

Théâtre du Mouvement  
*direction Claire Heggen and Yves Marc*

# ALBA

directed by **Yves Marc**

artistic assistant **Estelle Bordaçarre**

with **Alexandra Antoine Silvia Cimino Mélanie Devoldère**  
**Véronique Muscianisi Elsa Taranis Yves Marc**

**a choreographed and dramatic work**



THEATRE DU MOUVEMENT


**A theatrical creation around body, gesture and movement**  
**An original creation, freely adapted from Federico Garcia Lorca's play**  
***The House of Bernarda Alba***

A work conceived and directed by Yves Marc  
artistic assistant Estelle Bordaçarre

**Performers**

Bernarda : Yves Marc  
La Poncia - The maid : Mélanie Devoldère  
Adela : Silvia Cimino  
Martirio : Elsa Taranis  
Angustias : Véronique Muscianisi  
Magdalena-Amélia : Alexandra Antoine

Set and lighting design : Jaco Bidermann  
Sound design : David Schaffer  
Costume design : Fanny Mandonnet  
Production manager : Ophélie Tison Canonne



The Théâtre du Mouvement was founded in 1975 by Claire Heggen and Yves Marc. The company's main focuses are on research, creation and transmission. It has based its work on the theatricality of movement, integrating the corporal mime technique of Etienne Decroux – and has expanded its scope through various and specific research themes (animality, masks' displacement over the body, human walk, relation between body, movement and objects, bodily manifestations of emotions and thoughts, musicality of movement,...). Conceptually, the stage writing frames it's language somewhere between dramatic dancing, object theatre and text theatre in which the body is engaged, thus placing the actor's body at the core of artistic creation.

**Work in progress extracts available on YouTube**  
Enter « Alba Yves Marc »

Production Théâtre du Mouvement, co-production L'Odyssée - Festival MIMOS - Institut National des Arts du Mime et du Geste de Périgueux. Project supported by the City of Coulommiers. The Théâtre du Mouvement Company is funded by the French Ministry of Culture - DRAC Ile-de-France.

## The reference play : The House of Bernarda Alba from Federico Garcia Lorca

The play centres on the events of a house in rural Andalusia in the 1930's. Upon her second husband's death, domineering matriarch Bernarda Alba imposes an 8-year mourning period on her household in accordance with her family's religious tradition. Bernarda has 5 daughters, aged between 20 and 39, whom she has controlled inexorably. Nonetheless, she has resolved to give her eldest daughter, the rich Angustias, in marriage to a proud, handsome suitor from the village, Pepe El Romano. Angustias inherited her wealth from her father, Bernarda's first husband. Pepe El Romano is attracted to Angustias' money but truly desires Adela, the youngest sister, so lovely and attractive. Her sisters are jealous and frustrated, so much so that one of them reveals the truth about her affair.

Adela, stricken with sudden spirit and jubilation, defies her mother and the whole family, proclaiming her love. Bernarda hounds the seducer out of the village to prevent scandal and gossip. Adela, having heard a gunshot and not knowing that Pepe survived, hangs herself.

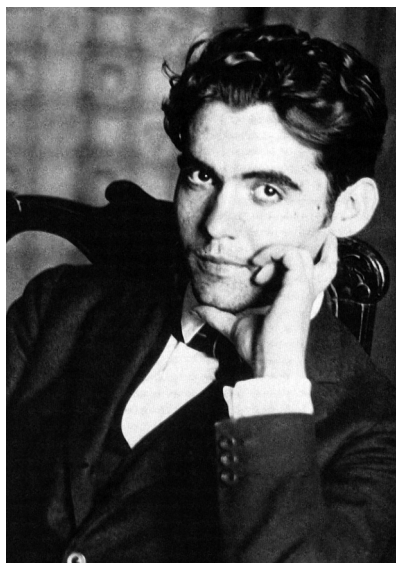
### Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936)

Federico García Lorca was born in 1898 in Andalusia.

He studied law along with philosophy and literature at the University of Granada. He then set up the Gallo review with a group of local intellectuals. In 1919, García Lorca travelled to Madrid, where he became part of a group of artists which included Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel, who exposed the young poet to surrealism. The three of them collaborated on their 1929 film *Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog)*. He was passionately involved with Dalí. The friendship with Lorca had a strong element of mutual passion, but Dalí rejected the erotic advances of the poet.

In the middle of the 1930's, he co-directed La Barraca, a national travelling theatre company, which toured many Spanish villages, towns and cities performing some of García Lorca's own plays, including his three great tragedies *Bodas de sangre* (1933), *Yerma* (1934), and *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936). In 1936, García Lorca, a homosexual and a rebel, was arrested and murdered by Franco's soldiers.

