

fantasia



Image from Walt Disney's Fantasia

Creation 2019 Ruth Childs

CALENDER

Première October 30 – November 3 – ADC, Geneva

November 15-16 - Atelier de Paris / CDCN

November 20-24 - Arsenic, Lausanne

PRODUCTION

SCARLETT'S

Ruth Childs, ruthechilds@gmail.com

ARTISTIC TEAM

Choreography/Performance: Ruth Childs

Technical direction and light design: Joana Oliveira

Sound design and research: Stéphane Vecchione

Dramaturgy/assistant: Lou Forster, Maud Blandel

Costumes: tbc

DELEGATED PRODUCTION, ADMINISTRATION, DIFFUSION

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PARTNERS

ADC-Geneva, Arsenic, Lausanne, Atelier de Paris / CDCN.

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A familiar tune. Choreographic research

Until now I never wanted to choreograph a "dance" for myself. The idea had intimidated me; it felt like a significant milestone given the choreographers that I collaborate with; [can you name a couple here, and maybe a short statement about them?]. Above all, I felt I was lacking a personal and pertinent method to develop a choreographic score.

Lately, during my choreographic research, I started noticing how familiar tunes make me do spontaneous and surprising things: my body finds postures dynamics, and movements without making a conscious effort. Something about finding the unknown through the known has captivated me.

To quote Marcel Proust: « voluntary memory [...] only gives us of the past faces without truth; but an odor or a rediscovered taste [...] reminds us how different this past is from what we think we remember». In this way, my choreography is interested in the gap between the representation of the past and the motor experiences, which allow the body to remember.

My relationship with music puts me in a bizarre position; intellectually I would rather resist using music to generate movement, particularly classical ballet music. But this dichotomy has sparked my desire to cultivate and play with musicality. Being able to anticipate every single note of a piece of music puts my body in an interesting state of alertness, as if it suddenly became "hyper" intelligent and playful. These melodies allow me to access new layers of physicality: here I am, tightening my jaw, turning my head to the right -- look at my left ear -- widening my shoulders, moving my butt, drawing curves in space, crushing a plastic bag in synch to the rhythm, opening my mouth, widening my nostrils, my fingers. My body is suddenly working on its own, through its muscle memory as well as visual memories of known movements, responding to nostalgia or denoting irony.

In *Matter and Memory* – a work often cited in conjunction with Proust's *Search* – Henri Bergson suggests that in order for a specific recollection to reappear in consciousness, "it must descend from the heights of memory until reaching the precise point where the action was accomplished [...] It is in these present day [movements] that recollections borrow the heat which gives life. »

Finally, I find a rich and generative outlet in physically resisting the primal impulses that my body go to while working with familiar classical music. This resistance becomes a strategy, which allows me to dissolve automatic movements illustrating the music and instead access other forms of mobility. My goal is to collect, juxtapose and rehearse the gestures that appear during the research process as the compositional order for a dance I would call *fantasia*.

A score in silence. *Sound research*

Initially I imagined that *fantasia* would be performed in silence. Once the score created, I would remove the music and reconstitute the choreographic score: my memory of the music would help me engage in the hazardous experience of recollection, an intimate and abstract situation spotlighting play on memory and gesture. At this point in my investigation, I am now taking this idea a step further to deepen possibilities in sound research and create a dialogue between choreographic and musical scores. I would like to try using my own voice (live or recorded) and fragments of the symphonic music to approach the music as my partner for a duet; we would be alternately protagonist and witness. The original music is on the one hand the witness of a past reality and on the other hand what remains from the process of recollection. It combines nostalgic associations with a bygone past, and the physical presence of this body as a medium, recipient, character or woman, in space.

Colorful organization. *Clothes. Wigs. Bags.*

My first creation "The Goldfish and the Inner Tube," in collaboration with Stéphane Vecchione, was an explosive exploration including sound, materials and bodies. For *fantasia*, I will reduce the field of research to the body and its musicality. However, I would like to include another element: color, which will allow me to organize my gestures in an abstract dramaturgy going from white, to lavender, to red, to green and then to black. I will use wigs and plastic bags as extensions of my body to evoke landscapes, objects and musical movements. For each movement, my body will appropriate a different hue. Art Make Up (1971) by Bruce Nauman is a reference for me in the relationship he forges between body and color. Filmed close-up, the American artist paints his body successively white, pink, green, and then black. Without climax or emotion, his skin simply accepts these transformations. As with the music, I would like to treat the color and colored accessories (wigs, clothes and plastic bags) as performance partners. The stage becomes a painting in which I disappear, or in which my body becomes an agent moving color. The color will also be a tool used to disguise myself, allowing me to hide or play with my own persona. The costume is an escape route, a protection or an artifice under which the performer disappears.

The female body. *My body?*

In *fantasia* I am staging myself. I consider this piece as a self-portrait, and a celebration of the body. This physical body is also a gendered body and *fantasia* implies thinking about the representation of the female body, *especially in light of the current political situation linked to #metoo.*

During my research, I have turned to the works of the artist-performer Hannah Wilke who stages her own body in her film *Gestures* (1974) or her photos *Starification Object Series* (1974.) She treats her skin and face as clay, or covers her body with chewing gum to form a sculptural object. She combines a complete absence of subjectivity and a precise and intense utilization of the body. This physicality particularly interests me, in her choice of vulnerable and humorous materials: chewing gum, modeling clay, skin.

