

# MONSTER

K. Danse 2015-2016

**A performance combining contemporary dance and digital media based on a contemporary rewriting of The House of Asterion by Jorge Luis Borges (inspired by the myth of the Minotaur) \***



Project proposed by

**Compagnie K. Danse**

Choreographers: Anne Holst & Jean-Marc Matos

In close collaboration with

**1minute69**, Interactive audiovisual illusion

Digital artists: Aurélie Dumaret & Emilie Villemagne

**Dancers**

Marianne Masson & Mario Sáez

*Monster* is a multi-faceted immersive project, inviting each audience member to discover, feel, experience and travel through... an interactive performance/installation combining choreography, audiovisual arts and digital technology. The scenographic set (a spiraling labyrinth of suspended screens) allows for the question of being in the world/labyrinth to be perceived by the audience. It proposes different configurations depending on the accommodating space: theatrical stage, auditorium, and non-conventional large space. The audience can either be outside or inside the set.

\* The novel «The House of Asterion » is part of the book *The Aleph*, J.L. Borges.

# Monster

## Description of the work

### Artistic Thematic

This dance performance dealing with the thematics of the European [Metabody](#) project is inspired by Jorge Luis Borges' *The house of Asterion*, from his collection of short stories *The Aleph*.

With *The house of Asterion*, Borges rewrites the myth of the Minotaur, but from the point of view of the monster rather than that of Theseus, the killer of the monster. The gaze is thus displaced allowing for a critical reading where the monster is heard and seen – the monster, which hitherto has been mute and hidden.

Asterion is situated outside the standards of homogenization which are a result of today's omnipresent media technology.

As a being, Asterion is endowed with a reflexive conscience and a troubling dimension rooted in his solitude, his difference, his alterity.

Resisting modalities permeating our world, through systems of education, work, leisure etc., which encourage imitation in ways of thinking, moving, and behaving, Asterion is empowered by his imagination: *'(...) I pretend I am being followed (...) I can pretend to be asleep (...), (...) of all the games, I prefer the one about the other Asterion.'*\*

Inventing another self allows Asterion to conceive of the world as his house. Duplications and visions of multiplication are omnipresent: *'I have also meditated on the house. All the parts of the house are repeated many times. Any place is another place. There is no one pool, courtyard ... [they] are infinite in number. The house is the same size as the world; or rather, it is the world.'*\* This principle of duplication recalls this same principle so characteristic of our contemporary usage of communication technology. *If the house is the world*, as Asterion claims, the labyrinth is no longer an architectural structure in the world. It *is* the world. To *be* in the world, to exist, Asterion needs to feel it. The only way he can feel it is through a physical confrontation: *"I run through the stone galleries until I fall dizzy to the floor. I crouch in the shadow of a pool or around a corner and pretend I am being followed. There are roofs from which I let myself fall until I am bloody"* \*. The physicality of Asterion is essential. The physical presence of a dancer/dancers confronting themselves with the physical world is a way of questioning the body in technology.

Asterion does not think of himself as imprisoned in the labyrinth that is the world beyond comprehension. The only escape is death. He is the redeemer of the humans sacrificed to him, as he himself awaits his redeemer. He lives the illusion of total liberty, incorporated liberty, but is in reality free nowhere. Unlike Theseus who knows who to kill, Asterion does not know who will kill him, *"will he be like me?"* \*

Integral to this research under the headings of the [Metabody project](#), the choreography takes in an interactive scenic space that allows for this question of being in the world/labyrinth to be perceived by the audience.

The progression of Asterion is an experience of loneliness and questioning in an incomprehensible world. The world in 'Monster' is no longer incomprehensible. It is omnipresent and crushing. If it is the *image* of the 'Monster' that is perpetuated in this world, *Monster* still has to throw himself against it to exist.

*\*(Jorge Luis Borges, The House of Asterion)*

## General approach

The audience can attend the performance either from outside the set or share the space of the performers inside the "labyrinthine" spaces and corridors.

Changes of perception, via the various surfaces of projection, the multiplied image, the sound diffusion and the optical sensors allow for the set to become a living organism in constant evolution.

A "breathing" Monster.

This project puts forward a questioning about perception, the perturbation of senses, the sensorial experience and its "surprises".

This project provides the conditions for the emergence of new technological paradigms, and opens spaces of perception where the body is radically valued in its irreducibility and unpredictable and changing diversity: it is both a choreographic scenario involving two dancers (a man and a woman) and the evolving relationship they have with their environment (the labyrinth and its metaphorical representations).