Lorca was able to weave traditional and folk elements of Spanish literature and culture from his native Andalusia, such as poetry and gypsy music, more specifically the *cante jondo*, a well-appreciated form of flamenco.



Alba  
that obscure object of desire



*The day we stop resisting our instincts, we'll have learned how to live.*  
Federico García Lorca

## Dramaturgical choices

We have maintained the great dramatic principles of Lorca's iconic play : the confinement, the mother's tyranny, the family law, the hatred and jealousy, the craving, the archetypal process of women's quarters, the constant pressure of both moral and religious dogma.

We unveil what Lorca's words, carved in a specific social reality and family realism, seem to suggest in a low-key manner, without really stating it clearly.

We staged these bodies and their movements - as an echo to the dramatic images offered by Lorca - through a metaphorical play between «mimographies» and choreographies.

We suggest implicitly, as a mild yet rebellious cry, what must, it seems, remain unsaid or silenced : the pleasure of desire and the desire for pleasure, frustrations, a pent-up sensuality at the mere idea of man, jealousy and hatred and the constant constraints weighing over bodies and souls.

Alba glorifies the human body, pointing out its shackles and its taboos. It's an ode to life and love in all its forms.

Love seen as a possible weapon of resistance and transgression, free from the pressure of a society submitted to dogma.

*A tyrant's power always appear to rely on repression of vital impulses and the control over sexuality. Willem Reich, 1933.*



## Scenic vocabularies

### Man : between presence and absence

Man, men never appear on stage. Their absence is one of the major dramaturgical feature of Lorca's play: men's absence is always present within these women's imagination. In Alba, man only appears in a photo frame, an elliptical outline summing up all of Bernarda's daughters' fantasies. He catalyzes the growing hatred, a strong jealousy between the sisters... in any case, a craving, something irrepressible which dwells in these women's hearts and bodies.

Bernarda, in the flaring up of her domination, reproduces the same power pattern as men do. She unconsciously incarnates men's stranglehold over social, religious and family laws. To support this point of view, Bernarda's part is performed by a man, Yves Marc, who gives life and movement to the character, unveiling her contradictions, her strong beliefs and inner laws. Dressed as a woman, his interpretation enhances the ambiguity and suggests this absence/presence of man.



### Silence, silence I say !

These last words of Lorca's play are so meaningful to us. We have taken Bernarda's words of command, repeated time and time again, at face value.

Three sentences only will be heard from the original text. They convey the crucial part of the dramaturgy:

«Your father's mourning will last eight years. Throughout this time, no breath of air shall enter this house.

Consider doors and windows as sealed with bricks.»

Shutting words up, unleashing these bodies in order to reveal and expose their constraint, the repression, the unsaid, the shameful in a "well-meaning" society. What won't be said will be moved, «movemented», hectic, quivered, caressed. Bodies shall express what words are not allowed to tell, thus becoming a metaphor for burning desire.



## Corporal and movement vocabulary

Alba takes advantage of the wide interpretative spectrum of its actresses in order to put forward a large range of propositions, from silent dramatic performing to various forms of movement : choreographic dance, dramatic movement, physical theatre, corporal mime.

Each movement is generated by an emotional or corporal state, clearly defined in relation to a specific character or a situation.

### *Inner body tensions*

Inner body tensions will translate through the theatrical use of opposition between the various body parts.

These physical contradictions generate inner resistance and tensions which are able to translate the theatrical dialogue between desires and frustrations.



### *Body constraints*

Bodies will be subjected to all sorts of constraints: veils, ropes, clay...

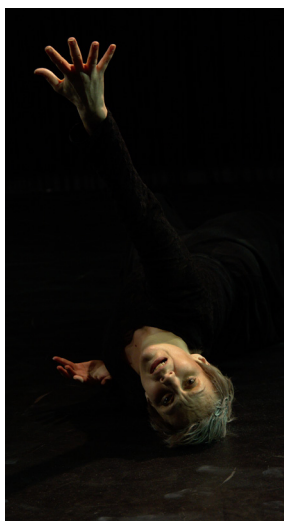
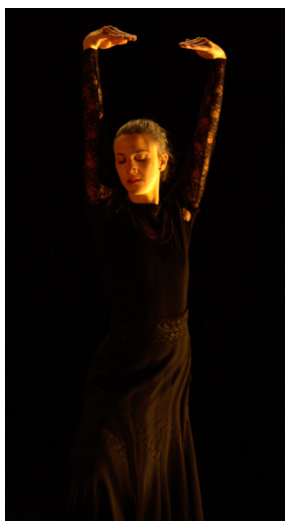
These shall remind us that if one can subdue a body, its envelope, its flesh, one can never subdue the life that palpates underneath. Life is always there, pumping the blood, following the rhythm of impulses and fantasies, quivering in the smallest nooks of the skin's texture.





