

# KAAI THEATER

## CLAIRE CROIZÉ & MATTEO FARGION FLOWERS (WE ARE)

**27 & 28/03 20:30 | KAAITHEATER**

DANCE | 70 MIN

**LET'S TALK** Zin om informeel na te praten over deze dansvoorstelling in het Nederlands? Ben je nieuwsgierig naar de ervaringen van anderen? Tijdens LET'S TALK (ABOUT DANCE) reikt een moderator reikt jou en een kleine groep toeschouwers kapstokken aan om je kijk op dans te delen.

— Op wo 27/3, na de voorstelling in het Kaacafé.

**BRUSSELS  
DANCE**



# CLAIRE CROIZÉ & MATTEO FARGION

## FLOWERS (WE ARE)

**NL** Het werk van Claire Croizé is dansant, genereus en steeds gedragen door een grote liefde voor muziek. In *Flowers (we are)* gaat ze aan de slag met twee van haar favoriete inspiratiebronnen: Bach en Rilke. Ze legt beide grootheden in de handen van Matteo Fargion, de Britse componist en performer die je ongetwijfeld kent van zijn geniale duetten met choreograaf Jonathan Burrows. Fargion en Croizé gaan niet voor slaafse vertolkingen van Bach en Rilke, maar kiezen voor een speelse, enigszins tegendraadse hommage. Ze maken een keuze uit de preludes van Bachs *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* en uit zijn koralen die getranscribeerd worden voor quatre-mains piano. Daarnaast creëert Fargion ook nieuw werk 'à la Bach' om zo een nieuw licht te werpen op zijn barokke meesterwerken. De gedichten van Rainer Maria Rilke interpreteert hij dan weer als pop songs. In de oneerbiedigheid toont zich de liefde.

De Frans-Brusselse choreografe Claire Croizé presenteerde al verschillende voorstellingen in het Kaaithheater, waaronder *EVOL* dat werd geselecteerd voor Het TheaterFestival 2017.

**FR** L'œuvre de Claire Croizé est dansante, généreuse et portée par un grand amour de la musique. Dans *Flowers (we are)*, elle s'attaque à deux de ses sources d'inspiration favorites : Bach et Rilke. Elle confie les deux esprits illustres au compositeur et performeur britannique Matteo Fargion, que vous connaissez sans aucun doute des duos géniaux avec le chorégraphe Jonathan Burrows. Fargion et Croizé ne s'adonnent pas une interprétation servile de Bach et de Rilke, mais optent pour un hommage ludique et quelque peu à rebrousse-poil. Ils opèrent une sélection de préludes du *Clavier bien tempéré* de Bach et de ses chorals qu'ils transposent pour un piano à quatre mains. Parallèlement, Fargion compose une nouvelle œuvre « à la Bach » afin de jeter un éclairage nouveau sur ses chefs-d'œuvre baroques. Quant aux poèmes de Rainer Maria Rilke, il réserve une interprétation de chansons pop. C'est dans l'irrévérence que s'exprime l'amour.

La chorégraphe française bruxelloise Claire Croizé a présenté plusieurs spectacles au Kaaithheater, dont *EVOL*, sélectionné pour le TheaterFestival 2017.

**EN** The work of Claire Croizé is dansant, generous, and always sustained by her great love of music. In *Flowers (we are)*, she engages with two of her favourite sources of inspiration: Bach and Rilke. She has placed both masters in the hands of Matteo Fargion, the British composer and multi-instrumentalist that you undoubtedly know from his brilliant duets with choreographer Jonathan Burrows. Fargion and Croizé have not created slavish interpretations of Bach and Rilke, but have rather opted for a playful, somewhat unruly tribute. They have made a selection from the preludes of Bach's *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* and from his choral pieces, which have been transcribed for four-handed piano. In addition, Fargion has created new work 'à la Bach' in order to shed new light on his baroque masterpieces. He also interprets the poems of Rainer Maria Rilke as pop songs. He expresses his love through his irreverence.

The French-Brussels choreographer Claire Croizé has presented various works at Kaaitheater, including *EVOL*, which was selected for Het TheaterFestival 2017.

#### CREDITS

CONCEPT Claire Croizé | MUSICAL COMPOSITION Matteo Fargion | DANCE Emmi Väisänen, Claire Godsmark, Gorka Gurrutxaga | MUSIC INTERPRETED BY Matteo Fargion & Francesca Fargion | MUSIC Johann Sebastian Bach | DRAMATURGY Etienne Guilloateau | LIGHT DESIGN Hans Meijer | COSTUME DESIGN Anne-Catherine Kunz | PRODUCTION ECCE vzw | CO-PRODUCTION Kaaitheater, Concertgebouw Brugge, wpZimmer, Kunstencentrum BUDA | SUPPORT Workspace Brussels, STUK, De Vlaamse Overheid

## ON FLOWERS (WE ARE)

Claire Croizé's new creation *Flowers (we are)* is a piece for three dancers and two musicians. As with *EVOL* (2016), Claire found inspiration in her favourite poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, but this time she traded the songs of David Bowie for the keyboard music of Johann Sebastian Bach, which in turn becomes source material for additional music by Matteo Fargion. It is Claire's first time working with a contemporary composer. Matteo, who is known for his genre-defying duets with choreographer Jonathan Burrows, also performs the music, together with his daughter Francesca.

Like Rilke, Bach is an old friend. "In my daily practice, I often use his music," says Claire, "especially keyboard works such as *The Well-Tempered Klavier* or *The Goldberg variations*. I find that the intimate relationship between the music and the instrument echoes that between the dancer and their body. This helps the dancer to develop a distinct, personal voice."

