



Trois Grandes Fugues

2020 TEACHERS RESOURCE

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Dance, Music

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Your guide to make the most of the festival experience.

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CAST AND CREATIVES

Lyon Opera Ballet 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 CloupFricket, 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 Fuge

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



GROSS FUGE IN B-FLAT MAJOR OP. 133

The central motif of the fugue is an eight-note subject that climbs chromatically upward, listen to it here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gro%C3%9Fe_Fuge#

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 iteration of the score, the repetition of the piece three times over aims to create an intimacy with the music.

A fugue is a piece of music which is based around a central motif which is repeated and builds up over time, each part (voice or instrument) comes in one by one. The parts converse with each other utilising the main motif and other counterpoints. In *Grosse Fuge* Beethoven manipulates the motif in a wide variety of ways, extended parts played at *fortissimo* (played very loudly), *sempre pianissimo* (played very softly), at varying speeds, different rhythms and even backward. It defies the general structure of a fugue - which is often a lot simpler - and for these reasons it was received with such a mixed response and is renowned as a very difficult piece to play.

MOVEMENT

Each choreographer utilises their own choreographic vocabulary to interpret the *Grosse Fuge*.

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. Partner work, the dancers are in male-female pairs, quick shifts of direction and geometric patterning, alternating groups, stillness and rapid movement.

Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker: "I wanted to write a masculine vocabulary, non-classical and sexual." Key movements in de Keersmaeker's choreography is 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.

Maguy Marin: "My piece is more fleshy. Blood and flesh and emotion". Rough 'pedestrian' movements, hunched bodies, tense movements and clenched gestures make up the final piece.

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 Keersmaeker'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 onto the black stage

FURTHER RESOURCES AND READINGS

The New Zealand Festival 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.

INTERVIEWS

“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

WATCH

The Festival trailer for *Trois Grande Fugues*: youtu.be/KIXoPrHBMbE

Explore Lucinda Child’s rehearsal room for *Grande Fugue* and meet the makers in 360 degrees with this video from Euro News: youtu.be/A4xO5ezm41o

READ

“It’s fascinating to see the enormous differences in the choreographic and kinetic responses to this music. Each dance could serve as a stylistic manifesto for the choreographer” *A New York Times* review with vivid descriptions of each dance: nytimes.com/2016/11/21/arts/dance/review-lyon-opera-ballet-showcases-beethoven-and-female-choreographers.html

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>

GO FURTHER

Explore a landmark performance from each choreographer:

Lucinda Childs, *Dance* (1979) collaboration with Phillip Glass and Sol Le Witt
<https://youtu.be/CByoefokGrA>

Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, *Fase* (1982)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTke1tQztpQ>

Maguy Marin, *Cinderella* (1989) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3-RMnx_xpE

Ready for one last fugue? Hans van Manen’s highly masculine *Grosse Fugue*, from 1971:
youtu.be/83astmL-XU

“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

BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

Watch the festival trailer for *Trois Grandes Fugues*. What are your expectations of the performance?

Listen to a section of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*. What kinds of dance movements does this make you think of?

AT THE FESTIVAL

What sense of energy do I feel in the space?

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

What questions do I have about the pieces? What are the dancers trying to communicate?

AFTER THE FESTIVAL

What was the dance piece about? Was there a story?

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

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

What did you think of the piece of music? Did you hear something new each time? What made them different?

How did the music sound the first-time round? The second time? The third? Did it get better or worse?

What did you notice about staging, lighting, sound, music, costume and other production elements?

How did the production elements support or enhance the performance?

How did the performers use their bodies to create different moods and characters within the pieces?

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

Were there parts of the performances you feel you didn't understand?

Choose one of the choreographers and research another work they have created. You can find examples of all three choreographers works on YouTube. Compare and contrast their piece with *Trois Grandes Fugues*. What motifs can you see in both works? What is different?

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

schoolfest@festival.co.nz | (04) 473 0149