### *Portraits of characters in movement*

Each character's identity is expressed through solo acts in which gestures and movement are framed in time, space, in silence or music. A mixture of sensuality and nervous tension, withholding and release, inclination and modesty. They all relate to the embodiment of the law or its reverse : the pleasure of movement.





### *Body-choir*

The cloning of specific gestures is a metaphor demonstrating that all sisters are equal, falling under the mourning rule. The choir also portrays the absence of free will, a general evocation of the lemming instinct, a metaphor for giving up, a denial of the individuation process which Bernarda stands in opposition to.



### *Tension of space*

The dramatic tension which prevails among the various characters can express itself in terms of «tension of space». Moving from closeness to remoteness, from speeding up to slowing down, the expression of bodies' inner tensions and their movements will let us feel how tensed and suffocating the air is within Bernarda's house.

Bodies' interplay portrays the air's tightness, the pressure of the law, the magnitude of frustration.



## Sound processing

Sounds, music and chants are recorded.

Sounds will conjure up the outer world, a world these women have no access to because of the law of enclosure.

One may hear bells, tidbits from mass in church, rumours, voices of men never seen, the happy voices of free, courted women.

Flamenco, the *cante jondo* (deep song) of traditional Andalusia, which Lorca loved so much, will serve as a vocal metaphor for silenced bodies in movement. Songs of rebellious bodies, the refrained chant of the voice of resistance. Song of an oppressed people, constantly hunted and hampered: the gipsy people. Voices, rhythms, sounds of dancing steps will support the dramatic choreographies of the characters, their corporal portrait in movement – a backdrop to their inner emotional states.



## White and black, seen and unseen : the play between metaphors and oppositions

### *Space and scenography*

The scenic space is black.

Alba creates a black space of confinement via the use of long synthetic fibre curtains, in turn transparent or opaque (according to lighting).

Black in order to hide or be hidden. Black as are obscure forces. Black makes the faces, smeared in white clay, stand out even more.

It reveals the crazy fantasies around whiteness and wedding dresses.

### *The poetics of veils*

Veils worn for mass, mourning veils, personal and collective veils.

These shall sound as an echo of a far more contemporary debate, spreading in various countries throughout the world: the issue around veiled women in the public space. Religious loyalty, acceptance, the selling-out under the power of the family religious law, fear of social interplay and of seduction. Veils, as they obliterate faces' expressions, are a symbol of the loss of all forms of freedom.



### *Costumes*

Costumes are black... Mourning dresses.

The father's mourning of course, but also mourning of freedom, of life, of the outer world.

As an exception, a joyful attempt: the sisters will sometimes get dressed in white wedding gowns, thus opening a window to express their desire, their fantasies... their childhood dreams.

### *Make Up*

Faces, legs and arms will be covered (smeared) with whitish clay.

This kind of make up offers the possibility to pull away from the realism of the actresses' faces. It creates, on the one hand, a kind of ghostly fictional space, and on the other hand, gives a broader scope to the story.



The Crew



The cast was selected both for its movement and dramatic skills. In addition to their particular proficiencies, they all share the common vocabulary of the theatricality of movement specific to the company, each of them having studied and trained under Yves Marc and Claire Heggen's direction.



**Yves Marc - director actor**

Co-artistic director of Théâtre du Mouvement with Claire Heggen since 1975.

Author, actor, director, professor - Co-artistic director of La Ferme de Trielle. Co-founder of Les Transversales, European Academia of the Arts of Gesture. Co-instigator of GLAM (French movement for the Arts of Mime and Gestural Theatre). Synergologist and technician in NLP (neuro-linguistic programming).

Student of corporal mime with Etienne Decroux.

He has also studied with Moshe Feldenkrais, practiced classical singing and various forms of movement (sport, dance, somatic techniques, etc).

Throughout the last 40 years or so, he has developed, in collaboration with Claire Heggen, a research program within the company, exploring specific themes such as : Theatricality of movement, Animality, The Human Walk, Musicality of Movement, Body expression of thoughts and emotions, etc...

He has directed approximately 20 plays out of the major creations of the company's repertoire.

In 2012 he creates a solo, *Ce Corps qui Parle*, which has toured in Avignon, Montreal, Brussels, and various French Festivals...

He performed in different plays of Théâtre du Mouvement in more than 60 countries.

