



# Trois Grandes Fugues

## 2020 TEACHERS RESOURCE

### Years 1 - 6

**New Zealand  
Festival** OF THE ARTS

#### **Curriculum Links**

Dance, Music

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Your guide to make the most of the festival experience.

# CAST AND CREATIVES

Lyon Opera Ballet [opera-lyon.com](http://opera-lyon.com) (France)

Choreographed by **Lucinda Childs**, **Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker** and **Maguy Marin**

Direction by **Yorgos Loukos**

**Dancers:** Jacqueline Bâby, Kristina Bentz, Edi Blloshmi, Julia Carnicer, Chantal CloupFricquet, Katrien De Baekker, Dorothée Delabie, Adrien Dlépine, Abril Diaz, Alvaro Dule, Tyler Galster, Caelyn Knight, Maeva Lassère, Yan Leiva, Coralie Levieux, Yorgos Loukos, Giacomo Luci, Ricardo Macedo, Marco Merenda, Elsa Monguillot de Mirman, Albert Nikolli, Chiara Paperini, Samuel Pereira, Lore Pryszo, Leoannis Pupo Guillen, Roylan Ramos, Anna Romanova, Erik Sosa, Raul Serrano Nunez, Merel van Heijswik, Paul Vezin.

**Balletmasters:** Pierre Advokatoff, Jocelyne Mocogni, Amandine Roque de la Cruz

## **Grande Fugue**

Choreography: **Lucinda Childs**

Assistant: **Caitlin Scranton**

Music: **Beethoven**, *Die Grosse Fuge op.133*

Recording: Lyon Opera Orchestra –  
Bernhard Kontarsky, Conductor (2016)

Stage design, lighting and

costumes: **Dominique Drillot**

Piece for 12 dancers

Created by the Lyon Opera Ballet on November  
17 2016

Length: 19 minutes

## **Die Grosse Fuge**

Choreography: **Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker**

Music: **Ludwig van Beethoven** La Grande  
Fuge, op.133

Recording: Debussy Quartet (2006)

Production: **Jean-Luc Ducourt**

Sets and lighting: **Jan Joris Lamers**

Costumes: **Rosas**

Piece for eight dancers

Created by the Rosas Company at the Halles de  
Schaerbeek in 1992

Entered the repertory of the Lyon Opera Ballet  
on February 12, 2006

Length: 18 minutes

## **Grosse Fugue**

Choreography: **Maguy Marin**

Music: **Beethoven**, *Die Grosse Fuge op.133*

Recording: Italiano Quartet ©1968, 1969 ©1996,  
Philips Classics

Costumes: **Chantal Cloupet**

Lighting: **François Renard**

Piece for four women dancers

Created by the Maguy Marin Company at  
the Espace Jean Popere de Meyzieu on March  
17, 2001

Entered the repertory of the Lyon Opera Ballet  
on February 12, 2006

Length: 19 minutes

*Lyon Opera: **Serge Dorny**, General Director*

*Lyon Opera Ballet: **Yorgos Loukos**, Artistic  
Director*

*The Lyon National Opera is registered by the  
Ministry of Culture and Communication, the  
City of Lyon, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes  
Regional Council and the Greater Lyon  
Metropolitan Area.*

## ABOUT THE SHOW

One massive piece of music. Three choreographers' remarkable interpretations. In "one of the most exhilarating, uncompromising evenings of dance" (*The Guardian*), three of the world's most esteemed choreographers, Lucinda Childs (US), Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker (Belgium) and Maguy Marin (France), present their own visions of Beethoven's passionate masterpiece *Die Grosse Fuge*.

Performed by the world-renowned Lyon Opera Ballet, a company known for taking on a vast range of ambitious work, this "monumental, stark and uncompromising" (New York Times) triple bill takes you deep inside Beethoven's score, in ways so different and gripping it reveals how strongly music can move you.

# PRODUCTION AND TECHNIQUES

## THE MUSIC: GROSSE FUGE IN B-FLAT MAJOR OP. 133

Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* met with a poor reception when it premiered in 1825. Response ranged from "Incomprehensible" to 'Armageddon". The composer wrote the piece a year before his death when he was almost completely deaf - however is now considered one of his greatest achievements. In the performance each choreographer uses a different version of the score - the repetition of the piece three times over aims to create an intimacy with the music.

The piece has extended moments of *fortissimo* (the musicians play as loud as they can) and *pianissimo* (the musicians play as softly as they can). This creates the extremes of violent eruptions and still calm that made the work so challenging for audiences in 1825. Today the piece is still described as brutal, confrontational and startling - although musicians and composers are also finding the joy and enthusiasm in it. Violinist Nick Kitchen from The Borromeo String Quartet admits in conversation with NPR "that the ensemble has come to refer to the quartet's strangely happy middle portion as the 'nanny-nanny-boo-boo' section."

## MOVEMENT

Each of the choreographers interpret the *Grosse Fuge* using their own dance style and emotional response to the music:

**Lucinda Childs:** "This music is very imposing, it has very sharp changes of direction, so I use a lot of half turns and three-quarter turns and very sharp punctuated phrases." Lucinda Childs. Key elements of this dance are - partner work, the dancers are in male-female pairs, quick shifts of direction and geometric patterning, alternating groups, periods of stillness and rapid movement.

**Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker:** "I wanted to write a masculine vocabulary, non-classical and sexual." Key movements in De Keersmaecker's choreography are falling and rebounding, hand and arm movements that fold and extend and running, jumping, falling sequences. She works with the theme of gender fluidity in dance, all of the dancers regardless of gender move and dress the same.

**Maguy Marin:** "My piece is more fleshy. Blood and flesh and emotion". Rough 'pedestrian' or everyday movements, hunched bodies, tense movements and clenched gestures make up the final piece which creates a very emotional and distressing mood.

## SET, COSTUME AND LIGHTING

In Lucinda Child's piece the lighting, set and costumes are all by Dominique Drillot. In the original production, a cage-like structure was placed on the stage that the performers emerged from. In this touring production, the effect of a cage is replaced by lighting "gobos" (cut out stencils that sit in front of lights to throw shadows on the stage). The effect is one of a delicate lace, which is a reference to the baroque era of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*.

De Keersmaecker's interest in breaking gender confines in dance is reflected in the formal jacket and shirts that the dancers are dressed in. The costumes become an integral part of the choreography. As the piece builds they remove their jackets to show sweaty backs and twisted shirts. A key moment in the lighting is the perfectly timed black out at the end, creating the effect of the dancers being suspended in air.

In Marin's work, the four women are in costumes designed by Chantal Cloupet. Barefoot and hair out or loosely tied, they are all dressed in shades of red - a colour that represents, blood, energy and danger. The clothes are everyday; they are something you could see people on the street wearing. Marin and lighting designer François Renard allow us to listen to the opening bars of the overture in the dark before the four women burst on to the black stage

# FURTHER RESOURCES AND READINGS

The New Zealand Festival of the Arts Programme for *Trois Grandes Fugues* will be available to schools for free. This is a fantastic resource for student and teacher research and contains information, choreographer comments and analysis of all three compositions. Schools attending the performance will be sent a PDF of the programme via email.

## READ

“It gives me something grave, something deep in sadness, but at the same time it’s always falling and coming back, falling and coming back. It’s always reviving, being brought again to life.” Maguy Marin in conversation with Linsey Winship from The Guardian:

[theguardian.com/stage/2017/sep/05/trois-grandes-fugues-lucinda-childs-anne-teresa-de-keersmaeker-and-maguy-marin-beethoven](http://theguardian.com/stage/2017/sep/05/trois-grandes-fugues-lucinda-childs-anne-teresa-de-keersmaeker-and-maguy-marin-beethoven)

## WATCH

Watch the Festival trailer for *Trois Grande Fugues*: [youtu.be/KIXoPrHBMbE](https://youtu.be/KIXoPrHBMbE)

Meet the makers: Explore Lucinda Child’s rehearsal room for *Grande Fugue* and explore it in 360 degrees! This video introduces you to the key players including dancers, the choreographer, and costume designer: [youtu.be/A4xO5ezm41o](https://youtu.be/A4xO5ezm41o)

## LISTEN

To Beethoven’s *Grosse Fuge* and hear members of the Borromeo String Quartet talk about performing the piece: <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=90681740>

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### Drawing to music

Set out some simple drawing or painting materials, coloured pencils, crayons, pastels, watercolour and something to draw on. You could use individual sheets, or a large roll shared between the class. Explain to the class you are going to play a piece of music and they are going to respond using the colours and materials around them. Play *Grosse Fuge* and encourage the class to think about scale, texture, movement and colour while responding to the music. Discuss the different responses.

### Compose your own dance to *Grosse Fugue*

As a class discuss the different emotions that the performances created – create a brainstorm of words. In pairs or groups create your own dance responding to *Grosse Fuge* and one of the emotions as inspiration.

“Dance that rewards close viewing and illuminates its music” **Financial Times**

“One of the most exhilarating, uncompromising evenings of dance I’ve seen in ages”  
**The Guardian**

# PROVOCATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

## PRE-FESTIVAL

Watch the festival trailer for *Trois Grandes Fugues*. What do you see? What can you hear?

Has anyone been to a performance in a theatre before? What was it like?

Discuss the process of going to a performance. What do we expect will happen? How are we going to act and behave? What should we look out for when we are in the performance space?

## AT THE FESTIVAL

What can I see around me? What does the theatre and stage look like?

What captures my attention in the space? The dancers? The music? The set? Why?

What emotions are the dancers creating? What are the dancers trying to communicate?

How does the music make me feel?

## AFTER THE FESTIVAL

How did you feel watching the performance? What were some of the thoughts you had as you watched it?

Did you like the style of music? What did it make you think about? Did it remind you of any music you have heard before?

Did you have a favourite of the three dances? Why?

Was there anything you didn't like about the performance? Why?

What were the dances about? Was there a story?

What did the movements and costumes make you think of?

What skills do you think you would need to be a dancer? Think about physical skills like co-ordination and flexibility but also things like memory and creativity.

Talk about some of the movements the dancers made – e.g. jumping, spinning, pirouetting, making shapes with their arms. See if you can repeat some of these movements in class.

How would you describe the performance to your friends and whānau?

**Need something more? Contact your SchoolFest team with any questions about the performance.**

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