

# CIE GREFFE / CINDY VAN ACKER



**ZAOUM**  
Creation 2016  
photo : Louise Roy

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# CREDITS

Choreography : **Cindy Van Acker**  
Scenography and set construction: **Victor Roy**  
Music : **Quando stanno morendo. Diario polacco N. 2 de Luigi Nono**  
Sound et epilogue music : **Samuel Pajand**  
Poems voice : **Elia Van Acker**  
Dance : **Stéphanie Bayle, Marthe Krummenacher, Gennaro Lauro, Francesca Ruggnerini, Raphaëlle Teicher, Elia Van Acker or Julia Koncsek, Rudi van der Merwe, Daniela Zaghini**  
Light design : **Luc Gendroz**  
Software programming : **Khalil Klouche**  
Costumes : **Kata Tóth**  
Costumes assistant : **Ni Zhang**  
Photos: **Louise Roy**  
Administration : **Cindy Janiaud**  
Touring : **Tutu Production**

Production : **Cie Greffe**  
Co-production: **adc-Genève, Arsenic Lausanne, TLH Sierre**  
Supports: **Loterie Romande, Fondation Leenaards. Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Pourcent culturel Migros, Sophie und Karl Binding Stiftung, une fondation privée genevoise and Corodis.**

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# TOUR

## **2018**

. *Rencontres chorégraphiques internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis - France*

## **2017**

. *Kaaithheater, Brussels - Belgium*

. *TLH, Sierre - Switzerland*

. *Festival NEXT / Schouwburg, Kortrijk - Belgium*

## **2016**

. *Arsenic, Lausanne - Switzerland*

. *ADC, Geneva - Switzerland*

# PRESS

*The choreographer Cindy Van Acker dived into the work of the Soviet avant-garde and poets of the East with their words steeped in the waters of the Danube and the Volga. Many quotes or elements will remain mysterious, but "Zaoum" has reasons to fascinate by offering a rare harmony and a mysterious purity between the bodies, the music and an extraordinary object: a kind of luminous and movable ceiling which seems to fly above the dancers and draws perspectives looking like dreams of architects. "Zaoum" is a unique performance transporting the minds of the audience to a state of grace and uncommon plenitude.*

**RTS, Vertigo, Thierry Sartoretti – 12.05.2016**

*The choreographer of Flemish origin composes here splendid scenes similar to real living pictures. As meditative as well as a combative piece, Zaoum brilliantly summons the ghosts of the resistance.*

**Le Courrier, Cécile Dalla Torre – 12.07.2016**

*Cindy Van Acker has her heart set on putting bodies back up. Just like a painter, she draws her sketches. Her work is on its way, in motion. It is more fragile than before, but it is fascinating.*

**Le Temps, Marie-Pierre Genecand – 12.01.2016**

# ZAOUM

## ***When they die, men dance***

*When some masterworks manage to land in the right place, it seems that any description or comment would downgrade them, beyond their obviousness. This is the case with Zaoum, whose expressive power continues to unfold within each member of the audience, even after the performance, in deep, often opposite impressions. Raising a signifying trait is at once betraying others. Zaoum is the place of an antithesis which comes forward to feed the human soul. Until this final panel hoisted by the child on stage, which says both the target and the white flag, war and surrender, without one being able to understand or put into words the absolute emotion that the latter gesture releases.*

*Cindy Van Acker chose to choreograph Luigi Nono's highly engaged piece, written in 1982, during the repression of the Solidarnosc movement, while Poland suffocated under the martial law of General Jaruzelski. We know the music of Nono nourished by political battles, notably the anti-fascist struggle in Italy; this composition seeks to open spaces of utopia by stretching up to the stridence, a groan, until the silence, four female voices, a flute, a cello and electronic lines.*

*With this piece by Luigi Nono, whose title, Quando stanno morendo is borrowed from a poem by Velemir Chlebnikov, comes the poetry zaoum: from za- (beyond) and oum (spirit), which gives trans-mental or trans-rational, or a language which, since 1913, makes the word an active principle of transformation of the world, betting on the liberating force of sound and writing. Malevich will be inspired by the movement to establish his pictorial supremacy.*