## Collaborative team

Choreographers: Anne Holst & Jean-Marc Matos (K. Danse [www.k-danse.net](http://www.k-danse.net))

In close collaboration with 1minute69 ([www.1minute69.com](http://www.1minute69.com)), Interactive audiovisual illusion  
Digital artists: Aurélie Dumaret & Emilie Villemagne

Created with and danced by: Marianne Masson & Mario Sáez

Technological and scientific collaboration

Antonio Camurri, Corrado Canepa, Giacomo Lepri (Casa Paganini – Research Center **infoMus**, University of Genova, Italy) : [http://www.infomus.org/index\\_eng.php](http://www.infomus.org/index_eng.php)

## Work urls

on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/160065949>

on K. Danse's site <http://www.k-danse.net/en/monster-3>



## **Technical requirements**

The scenographic set is a spiral of suspended screens (gauzes) brought by the company.

### **Scenic space:**

- Minimal dimensions: 9m x 6m stage or large empty space with possibilities to hang up the screens (ideally a ceiling grid to attach screens and lights).
- Black back wall
- Black dance floor

### **Lights:**

- 8 to 12 projectors, type 500 W-1000 W, cut lights preferably, attached on ceiling
- 4 cut lights on low stands
- Manual dimmer

### **Sound:**

- Double stereo sound amplification (stage and house), connected to a portable mac through appropriate sound card (provided)
- Stereo DIA boxes.

### **Electricity:**

Access to 220 V (multiplugs, extension cords)

### **Video projection:**

- 3 video projectors (provided by the company) with proper extension VGA cables (also provided)
- Suspended black and white gauzes (provided)

### **Computers:**

- Portable macs (provided by the team)
- Interactive equipment: cameras, appropriate software, accessories, cables, wireless transmission boxes, etc. (provided by the company)

### **Technical team required:**

Ideally the day prior to the performance: two people to help with the installation of the suspended screens, the lights and sound system.

### **Travelling team:**

5 people in total (one choreographer, two dancers, one multimedia artist, one technician).

**Travelling from France.**

## Artists biographies



**K. Danse**

photo: Raphaël Khan

The choreographic approach of the Compagnie K. Danse develops a contemporary movement language by the dialectic confrontation between the physical body (lived, experienced) and the visual body (seen, virtual).

The performances question the borders between fiction and reality, the social construction of the body, and the psychological structures in human relationships.

They investigate various digital technologies:

- \_ **Metaphorá** 2016, **Errance** 2015, **Monster** 2014 (visual design and interactive digital scenography)
- \_ **The Tiger's Bride** 2013, **Tactile Sensations** 2011-2012 (reactive costumes and augmented tactility)
- \_ **Echo Room** 2009, **Para\_site** 2007 (physiological sensors)
- \_ **Gameplay** 2005 (semi-autonomous interactive tracking)
- \_ **Nuit Ecran** 2006, **Lovely User** 2004/5 (interactive real time image-sound environments)
- \_ **Icare Ecart** 2003 (body sensors, interactive 3D and motion capture)
- \_ **Danse e-Toile** 2009, **Fronter@** 2004, **Danse et Toile** 2002 (tele presence via internet) ...

The company develops four main areas of activity: performance making, mediation, research, and organization of events.

### **Anne HOLST, choreographer.**

Dancer, choreographer and artistic director. BA (1st) Dance in Society, MA Dance Studies (Choreography), University of Surrey, UK. Trained in ballet, contemporary dance, physical theatre, and choreography. Her choreographic research centers on the development of movement abstracted from existing structures in various fields of human experience. She has choreographed more than 30 pieces which have been shown in France and in Central America, Morocco, England, Venezuela and Mexico.

### **Jean-Marc MATOS, choreographer.**

Dancer, choreographer and artistic director. Trained at the Cunningham Studio in New-York, he has performed with David Gordon (Judson Church). He is interested in the impact of digital technology on society, in order to develop a meaningful relationship between dance and new media. He has choreographed more than 45 pieces which have been presented extensively in France (Avignon Festival, the Pompidou Center, etc.) and in many countries (Europe, Central and South America, USA, Canada, North Africa, India, Pakistan).

