowledge to the interpreters thereafter. We created new digital forms and motions inspired after him, which reinforced our area of research dear to us: inventing a living digital language from body’s intuition.

While observing them performing on our playground where what is material and immaterial form a single whole, we have been struck by a second obvious fact: the search for illusion lies in our digital practice just like in hip-hop practice. According to us, image is considered as a trompe-l’oeil. We try to modify the perception, to confuse the audience with what is real or not, to cross daily limits of reality and to make “impossible” things appear: promptly changing properties of matter, reversing gravity, giving the impression of a volume only using flat projections.

Also, that’s exactly the kind of research investigated by a hip-hop dancer, particularly with his body, moving his arms as if they were in a liquid state or, on the contrary, automated, slowing down and accelerating and using reverse effects.

In both cases, the relation to time and space is modified, distorted, shifted. This focal point is particularly exciting for us and that’s also why we focused the research around it.

Backed by such observations, we now want to go deeper into the experience, to dive together into the deep end. Our will is to expand the “Pixel” project so that the explored land be an extensive experience of new spaces and of new living and moving digital items in communication with the body.

Claire Bardainne and Adrien Mondot
ARTISTIC CREDITS

ARTISTIC DIRECTION Mourad Merzouki
STAGE DIRECTION Mourad Merzouki, Adrien Mondot, Claire Bardainne
CHOREOGRAPHY Mourad Merzouki
ASSISTANT OF THE CHOREOGRAPHER Marjorie Hannoteaux
DIGITAL PRODUCTION Adrien Mondot, Claire Bardainne
MUSIC DESIGN (in progress) Anne Germanique, Wilfrid Haberey
DANCERS Rémi Autechaud known as RMS, Kader Belmoktar, Marc Brillant, Elodie Chan, Yvener Guillaume, Amélie Jousseaume, Ludovic Lacroix, Xuan Le, Steven Valade, Mede Yetongnon
LIGHTING DESIGN Yoann Tivoli assisted by Nicolas Faucheux
STAGE DESIGN Benjamin Lebreton
COSTUME DESIGN Pascale Robin

PRODUCTION Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne / Compagnie Käfig
COPRODUCTION Maison des Arts de Créteil, Espace Albert Camus - Bron
With the support of the Adrien M / Claire B Company
TOUR DATES : 2014/2015 SEASON

This planning is still in progress and subject to change

November 15-22 | Maison des Arts, Créteil - Festival Kalypso
November 27-30 | Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf - Festival Automne en Normandie
December 2 | Le Granit, Scène nationale, Belfort
December 6 | Le Carré, Sainte-Maxime
December 9 and 10 | L'Hexagone, Scène nationale Arts Sciences, Meylan
December 13 | Théâtre de l'Olivier, Scènes et Cinés Ouest Provence, Istres
December 16 | Théâtres en Dracénie, Draguignan

January 6 | L'Hippodrome, Douai
January 8-10 | Théâtre de Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, Scène nationale
January 13-14 | Le Forum, Le Blanc-Mesnil
January 17 | Palais des Festivals, Cannes - Festival de danse de Cannes
January 20-30 | Maison de la Danse, Lyon
February 3-5 | Le Corum, Montpellier - Festival Montpellier Danse
February 7-10 | Théâtre Jean Vilar, Suresnes - Festival Suresnes Cités Danse
February 13 | Théâtre Jean Arp, Clamart
February 22 | Teatro Comunale Luciano Pavarotti, Modène, Italy
March 3 and 4 | Théâtre de l'Archipel - Le Grenat, Perpignan
March 12 | Théâtre de Cusset
March 17 and 18 | Bonlieu, Scène nationale d'Annecy
March 20 | Théâtre Louis Aragon, Orly - Biennale de danse du Val-de-Marne
March 24 | Espace Jean Legendre, Scène nationale de l'Oise, Compiègne
March 26 | Espace Albert Camus, Bron
March 28 | Théâtre de Saint-Maur, Biennale de danse du Val-de-Marne
April 3 | Espace Michel Simon, Noisy-le-Grand
April 8 | Théâtre Anne de Bretagne, Vannes
April 22 or 23 | Maison de la Culture, Amiens
April 28 | Théâtre de Bourg en Bresse
May 9 | L'Arsenal, Metz - Festival Metz en Scènes
May 21 | L'Embarcadère, Montceau-les-Mines

Estimated number of performances : 66 in 29 cities
Born in Lyon in 1973, Mourad Merzouki began practicing martial arts and circus arts as early as a seven-year-old. At the age of fifteen, he encountered hip-hop culture for the first time and through it, he discovered dance.

