

CREATION 2017

CUBE  
CUBe association | Christian UBL

# STILL

PLAY FOR 6 DANCERS  
AND TWO MUSICIANS

«Entraver un artiste est un crime,  
cela revient à assassiner  
une vie en germe!»

Egon Schiele, 23 avril 1912

**Choregraphy & Conception** Christian Ubl **interpretation**  
Alternately Anne-Emmanuelle Deroo / Séverine Bauvais,  
Alternately Martin Mauriès / Aniol Busquets,  
Marianne Descamps, Bastien Lefèvre, Joachim Lorca and  
Marion Peuta **Dramaturgy & Sound** Fabienne Gras  
**Costumes** Pierre Canitrot, Virginie Corfa **Composition & Live  
music** Hélène Breschand & Fabrice Cattalano  
**Lightning design** Jean-Bastien Nehr **Light** Jean-Bastien Nehr  
/ Bertrand Blayo **Vocal** Dalila Kathir

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Creation  
03 & 04 mars 2017  
Ballet Preljocaj | Pavillon Noir  
CCN Aix-en-Provence

Avant-Première  
21 janvier 2017  
Klap Maison pour la danse  
Marseille

**production**  
CUBE association

**Coproduction**  
Ballet Preljocaj / Pavillon Noir - CCN Aix-en-Provence, Klap Maison pour la danse de Marseille (résidence de finalisation) - Chorège / Relais culturel régional du Pays de Falaise - Fondation EC. ART- POMARET - 3bisf, lieu d'arts contemporains d'Aix-en-Provence - Soutien du Centre Chorégraphique National d'Aquitaine en Pyrénées-Atlantiques - Malandain Ballet Biarritz - CDC Le Pacifique de Grenoble - La Briqueterie/ CDC national du Val de Marne, Vitry-sur-Seine - Fonds SACD Musique de scène - Théâtre de Châtillon - ADAMI - SPEDIDAM

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Supports for residencies  
Théâtre Paul Eluard, Choisy-le-Roi - La Garance, sn Cavailon - CND - CDC Le Pacifique de Grenoble

**support for residencies**

Théâtre Paul Eluard, Choisy-le-Roi - La Garance, SN, Cavailon - CND (résidence augmentée) - CDC Le Pacifique, Grenoble

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## Statement of intent

Following a long creative cycle examining identity and living elsewhere, the next artistic project by CUBe takes inspiration from the turn-of-the-century Jugendstil aesthetic. Started at the end of the 19th century, this modern movement left its mark on many European countries, embracing multiple artistic disciplines such as painting, architecture, literature, music, and dance.

My entire childhood in Vienna was influenced by architecture, which itself was shaped by Jugendstil: a response to the excesses of unchecked industrialization and the sclerotic reproduction of classical conventions. This movement, perhaps most widely recognized by the French term Art Nouveau but also known in Austria as Sezessionsstil, suddenly emerged all over Europe.

CUBe's new opus Stil (Style) revisits this period, long deserving its due for its rich historic and iconographic references. The creative process, drawing from both a personal and a universal retrospective, seeks to establish a contemporary form: an innovative way of speaking and com-posing.

### Klimt and Schiele: Yin and Yang of the Austrian Soul

At the beginning of the 20th century, Jugendstil brought the cornerstones of delicacy, refinement, and imagination to Vienna, captivating the Viennese. The now ubiquitous paintings of Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele - found not only in museums and galleries but so mass-produced for consumption in tourism, leisure, and lifestyle industries that we can now categorize them as popular iconography - are encompassed within this movement. Comparing the two artists Elisabeth Léopold (widow of the art collector Rudolf Léopold) noted, "Klimt was far more popular...he was handsome, charming, a real ladies' man. But his works weren't Austria: they lacked the melancholy and death so present in those of Schiele." Furthermore, she continues, "though they adored one another, Klimt and Schiele chose divergent paths. When an art dealer requested that Schiele refer to Klimt to

alter one of his self-portraits (under the pretext that his canvas was impossible to sell as-is), Schiele replied, "This painting was born from the depth of my soul and I will change nothing."

### A Difference of Stil

Though radically different in form and content, the human body is often at the heart of the matter in both Klimt's and Schiele's oeuvres. Studying this trove - their two styles so rich in nuances of expression - will give us the raw material to craft postures, poses, and movements that will embody the very substance of CUBe's new opus Stil. By exploring motion and creating tension using the past versus the contemporary, our goal is to experiment with new shapes, sensations, and expressions to invent a unique way of filling the stage through dance.

