

AND...

SHOW broadcast on ARTE on July 19, and available on ARTE Concert.

THE WORKSHOPS OF THOUGHT

Dialogue artists-audience with Israel Galván, July 20 at 16:30,
Site Louis Pasteur Supramuros de l'Université d'Avignon

NAVE OF IMAGES (screenings)

FLA.CO.MEN (2016) and *La Fiesta* (2017), Israel Galván,
July 23 at 14h30, Église des Célestins

TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- July 29, 2017, Festival d'Estiu, Sagunt (Spain)
- December 21, La MALS, théâtre de Sochaux, MA Scène nationale - Pays de Montbéliard
- January 11-12, 2018, Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg
- January 19-20, Festival Flamenco de Nîmes
- February 7, Opéra Berlioz Le Corum, Montpellier
- February 27, Festival Flamenco de Jerez (Spain)
- March 19, Le Parvis Scène nationale Tarbes Pyrénées, Ibos
- March 22-23, Théâtre de l'Archipel Scène nationale de Perpignan
- May 4-5, Teatros del Canal, Madrid
- May 15, L'Onde Théâtre, Vélizy-Villacoublay
- May 18-19, Teatro Central, Séville
- June 2, Théâtre du Beauvaisis, Beauvais
- June 6-12, Théâtre de la Ville, Paris

LA FIESTA

"I think that celebration is at once the expression and the necessary component of my culture." Fiesta is the manifestation of a specific aspect of Spanish culture, which expresses itself throughout the year through festivals and religious celebrations, carnivals and pilgrimages. But it is also a precise and codified moment in a flamenco show in which the performers announce the finale by switching roles (*fin de fiesta*). When Israel Galván thinks of those moments, the Andalusian choreographer is reminded of artists for whom celebration was work and lost their intrinsic necessity, or of thousands of people like caught in a vice on the street, prisoners of compact crowds its cannot escape. Those celebrations have nothing to do with those of his community, of family. Intimate celebrations through which "can appear a certain violence, a certain eroticism, in a sort of general feeling of liberation." He has chosen to bring together unique dancers and musicians (Emilio Caracafé, El Junco, Ramón Martínez, Niño de Elche, Uchi), and not only flamenco performers (Eloisa Cantón, Alejandro Rojas-Marcos, Alia Sellami, the Byzantine Ensemble Polytropon), for he believes that a voice becomes *flamenca* as soon as it is accompanied by flamenco music. Israel Galván doesn't just try to render the truth of his fiesta, largely unknown to the public, a truth that can stand separation between the arts that make it up almost as little as it can too much preparation, he also seeks to experience this feeling forbidden to the great soloists of his art: to be one with the group, to experience something greater than himself. Bringing his Fiesta to the Cour d'honneur will give him that chance.

ISRAEL GALVÁN

The son of dancers José Galván and Eugenia de los Reyes, Israel Galván, born in Seville in 1973, grew up in tablaos and flamenco schools, in an atmosphere of fiesta. In 1994, he joined Mario Maya's *Compañía Andaluza de Danza*. He created his first show in 1998, *¡Mira! / Los zapatos rojos*, which was enthusiastically received by critics. He followed it up with, among other, *La Metamorfosis* (2000), *Arena* (2004), *La Edad de oro* (2005), *El Final de este estado de cosas* (which he presented at the Festival d'Avignon in 2009), *La Curva* (2010), *Lo Real/Le Réel/The Real* (2012), *FLA.CO.MEN* (2013). He built his international reputation on the boldness of his creations, born of a perfect mastery of the choreographic culture of flamenco and based on his own inner states. Open to stylistic daring in all its forms, the choreographer alternates intimate forms, great shows, and collaborations with contemporary artists such as Enrique Morente, Pat Metheny, Sylvie Courvoisier, and Akram Khan (*TOROBACA*, 2015). His work has earned him numerous awards, including the New York Bessie Performance Award and the National Dance Award for Exceptional Artistry (United Kingdom). In 2016, he was named Officer of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

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EDITION

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COUR D'HONNEUR DU PALAIS DES PAPES

INTERVIEW WITH ISRAEL GALVÁN

How did you approach the notion of celebration at the heart of this show?