His teaching is acknowledged in France and abroad: National Theatre Schools, circus performances, various workshops in more than 20 different countries.

He gave many conferences around the major artistic themes of the company.



**Estelle Bordaçarre - artistic assistant**

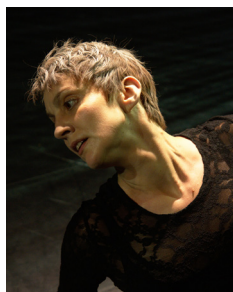
She studies drama at the École du Passage, then trains in puppet and object theatre, in movement and gestural theatre with the Théâtre du Mouvement company, in mask theatre and butô.

In 2002, she joins (Les) Souffleurs.

In 2005, she founds La Cie Emoi.71

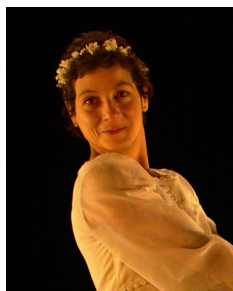
In 2011, she puts on her own clown solo, *Rien (Nothing)*.





### **Alexandra Antoine**

Has trained in ballet dancing at the Paris Conservatoire National de Musique et de Danse from 1987 to 1989. She joined the corps de ballet of the Opéra de Rouen where she danced from the classical and contemporary repertoire. She then trained in singing and comedy at the Rouen Conservatoire. In 2011, she found out about the Théâtre du Mouvement and took its training, as a means to bridge the gap between dance and theatre.



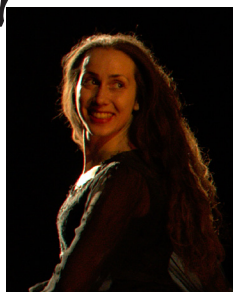
### **Silvia Cimino**

Italian-born, graduated in contemporary dance and in sculpture and painting from the Instituto d'Arte of Palermo. She has studied drama at the Avignon Conservatoire d'Art Dramatique. Dancer, movement actress, comedian and musician, she has a keen interest in a transversal approach of various performing arts. She has been working as performer and teacher for Théâtre du Mouvement since 1999.



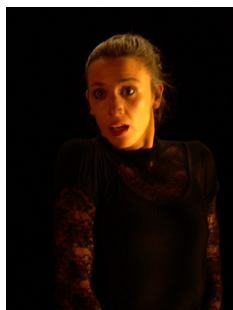
### **Mélanie Devoldère**

Actress, puppeteer and director, she trained at Paris VIII University and École du Samovar. Founder of La Cie des Singes Hurleurs in 2009, she creates *Le Papalagui*, a show currently touring France and Latin America. Lately, she has performed in a gestural theatre show with Inextenso 93 called *Tumultes* and directed by Catherine Dubois.



### **Véronique Muscianisi**

She has studied drama at the Avignon Conservatoire d'Art Dramatique. She also practices Tai-Chi Chuan and Sattriya (danced theatre from Assam). She teaches at the Études Théâtrales Department of Paris VIII University since 2010.



### **Elsa Taranis**

Has studied drama from the Conservatoire Royal de Liège en Art Dramatique, corporal mime with Théâtre du Mouvement and contemporary dance with Studio Harmonic. She has a practical and extensive experience of Argentinian tango, capoeira and aerial circus techniques. She is part of the Brussels collective «The Muzicien(ne)s», a project fostered and managed by Didier de Neck and supported both by the Théâtre de Galafronie and the KVS.



**Jaco Bidermann - scénographie et création lumière**

Jaco Biderman has studied photography at the École Nationale Louis Lumière. He has become stage manager at the Grande Halle de La Villette and light designer associate at the «Rencontres des Cultures Urbaines», an urban music festival. He accompanies various dance and theatre companies, either during music festivals or for artistic projects in museums. He has teamed up in particular with the Joubran Trio, Les Souffleurs (poetic 'commando' units) and with La Compagnie du Sans Souci.



**David Schaffer - conception sonore**

David Schaffer is graduated from National Theatre School Of Canada (NTSC-ENTC) in 2001 and is active in the fields of photography, video, sound design and music.

He's been working For Theatre Du Mouvement since 2009 as a touring technician and photographer.



**Fanny Mandonnet - costumes**

Fanny Mandonnet graduated from the École du Centre Dramatique National de l'Ouest in Rennes and from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Techniques du Théâtre de Lyon.

For the last 33 years, she has created, designed and produced costumes for the theatre and for opera, circus and dance companies. She outlines the essence of her work as the handling of a language which has moulded itself through each of her artistic adventures.



# Contact

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Photos : David Schaffer