NYC. *going back.*

With *fantasia* I am also reconnecting to my memories as a young dancer and spectator in training. So I would like to revisit certain haunts of my youth: concert halls, dance studios, theaters and museums. My desire to dance and become an artist was born in New York. I never lived there but I visited often. As a child my father brought me to see the New York City Ballet, the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic and exhibits at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I took dance classes in the legendary studio Steps on Broadway where I often ran into the stars of the New York scene. As a teenager, I preferred hanging out in my aunt Lucinda Child's loft in SOHO or at the Merce Cunningham studio and attended performances in the Brooklyn Academy of Music. I would like to revisit and re-experience all of these places. To this end I have obtained a residency at *The Floor*, a new studio directed by Violaine Huisman and Jamie Dowd in Brooklyn, with an artist in residency program.

fantasia. *the title.*

Fantasia is a musical composition with a free form and often improvisatory style.... a musical composition based on several familiar tunes.... something composed of a mixture of different forms or styles.... a 1940s Disney Classic, a surname belonging to at least 841 white women in the United States... a costume (in Portuguese)... an Arabian horse show.



Image from Walt Disney's Fantasia

References (in progress)

Music

- Beethoven's Symphony #6 "Pastoral"
- Beethoven's Symphony #9
- Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker
- Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings in C
- Dvorak's Slavonic Dances
- Radetzky March, Op. 228

Film

- *Fantasia*, Walt Disney (1940)
- *Gestures*, Hannah Wilke (1974)
- *Art Make Up*, Bruce Nauman (1974)

Previous work

The Goldfish and the Inner Tube - 2018

Particular Reel/Calico Mingling/Reclining Rondo/Katema - 2017

(recreation of Lucinda Childs Early works)

Pastime/Carnation/Museum Piece – 2016

(recreation of Lucinda Childs Early works)

Ruth Childs

British-American dancer and performer Ruth Childs was born in 1984 in London. She grew up in the United States where she studied dance (classical and contemporary) and music (violin.) In 2003 she moved to Geneva to finish her dance training with the Ballet Junior de Genève. Following this, she started working with many internationally known choreographers and directors including Foofwa d'Imobilité, La Ribot, Gilles Jobin, Massimo Furlan, Marco Berrettini and Yasmine Hugonnet.

Since 2015, she is also working on a re-creation and revival project of the early works of her the aunt, the American choreographer Lucinda Childs.

In 2014 she founded her company SCARLETT'S in order to develop her own work through dance, performance, film and music and collaborates with Stéphane Vecchione on musical project "SCARLETT'S FALL."

In 2016 the state of Geneva awarded her a scholarship and research residency in Berlin of 6 months to develop her own work. . Her first stage piece in collaboration with Stéphane Vecchione , *The Goldfish and the Inner Tube*, premiered in April 2018 .

Joana Oliveira

Joana Oliveira was born in Porto in Portugal. Early on, she developed passion for performing arts and in particular light design. In 2006 she entered the Academy of Contemporary Performance in Porto to study light design.

Following her graduation, she created lighting for diverse performances including dance and theatre and in situ projects. In 2014 she received a study scholarship and moved to Lausanne, Switzerland to work as an apprentice in the Arsenic theatre. She then started to work with many different Swiss companies, and now designs lighting for the following choreographers and theater directors: Audrey Cavelius, Ludovic Chazaud, Orélie Fuchs Chen, Le Collectif sur un Malentendu, Claire Deutsch and Christophe Jaquet.

Since 2015 she worked closely with YoungSoon Cho Jaquet (compagnie Nuna) as light designer and technical director.

In 2018 she collaborated with Ruth Childs and Stéphane Vecchione on their stage piece «The Goldfish and the Inner Tube ».

Stéphane Vecchione

Sound designer, performer and self-taught drummer, Stéphane Vecchione, born in 1971 in Yverdon-les Bains, trained as an actor, at the Conservatoire de Lausanne, in the Dramatic Arts section, from 1995 to 1999.

He then worked as a performer and or musician for many artists and companies including Stefan Kaegi, Denis Maillefer, Massimo Furlan, Nicole Seiler, Philippe Saire, Yasmine Hugonnet, Clédat & Petitpierre. He is also a member of the group Velma (important band and performance collective based in Lausanne) and Deviation (sound installation collective based in Lausanne.)

In 2002, he received a prize for "young music creators" from the Vaud Foundation for the promotion of artistic creations. In 2010 he founded his company SORI, to develop his own work through performance and sound.

In 2014 he started his collaboration with Ruth Childs first with their musical duo SCARLETT'S FALL and then their stage piece *The Goldfish and the Inner Tube* in 2018.

Lou Forster

Born in 1988, Lou Forster lives and works in Paris. He has a diploma from the EHESS and has been active as a critic for journals such as A Prior and Art21 which he co-directed from 2012 to 2013. He also worked with Jeanne Revel and Joris Lacoste on developing the W method, a critical, practical and theoretical approach to represented or performed action.

Since 2010, he has collaborated with Lénio Kaklea with whom he created O, a platform which produces choreographed work, programs and editions, and exhibits including the Lucinda Childs retrospective Lucinda Childs (Centre National de la danse, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Festival d'Automne 2016).