### Renowned Pioneers

In the dance world, American Loie Fuller (1862-1928) was one of the first artists to bring "Art Nouveau dance" to life. At the time, her notions of movement and costumes revolutionized dance. Her style contributed to bridging the gap between variety shows, performance, and modern dance. Striving to separate dance from classicism, breaking down barriers, and shattering established conventions, her creations were unusual and personal.

At the dawn of the 20th century, Jugendstil also transformed the never-ending debate between conservative supporters of tradition and progressive champions of modernity. Shared ideas and ideals gave birth to the desire to create a style that expressed itself through diversity rather than uniformity. This movement was characterized by inventive applications of organic rhythms, colors, and ornamentation inspired by trees, flowers, insects, and animals; this combination enabled the movement to reinsert the sensory world into everyday life. Using all available space and creating a universe where modern man could flourish, it was also considered a complete art form.



## THE ROAD TO THE CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION

New forms of writing inevitably take us into uncharted waters and demand deconstruction. They lead us into undefined territory where our expectations and codes of reception are shaken.

I believe that today, we are living in a time similar to that of Jugendstil. The meaning and usefulness of art, and a certain liberty of expression within it, are under discussion. The control of desires (not to mention censorship) is becoming an increasingly important phenomenon in our societies. I am affected by this as an artist and as a citizen. Schiele was haunted by the control of desires. That is why I consider it relevant to revisit the heritage of this troubling and unsettling artistic trend, which during this short but rich era also revolutionised the performing arts with Loïe Fuller, creating parallels between the past and present. I want to express these connections between the present day and a century ago, to show the friction between the two periods, making the connections readable and bringing them to life through the bodies on stage. The "golden" life blanket will have an aesthetic and symbolic role in the performance.

I hope to raise the spectator's awareness and spark their curiosity to encourage them to question their boundaries and prejudices with regards to choreographic writing of the past and theatrical writing of the present. By calling on a body trained in the art of dance with all its codes of contemporary dance (modern techniques and improvisation techniques), choreography presents our eyes and our senses with a honed and sophisticated body that contrasts with everyday bodies or performative bodies in new stage writing. This project will put these two kind of bodies or representations of the body to the test and bring them into opposition on the same stage.

Although I feel that belonging to a group or a movement plays an important role in enabling artists to find their own path and individual identities, I also see openness to others, to what is foreign and different, as a strength to be treasured. This open-mindedness and multiplicity of expressions lay at the heart of the Jugendstil movement. Jugendstil served as a crossroads for all types of artistic expression, a place where different artistic approaches could reflect and confront one another, and work together to invent new expressions, forms, or creative techniques.

New forms of writing inevitably take us into uncharted waters and demand deconstruction. They lead us into undefined territory where our expectations and codes of reception are shaken.

What is a free body and what is free thought in art today?

## The contextualisation and reflection on our era through an exploration of the representation of the body between 1917 and 2017: how does the body carry itself?

Among other things, the two artist-in-residence programmes dedicated to research and preparation have enabled me to understand the historical, political, and societal context of this turbulent, crisis-stricken era. Numerous texts and letters from the period bear witness to both the hopes and fears of the artists associated with Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) and Sezessionstil (the Secessionist movement). One of the preoccupations of these artists was the extent to which they could make their works not only innovative, but also accessible (not to mention popular) and filled with references to daily life. The industrialisation of the time played an important role, just as the digital revolution does today. For example, in specialist art magazines (*Dekorative Kunst*) during the early days of the Art Nouveau/Secessionist movements, the trend was a target for criticism, on the grounds that industry popularised fashionable new artistic methods, and that mass production allowed for the reproduction and imitation of works of art. I would like to follow these concerns and this process to the letter, as I begin my work on STIL in bodily and musical terms.

Another preoccupation, above all for the painters of the period, was the representation of the body in its broadest sense, and more particularly the representation of its private sphere, which is to say the body and its moods, the naked body, and the desirability or non-desirability of the body.

The contextualisation of sexuality, itself an ever-present taboo, has produced a shift in the expectations and emotions of the spectator. These images of the body are still relevant, and are at times admittedly disconcerting, but they function as a thread linking the two extremes at the heart of the aesthetic movement: the classical and the contemporary.



