



IL N'EST PAS
ENCORE MINUIT...





THE GENESIS OF COMPAGNIE XY...

Abdeliazide Senhadji and Mahmoud Louertani are members of the Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC)'s sixth graduating class. They formed one of two duos, with Remy Ballagué and Nordine Allal, who were trained by Géza Trager, a Hungarian practitioner of traditional circus arts and professor of partner acrobatics.

Upon completing their training in 1994, Abdel and Mahmoud created and performed several performances, including *Frankenstein* and *Ningen* with the *Cirque Baroque*, *Bartleby* with the *Compagnie François Verret*, and *Cabane*, *Jeu de Cirque* with the *Compagnie de l'Ebauchoir* and the *Compagnie Ici ou Là*. They also assisted Géza Trager in his trainings and courses.

When Trager passed away, the acrobats who followed his techniques turned to Abdel and Mahmoud to continue benefiting from the "Géza Trager method." They soon began to teach and train at the *Lomme Circus School*, where they collaborated with visiting artists and students over the next fifteen years. In 2005, they teamed up with four graduating acrobats of *Lomme* to create the show *Laissez-porter*. The recent graduates, Mikis Minier Matsakis, Anne De Buck, Denis Dulon and Airelle Caen, along with Abdel and Mahmoud, created a new company to serve as the vessel for their work : Cie XY.

Four years and some 200 performances later, Abdel, now surrounded by an inner circle of experienced acrobats, reached out to the larger community, seeking to delve further into their acrobatic knowledge and creativity. He invited a range of talented individuals, some experienced and some recent graduates, to challenge themselves and their acrobatic practice by collaborating in a large group effort. After several meetings a new project emerged as a collective work, with Compagnie XY serving as a container, where each artist has ownership of and responsibility for the development of the work.

In May 2009, therefore, Cie XY first presented the resulting work, *Le Grand C*, deconstructing the traditional acrobatic roles of “flyer” and “base.” The seventeen artists and performers explored new pathways of physical movement, circus technique, and above all, their capacity to build relationships with their viewers. *Le Grand C* uses leaps, tosses, falls, and the composition and decomposition of human pyramids and columns... unveiling, in just over an hour, a three dimensional universe both sublime and formed by the human experience. *Le Grand C* is also the company’s first collaboration with Loïc Touzé, a choreographer who joined the group as its eighteenth collaborating artist and facilitated the creation process.

Le Grand C was performed more than three hundred times in twenty countries around the world. In the process, Company XY forged a unique identity and began to develop its own language.

In 2013, always seeking to inquire further into acrobatic practice and its artistic possibilities, Abdel initiated a new communal effort and assembled an even larger group, reaching a new level of collaboration: twenty-two acrobats came together the company’s next collective adventure: *Il n’est pas encore minuit...*



IL N'EST PAS ENCORE MINUIT...

The company's third creation, *Il n'est pas encore minuit...* is an exceptional acrobatic event, pushing the limits of physical ability and bringing poetry to the body in motion. This astonishing circus spectacle with twenty-two acrobats is a true invitation to share in their extraordinary but human adventure and to immerse oneself, for just over an hour, in the heart of the action.

Carried by a physical engagement with every instant and a vividly communicated energy, the artists multiply the possibilities and create an ever expanding terrain of acrobatic language. The bodies flying through the air with grace find the height of virtuosity, creating and recreating new scenes, with joyous and poetic acts of resistance.

"Bodies intertwined, creating magic together... The party still raging, this joy still surging, we haven't reached our limits ... Midnight approaches ... It will soon be the hour."

With *Le Grand C* (2009), Company XY expanded on the base of a physical language specific to ground acrobatics and developed new modes of corporal expression made possible by its number. *Il n'est pas encore minuit* takes this exploration further, in superimposing physical material on concepts of crowds and solitude, of small islands of expression within the grander scene, of carrying and being carried, of being together, and of flights and falls.

The show is a game of construction and deconstruction, composing and decomposing forms like a living landscape. There exist in each element questions relating to the notions of work, solidarity, effort, lightness, discipline and play. And above all, there is the question of an individual's relationship to the group, laying bare the strengths and weaknesses of a collective.



TWENTY TWO ACROBATS ... PLUS LOÏC TOUZÉ AS A PARTNER

The collective dimension of this work was not a foregone conclusion; it was acquired thanks to a long process of work, of interactions between individuals, of a group process of playing and dreaming and capturing a moment of discussion, a laugh or a look. This is the story to be told.

In this sense, the company's trademark is a style at once very concrete (the physical work of the group to bring to life improbable and unexpected shapes, pushing the limits of acrobatic practice) and completely abstract since the actions and interactions between the individuals form the underlying sense of the show.

"The acquisition of this acrobatic language during the intense years of touring gives us a sense of great artistic liberty in this creation process. When an idea arises, it is much easier to explain, to share between us and to actualize physically. Above all it is possible to play with, to manipulate, to twist in every possible way, outside of prior expectations.

