

AMSTERDO

DUTCH DOUBLES: BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO BALLET



From the 16th of April until the 7th of May, The National Opera and Ballet will be premiering four ballets by four choreographers in collaboration with diverse artists outside of the ballet realm. All choreographers have distinct ties to the Netherlands. Hans Van Manen, a veteran of dutch ballet and hailed as the Mondrian of ballet, and Ton Simons former artistic director of Dance Works Rotterdam, are both native Nederlanders. Juanjo Arques originally from Murcia, Spain, was a member of the Dutch National Ballet for 8 years while Jorma Elo, a Finland Native, was a dancer with the Nederlands Dans Theater before becoming a full time choreographer.

Hans Van Manen choreographs 'Dances with Harp' with one of the most talented Harpists of our day Remy Van Kesteran. Consisting of 5 parts, 3 pas de deux and 2 quick one minute parts, not many ballets are set to the music of a solitary Harp on stage. From a joyous and lively performance by three men, the trio effortlessly blend into the pas de deux, while Remy Van Kesteren absorbed in his harp pulls the dancers along with his all-pervading harp chords.



Image by Angela Sterling. Dancers: Erica Horwood & Peter Leung

'Romance' by Ton Simons in collaboration with photographer Rineke Dijkstra, portrays something very personal and vulnerable with different nuances. Simons draws inspiration from Rineke Dijkstra's work which mainly consist of portraits capturing her subjects in self-conscious and revealing moments. Dancers Erica Horwood and Peter Leung present different stages in a relationship to Mozart's Piano concerto in D flat II. The two principals are shown on large screen before and after their performance, emanating the feeling of intimacy between them and the audience.

The idea that life's a roulette is the premise of 'Roulette' by Juanjo Arques in collaboration with visual artist Krijn de Koning. The unpredictability of what happens when we meet someone and the consequences of those meetings between two people. Known for his intricate and colourful site-specific installations, Krijn de Koning's work is more linear and architectural while Juanjo Arques' choreography is more natural and rounded, leaving an opportunity for contrasting the two features into one performance.

Scaled Image 2

Image by Angela Sterling. Dancer: Igone de Jongh


Jorma Elo and fashion designers Viktor & Rolf collaborate in a large scale performance of 24 dancers. 'Shape' vaunts five unusual designs including squared tutus in all white and half round tutus for soloists. Jorma Elo's choreography is classical and passionate and much like a traditional Ballet with many formation changes danced to Beethoven's symphony no.9 in D minor and Beethoven's Concert for Violin in D major performed by Noé Inui.

One of the Goals of the National Ballet is to continue renewing the art of dance in order for it to survive, which it unquestionably realizes with Dutch Doubles. Tickets are €15 – €48 and can be purchased online at www.operaballet.nl/en/

Featured image by Angela Sterling. Dancers: ensemble



LUCY STONES



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