The outer layer, the shell of skin (nudity), is a source of tension, and stimulates the senses and emotions of the receiver. The private sphere of the Being, as painted by Schiele or Klimt, tested and bent the limits of “political correctness”. These paintings, imbued with intentional, unequivocal eroticism, verge on pornography, and were all subjects of examination, censorship, and control before their publication. By the efforts of artists and their published works, the representation of the body was undergoing sweeping changes, and was challenged and revolutionised at the very heart of society. These works showed naked, pregnant women; women in provocative, sensual, intimate poses; couples during lovemaking; men naked together, touching their own genitals; and women in the throes of passion, faces deformed by extreme or exaggerated expressions. The private, sexual boundaries of the body were disturbed and troubled and burst out of their formal context, previously celestial or even religious.

In the interests of both bodily matter and the subject matter to be danced on stage in STIL, we have begun to produce a catalogue of poses (in the manner of a musical score) on the themes of Schiele and Klimt, in order to create a resulting substance and mould. It will allow us to transpose the bodily burdens and tensions, the emotions, and the expressions of that era to contemporary bodies: a transfer of information, one layer at a time, through shifts that aid the imitation of the form (twisted at the base) that may replicate the scandalous provocations of the era.

This score for the body is undergoing constant evolution and construction, and constitutes an important base for the choreographic writing of the body matter. Ideally, I wish for all other matter within STIL to be born from this first substance, including theatrical situations, dialogue, and complementary theatrical staging of the body.



Another aspect and treatment of the body I find very important is the work on facial expressions and details of the hands, a significant characteristic for both Schiele and Klimt. The sculpted, sometimes even deformed, body springs forth and is perceived and the original form is forgotten, verging on a certain “vanishing”. I also find this process or visual effect of formal collapse very relevant to the development of choreographic writing. Different treatments will be carried out to enrich or twist the tapestry of poses from the original score, or to make them more abstract or theatrical.

At the heart of Klimt's work, the collective, sacred body is also a communicative body. These bodies, often floating and high up, are summoned and set in motion in order for their strength and symbolism to be put into question through dance. A pregnant woman (often featured in Klimt's paintings) could be the protagonist of a sequence rich in scope, height, and movement.

Another interesting aspect is the fact that Japan and its exoticism had a great influence on the artists of the era. I would like for this influence to be felt on stage in the bodies and the music. I therefore explored this question and hit upon the “floating world”, a term I am borrowing from Japanese art to allow me to examine the score for the body through uninterrupted movement. This comes through in the form of a highly aerial rocking motion: a simple yet effective transfer of weight that will give a specific quality and distinctive temporality to the score.

Moreover, I feel that a real quotation from the artist Loie Fuller should appear and become legible on stage. She is the first artist who worked with dance in the Jugendstil, and she remains an important point of reference in the dance world. The transposition of her body to the stage establishes a dialogue and connection with the process applied by Klimt, who himself covered his paintings with patches of gold leaf. These two processes, obscuring and covering up the body for Loie Fuller, and concealing parts of the body with patches in the paintings of Klimt, are means of encroaching on the body portrayed and changing its function and symbolism. Bodies become a deformed, geometric surface, sometimes unidentifiable, more abstract than narrative. To replicate this, we plan to work with foil blankets, thereby creating the living incarnation of these processes on stage.

A final axis of the body work to explore and imbue on stage is, on the one hand, the censorship of bodies; and on the other, their eroticism and pornography. Their censorship, prohibition, amputation, judgement, or ablation is a circumstance in and of itself—an existing fact—and moreover a violating effect and circumstance that I would like to work on as it is by creating circumstances of censorship that can emerge once more through the score of poses. They can allow us to experience through physical limitation the control of desires and the expression of the living, performative body.

To evoke the very fine, sometimes subjective boundary between eroticism and pornography, we are relying once more on an elaborate score, set in friction against the naked, clothed or half-naked bodies through an unconventional act of undressing. A fine balance must arise at the very heart of this friction, in order to examine and bring to life the impact of the body represented on stage.

The pornographic act must be given its due, but may not necessarily be exposed or incarnated in an explicit manner. Other stances and methods remain to be discovered and embraced over the course of various experiments in the studio.