He quickly decided to develop this form of street art while also experimenting with other choreographic styles, particularly with Maryse Delente, Jean-François Duroure and Josef Nadj.

The wealth of his experiences fed his desire to direct artistic projects, blending hip-hop with other disciplines. In 1989 he, along with Kader Attou, Eric Mezino and Chaouki Said, created his first company ‘Accrorap’.

In 1994 the company performed Athina during Lyon’s Biennial Dance Festival; it was a triumph that brought street dance to the stage.

Merzouki’s travels have led him into unchartered territory, where dance can be a powerful means of communication. In order to develop his own artistic style and sensitivity, Merzouki established his own company, Käfig, in 1996.

In January 2006, Compagnie Käfig began a period of residence at Espace Albert Camus in Bron. The theatre became the venue of the Karavel Festival, created in 2007 under the leadership of Mourad Merzouki. The festival invites some 10 different hip-hop companies and other initiatives to the city.

In parallel, Mourad Merzouki spearheaded the inception of a new center for choreographic creation and development: Pôle Pik opened its doors in Bron in 2009.

In June 2009, Mourad Merzouki was appointed director of the Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne. He continues to develop his projects there, with an accent on openness to the world.

In 18 years, the choreographer has created 23 shows and his company gives on average 150 performances per year around the world.

February 15, 2013 The City of Lyon is awarding Mourad Merzouki the Medal of the City.

July 14, 2012 Mourad Merzouki is named Knight of the Legion of Honour.

July 5, 2011 Mourad Merzouki is named Officer of Arts and Letters by the Minister of Culture and Communication.

June 2009 Mourad Merzouki is appointed director of the Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne.

February 19, 2008 Mourad Merzouki receives the 2008 Award Designers without Borders, awarded by the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Bernard Kouchner. The trophy is awarded each year to artists and personalities for their particularly remarkable actions throughout the world.

December 4, 2006 The newspaper Le Progrès and Tele Lyon Métropole organize an evening rewarding Lyon’s cultural players. Ten awards are given in ten artistic categories. Mourad Merzouki and the Compagnie Käfig receive the Lumières de la Culture Award in the Dance category.

June 12, 2006 Mourad Merzouki receives the Choreographic New Talent Award by the SACD. 2006 SACD winners include, among others, Gad Elmaleh, Julie Ferrier, Radu Mihai, José Montalvo and Dominique Hervieu ...

July 14, 2004 Mourad Merzouki is made Knight of Arts and Letters by the Minister of Culture and Communication.

May 30, 2004 Mourad Merzouki receives the award for best young choreographer at the International Dance Festival at Wolfsburg, in Germany. Other winners include Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Tero Saarinen and Maurice Béjart.
A major figure on the hip-hop scene since the early 1990s, choreographer Mourad Merzouki works at the junction of many different disciplines: to his exploration of all hip-hop styles, he adds circus, martial arts, fine arts and live music. Without losing sight of hip-hop movement’s roots, of its social and geographical origins, this multidisciplinary approach opens up new horizons and reveals complete new outlooks.

His training is rooted in the circus school in St Priest, in Lyon’s eastern suburbs, which he attended from the age of seven while also training in karate and boxing. Hip-hop came along when he was fifteen: he began dancing in the street, then moved on to choreography with Kader Attou, who would remain his associate from 1990 to 1994. During that time he was also learning from contemporary choreographers like Jean-François Duroure and Josef Nadj.

In 1994, recognition came with *ATHINA*, a piece co-written with his first company, Accrorap. The project was backed by Guy Darmet’s Maison de la Danse in Lyon, which has subsequently supported all his new productions. Mourad’s first fully independent work, *KÄFIG*, was performed at the Rencontres Urbaines de la Villette in Paris. Käfig means “cage” in Arabic and German and becomes the name of the dance company. It points to the choreographer’s receptivity and openness and his refusal to become locked into a single style.