Twenty-two acrobats - the number multiplies the possibilities and permits a unique approach to our work. The occupied space forms islands and plateaus throughout the stage, moving past the need to stay close together to protect each and every one.

Loïc Touzé is again our accomplice. He has at once a fine appreciation for the collective work and the need 'to be together' with a view toward what makes sense and what is right for the group. He has highlighted rhythms and skills, expanded the vision of this work, and refined our physical qualities."



TEAM

« Alone, we go faster; together, we go further »

COMPANY XY IS ALSO...

... A COLLECTIVE AT EVERY STAGE

Alone goes faster, together we go further...

We treasure this proverb.

Our shows are a collective creation, but equally important, the organization of our tours, the development of the company, and decisions regarding new projects are as well. Each member, aside from their work on stage, brings their own skills to the table to carry the company forward, and all of the members of the collective receive the same salary. This collective utopia is subject to constant inquiry and reinvention.

... SINCE THE BEGINNING, AN EXPLORATION OF THE ACROBATIC MOVEMENT

XY's approach does not separate technical movement from artistic movement. The members are committed to the concept that the acrobatic movement vocabulary has its own expressive and poetic force. And it is in the quality of the body, in flight, in effort, that a functional movement attains artistic value.

In this exploration, we also explore the concept of stripping down the acrobatic practice, of exposing its inner layers, searching for the intrinsic value and a way to express it within the constraints of the stage. Therefore, we do not seek to mask the effort, the sweat and the concentration. The exchange of a conspiratorial glance, the connection of doubt and confidence, the pleasure of being onstage are not erased.

But the members are still integrally connected to and invested in the state of the collective at any given moment. It is the simultaneous consciousness of self and one's own emotions and the capacity to stay receptive to and in resonance with the group that makes each show unique for us and for the public.

And so over time we have refined the signals, the rhythms, and the forms that constitute our present aesthetic along with the ability to understand the creative process as a collection of "acrobatic sentences." In this acrobatic language, strength and engagement of the body play an important part, but are not the only subject.



... IMPROVISATIONS

Company XY also creates improvisational pieces. These are poetic and acrobatic interventions made for public space. It is a way for the group to meet people in their daily lives; the performance finds its audience instead of the other way around.

Acrobats blend into the crowd, immerse themselves in its flow, merge with passersby and offer them a moment to slow down time, to stop and see and feel and otherwise disrupt their daily environment by disturbing reality through acrobatics. This disturbance also impacts the community; such an ephemeral action exists through a wave force that leaves a rumor, an emotion, a mark in the city.

... SHARING

All of the members of the collection are animated by a certain idea of gathering, of opening, and of communication. This is especially so with respect to young artists and students at circus schools. And so all of the creation periods, the rehearsals, and the warmups are open to them.

Similarly, we coordinate acrobatic conventions in order to share and spread our vision of acrobatics by inviting and working with a variety of artists for several days. The circus for us is a space for exchange and reconnection

... POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Since 2010, Company XY has been a staunch member of the union of contemporary creative circus. And since 2014, it has occupied the position of vice president.

"The union reaffirms more than ever our commitment to a public policy in favor of art and culture that rests on the four pillars of circus, dance, music and theater. During its creation, creativity, solidarity, diversity and communication, inherent values of circus, formed the foundation on which the union's actions rest. It brings to life a solidarity economy where salaries, whether permanent or temporary,

It brings to life a solidarity economy where the employees, whether permanent or temporary, are the primary drivers of the companies and the main contributors to their success.

The member companies are the keystones of the union. They are the tool of the artists, and their unification allows space for the cultivation of research and writing that can only be developed through time."

<http://cirquedecreation.fr>



THE TRIBE HAS MASTERED THE ART OF GETTING HIGH WITH TWO, FOUR AND EVEN MORE

There are twenty two of them and it's wonderful!

The toast of the Dance Biennial in Lyon (...), this idyllic tribe is the circus collective XY, nine years as a company, three shows and a motto : "Alone we go faster ; together we go further ". And there you have it !

Following Le Grand C (2009), a pure marvel conquering the sky which received great public acclaim, the new show, 'It's Not Yet Midnight', staged in collaboration with choreographer Loïc Touzé, demonstrates once again that XY's acrobatic lifts know no limits.

Castles, turrets and other wondrous forms of human architecture are raised up on the stage, bringing together the whole ensemble... a mountain suddenly emerges then melts away to reappear later as an enormous wave. Incredible acrobatic lifts and saltos trace arcs in the air, criss crossing each other... XY conquer the vertical, inventing new ploys to leap ever higher such as flexible boards, with the artists bouncing from one to another as if jumping from rocks.

Emmanuelle Bouchez - Télérama 24.09.2014



22 VOILÀ LES ACROBATES !

"Not yet midnight ... ", by company XY, is one of the revelations of the Dance Biennial in Lyon.