For the music and original composition, I have chosen to work with electronic composer Fabrice Cattalano and harpist H el ene Breschand. The two worlds and methods of composing music will coexist on stage. The image of the harp wonderfully illustrates the era of Art Nouveau, yet the use of the instrument will circumvent purely classical intentions and tones. Opposite Breschand, Cattalano will develop and play his composition live, with the help of a touchscreen tablet. In my view, this device seems relevant and representative of the two modes of composition that one can find in music.

#### Between symphony and popular dance music

Fabrice Cattalano began by breaking up and "electronising" a symphony by Gustave Mahler, which is converted bit by bit into a drum machine, exhibiting fleeting traces of the past as it passes through a sequencer. His wish is to create a bank of audio elements that can be operated in a live setting as he overlays the different patterns. All of this will be managed through a touchscreen tablet that can orchestrate the different musical layers and themes.

#### The treatment of voice on stage

On stage: a musical creation at heart, initially represented through dance, composed according to a pattern that reflects the rhythmicity of one part of the choreography; then with my electronically-altered voice (looped and harmonised) overlaid in order to produce a celestial, spiritual heart, which will transport us into a whirlwind of exotic, yet resolutely modern, emotions on a Japanese theme. To obtain this result, exotic sounds from other cultures will combine with my composition to enrich and amplify the auditory points of reference.

These voices will therefore be galvanised by a rhythmic composition borrowed from the rumba (an exotic influence), which gradually develops into a more current sound (hot, heavy, and liberating). The melodic section, performed by instrumentalist H el ene Breschand, will reinforce this liberating aspect.



The four-hand musical composition performed by Cattalano and Breschand will also function as a gateway into abstract space, tension, and hypnotic discord, so that the bodies of the dancers and the visual installation of the foil sheets may ring out and exist through flotation, as ornaments of the atmosphere on stage, where man must face up both to the power of the Klimt and Schiele poses, and to the tool of identity, whether this be private, autobiographical, or simply personal. The relationship of this balance and interplay between the two compositional practices allows for music to be created together, in collaboration, suspended



## CUBe | association

CUBe is a contemporary dance company based in Marseille (FR) and directed by the Austrian choreographer and dancer Christian UBL.

Since 2005, Cube has been growing with presenting work involving movement, images, music, architecture, art and text. CUBe aims to partner with artists from different backgrounds to reach a multifaceted stage production which questions the power of dance, as well as the artistic act itself, its necessity and its visibility. With each creation, the goal is to create a language or a specific world, articulated around the body - providing poetic and cross-cutting responses to contemporary issues ; to cause an artistic effervescence, which speaks to the audience of today.



Christian Ubl  
choreographer | dancer

Christian UBL was born in Austria in Vienna. He approaches dance through a very eclectic background, including figure skating and mainly Latin sports dances – for which he won many prizes in international competitions. From 1993, he found interest in contemporary dance and follows workshops in Vienna, Budapest, Nantes, Istres and New York.

In 1997, he joins Coline in Istres for 2 years where he meets Luke Trembley, Robert Seyfried, Serge Ricci, Mirjam Berns, Fabrice Ramalingom H  l  ne Cathala, Fran  oise Murcia. After this training, he continues his carrier as interpreter with Robert Seyfried and Abu Lagraa. From 2000, he participates in Michel Kelemenis plays. Then, he is chosen by Les Carnets Bagouet to dance Meubl   sommairement (summarily furnished) by Dominique Bagouet. In 2001, he also performs for Christiane Blaise, Daniel Dobbels and Delphine Gaud. From 2003, he dances with Thomas Lebrun La Tr  ve (2004) What you want ? (2006), Switch (2007) and interprets for the Compagnie Linga in Lausanne and Irland Dance Theater in Dublin.

In 2005, Christian gets a license - Humanities - Art Show at the University of Lyon II and becomes the artistic director of CUBe. Subsequently, he creates the choreographies:

May You Live In Interesting Times (2005) Ersatztrip (2006) Klap! Klap! (2008), FEVER (2009) BlackSoul & WhiteSpace (2010-2012) I'm from Austria like Wolf! (2010) and La Semeuse (the sower) (2011).

He co-writes a duet Sur les pas des demoiselles (on the footsteps of young ladies) (2010) with Christine Corday for the Festival Rayon Frais in Tours. That same year, Christian begins a new artistic collaboration with David Wampach for Casette, Sacre et Tour and joins again Thomas Lebrun -Director of CCNT- for La Jeune Fille et la Mort (the young girl and death).