On a deck surrounded by a net, a hip-hop dancer and a contemporary performer challenge each other in order to improve their dialogue. The message is clear: hip-hop is extending its territory without losing itself. The Maison de la Danse of Lyon, directed by Guy Darmet, supported the project and since then, collaborated with most of Mourad Merzouki’s new productions.

Two years later *RÉCITAL*, an unusual dialogue between six dancers, a musician and the image of a classical concert, launches the Compagnie Käfig’s style. Mourad hangs a bunch of violins over the stage and choreographs the unlikely members of an orchestra. An international tour (40 countries) will bring worldwide fame to the Käfig Company.

Teaming up with South African choreographer Jay Pather in 2000, he creates *PAS A PAS*, an explosive mix of traditional Zulu dances and hip-hop.

In 2001, *DIX VERSIONS*, also created at Lyon’s Maison de la Danse, outlines the hip-hop singularity of seven performers, including New York’s dancer Klown. The piece is to be performed at the prestigious Jacob’s Pillow Festival in Berkshire, USA. DIX VERSIONS highlights hip-hop writing and acrobatics with circles of lights that isolate each dancer in his artistic originality, whether inspired by acrobatic or martial arts. The show is embedded in an off-beat plastic environment. Geometric objects are moved around the space by the dancers in a lively game of forms and energies. DIX VERSIONS confirms Mourad Merzoukis aesthetics.

In 2002, he signed «A Fable to La Fontaine» *LE CHÈNE ET LE ROSEAU*, aimed at a young audience, part of the project led by La Petite Fabrique - Annie Sellem.

For the Year of Algeria in France in 2003, he created *MEKECH MOUCHKIN - Y’A PAS DE PROBLÈME* (No Problem!) with dancers from Algiers.
In 2004, **CORPS EST GRAPHIQUE**, the result of a period of residence at the Maison de la Danse of Lyon, supported by BNP Paribas Foundation, was performed with an equal number of male and female dancers. A kind of lightness travels from one dancer to another as they revisit the codes of seduction using large puppets. A sense of humor rarely found in hip-hop is revealed.

In January 2006, **TERRAIN VAGUE**, set in a fantasized no-man’s-land, looks into the choreographer’s childhood and personal journey. For the first time, Mourad Merzouki tells a story. In a fun, colorful space of all possibilities, hip-hop dancers, theatre and circus artists challenge each other with audacity and virtuosity. An eclectic show for a visual, sensory, choreographic and musical journey, bursting with energy.

With **TRICÔTÉ**, in 2008, Mourad Merzouki takes the audience behind the scenes as the company began a residency at the Espace des Arts de Chalon-sur-Saône. Set to the music of the troupe’s faithful collaborator AS’N, this piece offers to all audiences a look at the creation process of a new work, from auditions through to performances.

For the 2008 Biennale de la Danse in Lyon, Mourad Merzouki, as a “guest artist”, performs **AGWA**, a creation featuring 11 Brazilian dancers. AGWA is all about water, at once a vital component of our bodies, a precious – vital, even – natural resource to be preserved and used with care and a symbol of renewal.

For the 2008 edition, he directed the Parade of the Lyon Biennial Festival of Dance, a major event bringing together choreographers and local associations: **LES POINTELLÉS** drew a connecting line between the 18 cities participating in the parade on the theme “Legends of the Future.” Mourad Merzouki was also artistic director for the third time of Bron’s participation in the event.

Between January 2006 and June 2009, Compagnie Käfig was in residence at Espace Albert Camus in Bron. The theatre became the venue of the Karavel festival, created in 2007 under the leadership of Mourad Merzouki. The festival invites some 20 different hip-hop companies and other initiatives to the city.

In 2009, **Pôle Pik**, a new place of creation and choreographic development dedicated to hip-pop dance opened its doors in Bron, in Lyon’s eastern suburb. This new place, whose creation has been supported for almost ten years by Mourad Merzouki, who is now the director, allows to keep spreading hip-hop dance and to develop its promotion, opening it to other art languages.

