

COMPAGNIE YOANN BOURGEOIS

L'Art de la Fugue

PremieredNovember 2011
at the MC2**Seen** 2 November
2011 at the MC2,
national theatre
in Grenoble (38)**Touring**• L'Art de la
Fugue13-15 April in
Elbeuf;15 May at
the Théâtre
en Dracénié,
Draguignan;
22 May - 9 June
at the Théâtre
Silvia Montfort,
Paris.

• Cavale

2-3 May at
the Piscine
Olympique,
Eybens (38);
12-13 May at
La Ferme duBuisson, Paris;
3-5 July at the
Parc du Thabor,
Rennes;11 July at the
Citron Jaune,
Port Saint-Louis
du Rhône;
14-15 July at the
Teatro de Corte,
Turin (Italy);
20-21 July at
the Festival
Contre-courant,
Avignon;22 July at
the Parc de
Chamarande,
Chamarande.**Contact**www.cieyoann
bourgeois.fr

As a child, Yoann Bourgeois knew that he would write one day. Not on a blank page, but for a stage. After some time spent at the Cirque Plume school as a teenager, he began a prestigious joint training programme – CNAC in Châlons-en-Champagne and CNDC in Angers. He then spent four years with choreographer Maguy Marin, enough time to learn how to work before spreading his wings in 2010 with his own company. His first step was to dedicate himself to a barebones style of circus. The artist nurtured a deeply reflective approach to circus writing and explored its dramatic purpose by stripping it of all of its showiness and effects.

After « *Les Fugues* » (2008-2011), small forms for man and object on the musicality of gestures, and « *Cavale* » (2010), a trampoline duo with a dizzying aerial choreography, the artist created « *L'Art de la Fugue* », a piece for a man and a woman – Yoann Bourgeois and the dancer Marie Fonte – accompanied by a pianist playing the work of the same name by Johann Sebastian Bach. In his three creations Yoann Bourgeois works on one central theme: expanding the duration of the point of suspension, that ideal place where the body in flight reaches its apogee before descending. It is a moment of infinite possibility.

Shedding light on the contrapuntal composition of the fugue through choreography and with the material of the circus; such is the substantial challenge that he takes on brilliantly in his new piece. We find a piano stage right and, stage left, an immense, 5-metre high wooden cube. In the centre there is an empty space. The dramaturgy lies in the deconstruction of this monolithic block. From this cube emerge shifting voluminous landscapes and stairs leading to nowhere, inspired by the drawings of Escher and the engravings of Piranesi.

The essence of baroque art is to contain the infinite within the finite, the many in the one. The scenography thus echoes the structure of the musical composition, written from the first four measures of counterpoint number 1. Likewise, the decentred spatial layout points to the question of the interval at the heart of the fugue's composition. But the most important analogy is that of the circus figure within the musical motif. In a game of appearance and disappearance, the performers indeed carry out simple actions according to infinite variations: sliding, falling, bouncing, pushing, pulling, elevating. Paradoxically, this simplicity brings about an evocative power. Falls and suspensions on a trampoline exchange within a strange, uninterrupted conversation, stretching time into an absolute present by imposing a kind of voluptuous panic



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on our awareness as spectator. The acrobat provides even more extraordinary moments when he returns to the exact same position he was in before launching into space, like a film in rewind. "In the traditional circus", he explains, "the more the figure is off balance, the more value it has. The game of climbing the stairs and allowing oneself to fall is the greatest simplification of this system of stimulating one's senses." The artist will continue working within his barebones style of circus in his next creation in autumn of 2012 with Chinese acrobats from Dalian: *Wu-Wei*, a show without apparatuses and seeped in the Taoist philosophy of "non-doing". ● CHRISTIANE DAMPNE