Their hand to hand (...), their takeoffs, their five-storey human towers, the care with which they ensure the landing of their somersaults describes an ideal world where risk-taking, generosity and solidarity rule the roost... 'alone we go faster, together we go further', as they say.

Ariane Bavelier - Le Figaro 18.09.2014

EXPECTATIONS WERE HIGH AFTER LE GRAND C ...

The good news is that while they continue to explore acrobatic stunts as a super-sized collective, they tackle the conquest of space head on.

Tricks, these brilliant acrobats have their bags full of them. There are now 22 of them for us to marvel at.

Emmanuelle Bouchez - Télérama 24.09.2014





THE NATION MULTIMEDIA

What's special about "Il n'est pas encore minuit" is that its 22 highly skillful performers form a tightly knit ensemble with such trust in each other that they can perform daredevil stunts with no strings or safety nets. Dressed in plain clothes, they portray dramatic characters in the show, which has a loose festive thread and is filled with humour, making it much more than just a showcase of special acrobatic skills.

Dramaturgically, with the performers not only showing their balance, climbing and dance skills, they become characters and we see relationships and stories develop in their small world onstage which clearly reflect our own..

Pawit Mahasarinand- September 29, 2014



WE MIGHT WONDER WHAT A CIRCUS SHOW IS DOING AT THE DANCE BIENNAL IN LYON?

The body is only athletic, it is not straight and centered, but it is the receptacle of the intention of the motion. The body dances, eyes light up and magic happens...

Bruno Paternot - Inferno 15.09.2014

EVER MORE INVENTIVE, THESE ACROBATS OF THE EXTREME GO FURTHER STILL.

It's in the air that company XY draw their movements. Outstanding acrobats, they revolutionised contemporary circus in 2009 with their multi-storey human towers raised progressively towards heaven.

Emmanuelle Bouchez- Telerama 26.08.2014



SOMERSAULTS, ADRENALINE , SMILES : DISCOVER COMPANY XY , THE A ± OF THE DANCE BIENNALE ****

A heart-stopping world premiere in Lyon.

Astonishing hand to hand, breathtaking acrobatics (...) suggest that company XY has the sense of risk in its chromosomes ...

Davir S. Tran - Le Progrès 16.09.2014

COMPANY XY IS A MOVING AND EXHILARATING SHOW WHICH INNOVATES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACROBATICS...A SHOW UNIQUE IN ITS GENRE.

A dance piece which is written in the sky...raw bodies and socially engaged artists who use their art as a testing ground for a new form of societal life, more unified and less individualistic

Martine Pullara – Lyon Capitale 16/09/2014



IL N'EST PAS ENCORE MINUIT...

Collective Choreography: Abdeliazide Senhadji, Amaia Valle, Andres Somoza, Airelle Caen, Alice Noel, Ann-Katrin Jornot, Antoine Thirion, Aurore Liotard, Charlie Vergnaud, David Badia Hernandez, David Coll Povedano, Denis Dulon, Evertjan Mercier, Guillaume Sendron, Gwendal Beylier, Jérôme Hugo, Mohamed Bouseta, Romain Guimard, Thomas Samacoïts, Thibaut Berthias, Xavier Lavabre, Zinzi Oegema.

Artistic Collaboration: Loïc Touzé, Valentin Mussou, David Gubitsch

Light Design: Vincent Millet

Costume Design: Nadia Léon assisted by Mélodie Barbe

Acrobatic Collaboration: Nordine Allal

Lindy-hop Training: Aude Guiffes and Philippe Mencia

Producers: Peggy Donck and Antoine Billaud

Coproductions et accueil en résidence

Biennale de la Danse (Lyon) • Cirque Théâtre d'Elbeuf (Pôle national des arts du cirque Haute Normandie) • Scène nationale de Melun-Sénart • CIRCa (Pôle national des arts du cirque Midi Pyrénées)

Accueil en résidence

La Brèche (Pôle national des arts du cirque-Basse Normandie) • La Cité du Cirque (Le Mans) • Le Prato (Pôle national des arts du cirque-Lille) Maison de la Danse (Lyon) • Pôle Cirque Méditerranée (Théâtre Europe La Seyne, CREAC Marseille)

Coproductions

EPPGHV-Parc de Le Villette • L'Equinoxe - Scène nationale de Châteauroux • MC2 Grenoble • L'Hippodrome, scène nationale de Douai / Tandem Douai-Arras • L'Onde - Théâtre de Vélizy-Villacoublay • La Verrerie d'Alès - pôle national cirque Languedoc-Roussillon • Le Phénix – Scène nationale de Valenciennes • EPCC Le Quai – Angers • Pôle Cirque Méditerranée (CREAC Marseille, Théâtre Europe La Seyne) • Scène nationale d'Orléans • Théâtre Brétigny - scène conventionnée du Val d'Orge

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