The project is articulated around three axis: to support choreographic creation and spread; to pass down and train non-professionals and professionals where « Kampus » is the key project; to combine in a synergic way artistic teams and an area around the hip-hop culture.

In June 2009, Mourad Merzouki was appointed director of the **Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne**. Here, he has developed a project called “Dance: a window on the world”, with an accent on openness. Alongside this project, he continues to create and show his works, to provide training and raise awareness about hip-hop dance, and to organize unique encounters to promote access to the choreographic arts and to support independent dance groups.

In 2010, Mourad Merzouki creates **CORRERIA**, a second part presented jointly with AGWA, which takes the viewer into a thrilling, frantic race, like the one that paces our lives. The show tours the world: Japan, Korea, Canada, United-States, Europe, Australia…

The same year, the choreographer presents **BOXE BOXE**, a creation that gives him the opportunity to reconnect with martial arts, his initial training. This piece is also the opportunity to explore new areas of research by surrounding himself with the Debussy String Quartet. Presented at Lyon’s 14th Biennale de la Danse in September 2010, this new show receives a warm welcome from the audience and the professionals.
In March 2011, under the prestigious “Friday evening events” at the Louvre museum, the Centre Chorégraphique de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne / Compagnie Kâfig is involved in this artistic event under the thematic: the “Fight” evenings. On that occasion, Mourad Merzouki imagines choreographic works based on BOXE BOXE and that echo the sculptures of the museum.

In 2012, two new works are added to the repertory:

**YO GEE TI**, a Franco-Taiwanese work developed in collaboration with the National Chiang Kai-Shek Cultural Center, is presented in March 2012 in Taipei and has its European premiere in June 2012 at the Montpellier Festival of Dance, where Mourad Merzouki has been appointed associate artist.

**KÄFIG BRASIL**: this work premieres at the Montpellier Festival of Dance and marks the return of Brazilian dancers from CORRERIA AGWA. For this creation, Mourad Merzouki invites several French and Brazilian choreographers to collaborate in an atmosphere of shared artistic friendship.

On June 1st, 2012, he will take on the works of the Lyon Museum of Fine Arts, in a new experience.

In September 2012, Mourad Merzouki, alongside Dominique Hervieu, will be co-artistic director of the Biennale de la Danse’s Parade in Lyon.

2013 brought the first edition of the **KALYPSO** Festival in Ile-de-France, which is an authentic showcase of contemporary choreographic creations. The Festival hosts about twenty companies in several places of the Ile-de-France region and attracts a broad audience around many encounters, workshops, master-classes, battles, etc.

In 2014, Mourad Merzouki finds his way back to creation through the **PIXEL** project. For this show, the choreographer liaises with Adrien Mondot and Claire Bardainne from the AMCB Company and focuses on digital arts. Using light projections that accompany dancers’ motion, the purpose is to strike a subtle balance between the real and the virtual world, between energy and poetry, fiction and technical achievement to create a show at the crossroads of arts.

The Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil acts as an active member of the **7Steps** street dance European network, which encourages a common reflection on new stakes for hip-hop. A choreographic creation bringing together ten dancers from participating countries is expected in October 2014 under the artistic direction of Mourad Merzouki.

2014 will also bring a renewed success for the piece **RÉCITAL**:
- While he is in residence in New Delhi, Mourad Merzouki passes down the piece to Indian dancers;
- 150 young people from Créteil takes over the piece all long the year to present their work in June 2014 during the Créteil participative event named “Jour de Fête”;
- The artwork, which was once again put on for 40 dancers during the 2012 Lyon Dance Biennial, is on tour in several French cities, as part of the “Kampus” project implemented by Pôle Pik;
- A notation system project using Labanotation is engaged on the piece: RECITAL is the first hip-hop artwork being the subject of a notation.
ARTISTIC COLLABORATIONS

Alongside his creations, Mourad Merzouki is invited to collaborate with other artists in France and abroad, thus contributing to the international reputation of the Käfig Company.

In 1997, he works with Josette Baïz and the company “Place Blanche” on the piece RENDEZ-VOUS, a choreography with four modern dancers.

In 1998 he directs the cork of eight actors and four dancers in LE CABARET URBAIN.