In *Flowers (we are)*, the music rarely strays too far from Bach. Using piano, synthesiser and their voices, Matteo and Francesca engage in a playful dialogue with Bach, creating a rich and unsettling sound world: At its purest, a selection of *Preludes* from *Book I* of the *Well Tempered Clavier*, chosen for their intimacy and simplicity. On the other end of the spectrum, Matteo's song settings of the dark and romantic poetry of Rilke, with perhaps just a few chords borrowed from the master. And in between are irreverent transcriptions, translations and deconstructions of Bach's *Preludes* and four-part *Chorales*.

Rilke's texts were used both as lyrics and as inspiration for three dancers – Emmi Väisänen, Claire Godsmark and Gorka Gurrutxaga – while they were working on the choreography. "There is just something about Rilke that triggers movement," says Claire. "He is truly a poet of the body: facial features, eyes and sight, hands and hand gestures, are all important symbols in his work. When I first read the *Duino Elegies*, it left a big impression on me. I was greatly moved by Rilke's message of love. However, reading it back later, I realized things were not as straightforward as I had thought, that Rilke's relation with love, beauty and religion is complex and fraught with questions and despair."

This struggle seems to find its way into the choreography. There are scenes full of urgency: the dancers run, jump and gyrate across the stage, making busy gestures at each

other, accompanied by fast-paced keywork. These alternate with quiet and vulnerable moments that seem hardly choreographed: dancers stumbling across the stage, eyes closed, searching for something or someone to hold on to. But *Flowers (we are)* is not so much about our relationship with the divine as it is about human relationships. Claire approaches this theme through the biblical tale of Tobias, which Rilke touches briefly at the beginning of the second elegy:

Gone are the days of Tobias,  
when shining Raphael,  
awful majesty disguised,  
stood at a door, twin  
to the youth who gazed  
out, curious, upon him.

The broad interpretation of this single phrase from the second elegy is a departure from her usual way of working with text, where she asks the dancers to translate whole lines and stanzas into movement. This time, she deals with the material much like a theater maker would, giving them characters and situations to work with. The story has two parts: with the help of the archangel Raphael Tobias heals his father's blindness, and he defeats the demon that haunts his future wife Sarah. These are turned into archetypes of filial and romantic love, that return like a chorus throughout the piece. The scenes between father and son, solid and sincere, contrast with the lovers' duets, which are more eager and more tentative. Tugging and pulling at each other, crawling across each other, the dancers imagine perfectly the contradictions of romantic love, the impossible desire to slip into each other's skin.

The narrative element is translated into a strong sense of theatricality, without ever turning into mime. Here, Claire once again shows herself to be a poet of movement: by stripping away or scattering the frame of reference, she leaves us with the raw, concrete emotions behind the story. Something similar happens in Matteo's songs, which have a performative streak yet remain abstract, true to their poetic nature. The warm and fanciful light design by Hans Meijer, suggesting a sublime mountainscape with little more than color and shape, creates an otherworldly atmosphere that adds an extra dimension to their story.

What ties everything together is the minute attention each of the performers pays to the others' movements, the care with which they observe, guide and respond to each other. In the end, *Flowers (we are)* feels like a message of hope, an invitation into a magical universe, a warm hand to hold in a world where people seem further apart from each other than ever.

# LYRICS

BASED ON POEMS BY RAINER MARIA RILKE

Excerpt from *Letters to a young poet*

Perhaps all the dragons in our lives are princesses who are only waiting to see us act, just once, with beauty and courage. Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love.

Liebeslyrik

And if you'd try this: to be hand in my hand  
As in the wineglass, the wine is wine.  
If you'd try this.

Love song

How shall I hold my soul  
To not intrude upon yours?  
How shall I lift it beyond you to other things?  
I would gladly lodge it  
with lost objects in the dark,  
in some far still place  
that does not tremble when you tremble.  
But all that touches us, you and me,  
plays us together, like the bow of a violin  
that from two strings draws forth one voice.  
On what instrument are we strung?  
What musician is playing us?  
Oh sweet song.

Excerpt from *The book of poverty and death*

Perhaps I am isolate in immense mountains,  
like ore, wandering in adamantine veins,

and am too deep to see their end, or beyond  
into distance. Everything is proximity  
and proximity has turned to stone.

And I am no expert in the lore of pain —  
this vast thickness of dark diminishes me;  
but if you are there, be heaviness, break in:  
your whole hand reaching me, and I  
affecting you with my entire crying.  
Am I traversing you?  
I fill your clefts and vaults, feel  
round me the rock-hardness of your wall.  
Or is it just the angst that I am in?  
in which you have stood me, buried to the chin?

And whatever you might want of me, say soon -  
then I'll no more be master of my mouth  
but let it of its own close like a wound;  
and my unworthy hands will cower  
like dogs and will not hear the call.

## My Life

I live my life in widening rings  
which spread over earth and sky.  
I may not ever complete the last one,  
but that is what I will try.

I circle around God, the primordial tower,  
and I circle ten thousand years long;  
and I still don't know if I'm a falcon, a storm,  
or an unfinished song.

## Silly Bach Song (original lyrics, not by Rilke)

Bach, Bach, Bach, Bach  
Johann, Johann, Johann, Johann, Johann  
Sebastian, Sebastian, Sebastian,  
Bach, Bach, Bach, Bach etc.  
For nearly a century after his death  
his mighty genius  
as a composer  
was little recognised.  
Yet during his lifetime  
his unique powers  
as an organist  
won for him  
a great reputation.  
Bach Bach Bach  
Our Bach Our Bach Our Bach  
was the greatest  
the greatest organ player  
that ever lived.  
Bach Bach Bach!