*Nono gives the artist a duty and a capacity for transformation of the world, as much as Chlebnikov and Malevitch, through pure, abstract forms, calling for a higher degree of consciousness, perception, and action. Cindy Van Acker, with them and with her creative team, opens her own work of resistance: she penetrates the score and follows it, especially in its tripartite structure (despair, accusation, hope); she introduces poetry into her dance (birth of a verb magnificently borne by a child); she works space with certain tools of this futurism, and the last installative part, which treats the ground as a page, is an expressive marvel (black square on white background / place of words in the poem). Above all, Cindy Van Acker merges matters, finding, in her usual manner, a new depth, spiritual by force of faith in the bodies. The scenography of Victor Roy, a monumental luminous press articulated, evolves in such a way as to threaten the space of representation, to make appear or disappear the dancers, to dazzle or extinguish, to tremble the earths, the points of reference. A great play on black-white. As for Samuel Pajand, he composed a coda like a long and deep suspense, which finds in the bass a counterpoint to the voices of Nono. We are thus witnessing the progressive transformation of a complex, integrative reality fed by all the sensory registers, inhabited by bodies displaying precise and yet enigmatic symbolic attitudes.*

*Zaoum is a humble, pervasive and rightful piece. Seven dancers and a child set up a slow presence on stage, which will go so far as to freeze in a very long image stopped for a shout of red-hot acme. It is the first time that this slowness, a choreographic quality that is particularly explored by Cindy Van Acker, means to anchor the human being on the earth, in the sense of a confidence in this anchoring. And that goes to the heart of this terrible moment when certain inert bodies, absolutely objectified, are manipulated without precautions, put to the test in the resistance of their abandoned joints with a laconic brutality. These inanimates whose flesh is triturated, martyred, bitten are never canceled. They add a verse to Chlebnikov's poem, which serves as tutor to the musical piece: when they die / men dance.*

*Zaoum is an apocalyptic piece, following the zaoum poetry. As explained in the program by Massimo Cacciari, who collected the poems used by Luigi Nono, the apocalypse brings together catastrophe and redemption, loss and salvation. The very opposite of the pessimism or sadness of which Deleuze says that it is what the established powers need to make us slaves. Similarly, Zaoum is a messianic piece, following Nono's composition, which was dedicated to "Polish friends and comrades who, in exile, clandestinely, in prison, at work, resist - who hope while being desperate, who believe while being incredulous." The very opposite of the blissful faith. Deleuze again on the free man: "To make of the body a power which is not reduced to the organism. To make of the thought a power that can not be reduced to consciousness".*

*With this child who organises the choreography throughout the play, soft voice, delicate body, tangible concentration, this work in black is certainly one of the least sombre of the Flemish choreographer. Desperate, she hopes. And it is certainly this type of antagonistic arrangements, deeply articulated, activated in the sensible, which we need today. The last words of the child are from Pasternak: "I have not lifted the white flag". "And even at the moment of death, men sing."*

**Michèle Pralong**

## PHOTOS



# BIOGRAPHY

## ***Cindy Van Acker — choreographer***

*Cindy Van Acker firstly danced in the Flanders Royal Ballet in Belgium and at the Geneva's Grand Theatre before emerging in the contemporary dance scene in Geneva in the 90'. She founds the Cie Greffe in 2002 at the occasion of the creation of Corps 00:00 that obtained international recognition.*

*Since then, she has signed around 20 projects, such as Anechoic a piece for 53 dancers (2014), the solo Ion (2015), the group pieces Zaoum (2016) and Speechless Voices (2018) and the solo Knusa (2016) created in the heart of Christian Lutz's project Insert Coins.*

*From 2008 to 2009 she created 6 soli, source of as many films made by Orsola Valenti.*

*In 2005, the Italian director Romeo Castellucci invites Van Acker to present Corps 00:00 at the Venice Biennale. This first meeting leads to an artistic collaboration with Castellucci who suggests her to create the choreographic part for his creation of Dante's Inferno (2008 edition of the Avignon Festival). Under his direction, she also signs the choreographic part of several operas as Parsifal, created at De Munt in January 2011, and Moise und Aron, set up at Opéra Bastille in October 2015.*

*Her career is also marked by her collaborations with the choreographer Myriam Gourfink, the scenographer Victor Roy, and the musician Mika Vainio.*

*In 2012, a book on Van Acker's choreographic scores is edited by Héros-Limite in the name of Partituurstructuur and in 2016 Magnetica by Enrico Pitozzi an analysis of the choreographic composition of Cindy Van Acker is published by Quodlibet Studio.*

*Through her choreographic creation, that combines aesthetic sobriety, minimalist movement, meticulous composition and electronic music, Cindy Van Acker examines with an almost scientific thoroughness the connections between the body and the soul, sound and rhythm, and creates works that cross over the boundaries between dance, performance and plastic art.*

*Since September 2017, she became Associate Artist in charge of the programming at ADC Geneva.*

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