Israel Galván: *Fin de fiesta* is a code of flamenco inherited from the spontaneity of parties. It's that final minute of the show where the artists seem to freely and casually switch roles in order to bring the celebration to a close: the guitarist will dance while the dancer sings, for instance. My daily life takes place in an atmosphere of celebration. Throughout Spain, but in particular in Seville in Andalusia, where I work, everything is cause for celebration: death, Christmas, the *corrida*, *Semana Santa*, the April fair, the El Rocío pilgrimage, the carnival. Politically and culturally, the year in Spain is a succession of celebrations. We are, as a society, constantly getting ready to celebrate. I think that celebration is at once the expression and the necessary component of my culture. I come from a family of artists, even as a child I was on the road, on tour, performing. The celebration we experienced from within wasn't always fun and games, it was our job: we had to perform so that others could celebrate. I've often felt like a stranger to the celebration I was witnessing. To me, that kind of celebration is synonymous with loneliness, exhaustion, lassitude, with a lack of enthusiasm. With the sadness not to be able to join in with those people. A distance. I was like taken apart. I couldn't find in those celebrations the moments of truth we experienced among artists, among my family. I spent hours watching videos of those family celebrations to prepare for the show. What struck me was that you can see things coming apart. Everyone seems all of a sudden to be standing on a sort of primitive volcano, dancing in a way that sometimes reminded me of African dances. Nothing really looks like flamenco anymore in those celebrations that often distend to let a certain violence shine through, but also a certain eroticism. The celebration leads to a sort of general liberation. I speak of that hidden aspect in the show, of those things that are disappearing, an intimate aspect to celebration: it's in the way we sit, in a head that looks up, attentive, in people who snap their fingers in rhythm, in the fluttering of eyelashes...

For the first time, you're creating a choreography for a group of artists who don't necessarily come from the world of flamenco.

I gathered a group made up of presences, each with a certain background, but I never tried to individualise them, to highlight our cultural idiosyncrasies. We tried instead to free ourselves from our codes. Niño de Elche is a musician willing to take any risk, an expert at creating invisible landscapes with his voice and his guitar. El Junco is a traditional dancer, but also a pianist, singer, and *palmero* (hand percussionist). His mischievous nature and maturity encourage him to confront new challenges. Uchi, gypsy but free, wild but wise, is herself a celebration. Everything in her is dance, song, and *compás* (rhythm). Her life, inseparable from her culture, is a powerful expression of rebelliousness and innocence, with something of the tragi-comedy about it. The pianist Alejandro Rojas Marcos excels both in the severity and in the joke, he possesses this rigorous timing that have the best gagmen.

Alia Sellami is a Tunisian singer. It reminds us that a voice becomes *flamenca* as soon as it is accompanied by flamenco music, that there's no other condition. The Byzantine Ensemble Polytropon brings its Phrygian and minor chord sounds, that we find in the essence of flamenco. It becomes our choir. Ramón Martínez is amazing, even though a lot about this award-winning dancer still escapes me. Rock music moves through Eloísa Cantón's vibrant body, a dancer, musician, and singer with a subterranean nature. If you watch the shadows on the floor of the stage, some seem not to be projected by any specific body but to have an existence of their own. That's what happens with her. Emilio Caracafé, majestic and mysterious, commands respect. A few notes of a powerful and hypnotic *seguiriyia* are enough for him to bring an audience to their feet.

How did you work with them?

I didn't try to create a typically flamenco celebration. My intention isn't to deconstruct the idea of celebration, or to dance well; there's no intention to please, to seduce. What I wanted was for an atmosphere of celebration that would be our own to arise. We simply looked for our truth in celebration. The role and space of each of the performers wasn't defined based on what they knew how to do. For instance, I didn't work with the musicians and the dancers separately, the way we usually do. I wanted to do away with the idea that music and dance should be separated. The music wasn't composed or orchestrated. There are no clearly distinguishable lyrics. What you hear are the sounds of the world as I imagine them coming out of a tower of Babel. The music is there to support a vaster dramaturgic atmosphere. It appears and disappears in the distance, like a celebration that would never cease beginning and never manage to end. It creates a sort of tension, in particular with regards to space. It comes from the fact that the celebration isn't a clearly-defined event. It is rather the manifestation of spontaneous desires that don't follow codes. Indeed, for the first time ever, I didn't try to write a show, but to formulate states of freedom that will exist on the stage and allow the work to progress from those freed states of bodies and music.

What place does this show have in your body of work, with its irreverent approach to traditional flamenco?

In *El Final de este estado de cosas*, you already had this kind of approach. I'd imagined a tribe that advances and remains united throughout the show, like a kind of family. We were all in it together. In a way, that show was also a celebration. Today, I feel more strongly this need to share, to belong to a group. I like the idea of a group absorbing my body as a soloist, of disappearing by becoming one with an organism that's bigger and stronger than me. When I dance among other people, it creates a sort of communion, which questions the way I dance. It means that I have to change the way I move, I'm always moved by the need to transform myself. With *La Fiesta*, I tried to come onstage with that energy. Every show is a reflection of a specific period of my life.

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Interview conducted by Francis Cossu and translated by Gaël Schmidt-Cléach