He also assists in creating Thomas Lebrun With Pop Songs creation - project for 16 amateurs in MPAA in Paris and creates And So We Dance, for 20 amateurs for the opening of the festival of Tour d'Horizon at the CCNT in June 2013.

In 2014, at the Pavillon Noir, he creates the play Shake it Out for five dancers and two musicians on stage on the place of folklore and tradition in European cultural sphere.

Christian begins a new collaboration as a performer with Tom  o Verges for 2014/15 season and creates HOW MUCH ? in Cairo and Alexandria in April 2015, the outdoor performance WAOUHHHHH! and A U, third piece to his triptych A World Without Flags in October 2015. 2016 Ubl is invited by Huber Colas at the festival ActOral.16 at Friche la Bel de Mai and create TONGUE OF FIRE with Lucie Depeauw.





**CUBe's production**

2005 | What is time ?  
May You Live In Interesting TimeS - Festival Printemps de la Danse Théâtre Sévelin 36 (CH)

2006 | How can one tell the copy from the original ?  
ErsatzZtrip - Pavillon Noir/CCN Ballet Preljocaj, Aix-en-Provence (FR)

2008 | What is the role of the public in performance today?  
KLAP ! KLAP ! - 3bisf lieu d'arts contemporains, Aix-en-Provence (FR)

2012 | How does one reconcile body and soul ?  
diptych BlackSoul & WhiteSpace - Tipperary Dance Platform – Irlande (IR)

2014 | What is the role of folklore, and of European culture ?  
Shake it out au Pavillon Noir / CCN Ballet Preljocaj, Aix-en-Provence (FR)

2015 | Why "difference" is a crucial component of "identity"?  
A U - KLAP Maison pour la danse de Marseille (FR)

2017 | What is a free body and what is free thought in art today?  
STIL - Pavillon Noir/CCN Ballet Preljocaj, Aix-en-Provence (FR)

**artistic collaborations & co-writing**

2009 - FEVER Creation of 5 choreographers at the Laban Center in London (E)  
2010 - Sur les pas des demoiselles Co-writing with Christine Corday (FR)  
2011 - La Semeuse Text from Fabrice Melquiot with Céline Romand & Christian UBL, 3bisf lieu d'arts contemporains, Aix-en-Provence (FR)  
2012 - Switch Reconstruction & recreation at the MPAA - Maison des pratiques artistiques amateurs – Paris (FR)  
2013 - With Pop Songs collaboration with Thomas Lebrun at the MPAA - Paris (FR)

**commands**

2010 | I'm from Austria, like Wolfi ! festival Goûter ma danse (FR)

2012 | Danse Apache Centre d'Art Bastille – Grenoble (FR)

2013 | And So We Dance Festival Tours d'Horizons, CCN of Tours (FR)

2013 | Tango « Meublé sommairement », de Dominique Bagouet - CDC Les Hivernales Avignon (FR)

2015 | HOW MUCH ? creation for the C.C.D.C Festivals D-CAF in Cairo and Nassim el raqs in Alexandria - Egypt (E)

2015 | WAOUHHHHH ! out door in situ walk about performance at the col du coq – collaboration with l'Hexagone, scène nationale Arts Sciences de Meylan and the CG Isère

2016 | TONGUES OF FIRE - performance with Lucie Depauw for the festival ActOral.16 in Marseille.



## support

DRAC PACA | 2006-2008, 2010 - 2013 – support for production

DRAC PACA | 2014 -2016 - two years support for company productions

DRAC PACA | 2017 -2019 - three years support for the development of CUBe

RÉGION PACA | 2005-2015 help for research, productions and touring

CG 13 | 2005-2015 – help for production and touring

CG 93 | 2008 support for residency in Bagnolet

ARCADI | 2008 support for production

VILLE D'ISTRES | 2005-2013 support for the company

VILLE DE MARSEILLE | 2014- 2015 support for productions

ADAMI | 2006, 2013/14 support for productions & touring

SACD-FONDS SCENE DE MUSIQUE | 2009, 2014 financial support

AMBASSADE FRANCE et AUTRICHE À DUBLIN | 2012 touring support

FORUM CULTUREL AUTRICHIEN PARIS | 2005-2015 touring support

AMBASSADE AUTRICHE À LUXEMBOURG | 2014



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## CREDITS

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