Claudia Stavisky, the artistic director of Lyon’s Théâtre des Célestins invites him in 2004 to direct LA CUISINE by Arnold Wesker and, in 2005, L’ÂGE D’OR (The Golden Age) by Georges Feydeau.

On the film side, in 2004, he collaborates to Marc Jolivet’s first feature film, CONCOURS DE DANSE A PIRIAC, working on all the dance scenes, choreographing actors of all ages such as Ginette Garcin.

In 2007, he also works on LES QUATRE SAISONS, directing the skating duo Nathalie Pechalat and Fabian Bourzat.

In 2009, he adapted RÉCITAL for the Beijing Modern Dance Company’s dancers.

The same year, Mourad Merzouki co-directs with Jeannot Painchaud the piece iD., the Cirque Eloize’s latest production, whose world premiere was given at Incheon in Korea.

Meanwhile, he creates DES CHAUSSÉES for the dancers of the Junior Contemporary Ballet of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et Danse in Paris.

In January 2012, at the invitation of Olivier Meyer, he created a work to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Suresnes Cités Dance Festival: with Kader Attou, Sébastien Lefrançois and José Montalvo, he participated in creating a choral work, inspired by the energy of BOXE BOXE.

At the end of 2013, Mourad Merzouki liaises with the Norma Claire company during the 9th “Rencontres de danses métisses” Festival in French Guiana, to set up creation and transmission workshops to young traditional Native American dancers from the Awala-Yalimapo village.

THE SHOWS ON VIDEO

Video excerpts of the pieces as well as documentaries on Mourad Merzouki’s work are available on CCN’s collection on Numeridanse (international online dance video library) website:

THE ADRIEN M / CLAIRE B COMPANY

MOBILE, ORGANIC, EPHEMERAL, RANDOM, SENSORY:
SEARCHING FOR A LIVE DIGITAL WORLD.

The Adrien M / Claire B Company has been acting in the fields of the digital arts and performing arts since 2004. They create many forms of art, from stage performances to exhibitions combining real and virtual worlds with IT tools that were developed and customised specifically for them.

They place the human body at the heart of technological and artistic challenges and adapt today’s technological tools to create a timeless poetry through a visual language based on playing and enjoyment, which breeds imagination. The projects are carried out by Adrien Mondot and Claire Bardainne. The company operates as a research and creativity workshop based out of Presqu’île in Lyon.

The company was associated with Hexagone Scène Nationale Arts Sciences - Meylan in the years of 2009-2010-2011. They also worked in association with the Manège de Reims Scène Nationale during the theatre seasons of 2005-2006-2007.

eMotion
eMotion is an app for creating interactions between graphical objects and real word information. It is based on a physical animation system and it aims at exploring how motion can convey emotion. In other words: it is an editor that allows you to define a graphic world composed of objects in the shape of points, lines, images, videos, and to define the way you will interact with them (sound, kinect, wiimote, leap motion, etc.).

All images are thus generated, calculated and projected live, in order to create a sensory synthesis, a tangible reality on stage, defined by a key principle in the digital programming: focusing on the inner energy that causes objects to move, rather than on their actual movement patterns. Thereby, maths and digital technology become possible tools for poetic composition. Deviating from their original use, they allow us to create novel sensory, although synthetic, spaces. They open doors to the realm of the imaginary and virtual world, coinciding with reality, to deliver all its evocative power.
ADRIEN MONDOT

Adrien Mondot is a multi-disciplinary artist, computer scientist, IT specialist and juggler who investigates and inquires about movement. He operates at the intersection between the art of juggling and technological inventions. Founder of the Adrien M Company in 2004, he teamed up with Claire Bardainne in 2011 and together they recreated the company under the name of ‘Adrien M / Claire B’.

CLAIRE BARDAINNE

Claire Bardainne is a visual artist, graphic designer and scenographer, who holds degrees from the Ecole Estienne and the Arts Déco in Paris. Her research focuses on the link between graphic signs, images and space, exploring back-and-forth shifts between the imaginary and the real worlds. She is associated with Adrien Mondot since 2011 for a common artistic project.
CENTRE CHORÉGRAPHIQUE NATIONAL DE CRÉTEIL ET DU VAL-DE-MARNE
COMPAGNIE KÄFIG
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