Since 1983, K. Danse has been present in major festivals and cultural events in France and abroad: Festivals of Aix en Provence, Avignon, la Rochelle, Châteauevallon, Métafort d'Aubervilliers, American Center of Paris, Georges Pompidou Center, Grande Halle de la Villette, Maison des Arts de Créteil, Maison de la Danse de Lyon, Centre National Art et Technologie de Reims, Centre National de la Danse, ISEA 2000 à Paris, Monaco Dance Forum, Espace Odysud de Blagnac, Cité de l'Espace de Toulouse, Digital Art Center Le Cube of Issy Les Moulineaux, Festival "Les Bains Numériques" of Enghien les Bains, ...

The company has toured in Central America, Senegal, India, Vietnam, Morocco, Spain, Mexico, Venezuela, Great Britain, Germany, Pakistan, Belgium, Hungary, Canada and USA and has presented performances in the Soros Center of Budapest, Video Fest and Podewill Centrum, Berlin, Hambourg International Festival, Foundation Polar in Caracas, Festival Medi@rte in Monterrey, Festival VAD Girona and IDN Barcelona (Catalonia), The international Video Art Festival of Casablanca (Morocco), The National Theatre of Guatemala, NIAS of Bangalore (India), Festival Llunes d'EsBaluard of Palma de Mallorca (Balearic Islands), ScenoFest Festival Quadriennale of Prague (Czech Republic), ...

Complete presentation of K. Danse:

[http://www.k-danse.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/cv\\_kdanse\\_en\\_2015.pdf](http://www.k-danse.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/cv_kdanse_en_2015.pdf)



## **1minute69**

1minute69 is an artistic collective devoted to the creation, dissemination and promotion of multi-disciplinary projects generally involving video, sound, sensitive devices, the body and its environment.

Founded in 2011 by Emilie Villemagne and Aurélie Dumaret, bound by a common will to create collaboration and exchange between lovers of digital art and more, 1minute69 is devoted to creation, dissemination and promotion of multi/trans-disciplinary artistic projects.

The collective 1minute69 now counts fifteen members from diverse backgrounds who share the same desires of experimentation, crossing knowledge and artistic practices, as well as common convictions about the need for non-discrimination, openness and freedom of conscience. Motivated by these human values above all, the life and activities of the association are organized around three main axes: creations, collaborations and education to digital art.

In permanent mutation, 1minute69's works seek to expand into new territories where digital content meets and redefines physical material. Based on both physical sensations and feelings, our experimentations question the boundaries between body and environment, the interference between what's real and what's virtual and the construction of stereotypes.

Through various projects with artists working in the fields of fine arts, lighting, music, dance, theater or puppet practice, 1minute69 is boosted by sharing and exchanging. Collaborations with other collectives and companies allow members of the collective to explore new forms of expression and reflect an aesthetic approach that questions and challenges the boundaries between different artistic practices.

Alongside the creation of performances, interactive installations, architectural projections and digital designs for the performing arts, the association attaches great importance to the transmission of knowledge and expertise, and has developed an increasingly significant educational activity over the past three years, through the implementation of creative arts workshops, always multidisciplinary and tailored to diverse audiences.

Web site: <http://www.1minute69.com>

Press: [http://www.1minute69.com/book/presse\\_1minute69.zip](http://www.1minute69.com/book/presse_1minute69.zip) photo : Ben Rupin



### **Marianne Masson**

Master dancer and choreographer. Starts, at the age of 17, her professional training at the James Carles School in Toulouse where she obtains the two EAT and the Diploma of Higher Choreographic Studies. In parallel to her dance training she studies theater and gets trained as an actor with stage directors of the New Jules Julien Theater (31). In 2009 she has founded the Compagnie MMCC (danse/music) with her fellow partner Chloé Caillat. Today, in parallel to her personal choreographies she is also a dancer for the dance companies Son Icône Danse, K. Danse, Emmanuel Grivet and Erre Que Erre.

<http://www.facebook.com/compagniemcc>



### **Mario G. Sáez**

Master dancer and choreographer. Master in Psychology at the UNED. Diploma of classical ballet at the Royal Conservatory of Madrid. Master in Administration of Cultural Institutions, University of Barcelona. Co-founder member, dancer and choreographer of the Erre Que Erre Company: many prizes as a dancer and choreographer in dance and video-dance productions, since 1996. Prior to these activities he has worked as a dancer for the companies Danat Dansa, La Fura dels Baus, Lanonima Imperial, Senza Tempo and Iliacan. He is presently associated artist in the ADDK of Berlin; works for the Compagnie K. Danse and develops his own work at the Espai Erre of Barcelona. <http://www.errequeeredanza.net/wordpress/>

## **Contacts, links**

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