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Fou glorieux

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BATTLEGROUND



PHOTO: ANDRÉ CORNÉLIUS

Premiere: February 13, 2016, tanzhaus nrw, Düsseldorf

Concept and choreography: Louise Lecavalier

Performed by: Louise Lecavalier, Robert Abubo

Assistant choreographer and Rehearsal director: France Bruyère

Lighting Design: Alain Lortie

Original music and Live music: Antoine Berthiaume

Additional Music: Steve Roach

Costume Design: Yso

Length: 60 min

Co-production: Fou Glorieux; tanzhaus nrw, Düsseldorf;

HELLERAU - European Center for the Arts Dresden; le CENTQUATRE, Paris;

Festival TransAmériques Montréal; Usine C, Montréal.

Louise Lecavalier is an associate international artist of the CENTQUATRE-Paris.

Louise Lecavalier is supported by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec,
the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Montreal Arts Council.

PRESENTATION OF THE WORK

BATTLEGROUND

Louise Lecavalier explores new territory in this solo and duet freely inspired by two Italo Calvino characters, the nonexistent knight and his squire. The stage is a fight ring, a self-contained experimental world where a thousand battles, ephemeral or extreme, are waged. Avid for adventures and misadventures, the two antiheroes allow glimpses of their ideals and disillusionments to show in a mad, unclassifiable dance.

"When I first began creating this work, a character appeared, taking shape in my improvisations, infiltrating the movement and dictating them to a certain extent. Watching him move, he made me think of the character in Italo Calvino's novella, *The Nonexistent Knight*, which had struck me as both philosophical and preposterous when I read it a few years ago. The character is hollow, and therefore, full of possibilities – a set of armour with nothing inside, only a voice and a spirit. I wanted to empty my own body of emotions to be able to move like this armour-body, a very simple way to create an alternative dancing character and to dance in a different way. My piece isn't based on the knight's story, but I'm fascinated by characters who, like him, are empty and full at the same time: Marilyn Monroe, Charlie Chaplin's tramp, Jean Genet's tightrope walker, Virginia Woolf's Orlando, and Edward Scissorhands, figures whose personal battles seem almost useless, naïve, or never-ending, but which touch us because they lead us to question the essence of our human nature. We see ourselves mirrored in their envelope-bodies, which retain their impenetrable mystery. These strong figures don't necessarily appear in my shows but they inspire me, as well as certain characters in films by Hayao Miyazaki, the Japanese animator and film director, characters who are transfigured and inhabit weird or strange bodies.

"*Battleground* continues the exploration I began in my last work, *So Blue*, which is a raw, spontaneous, human, visceral, animal dance. This time, my search seems almost deeper, but also naïve, as if I were trying to become separated from myself. This dance of an armour-body is propelled by a strange, indefinable force, a pure or lunatic fantasy. The movement is almost light, sparkling, and incisive; the character needs no rest. He slips, trembles, vibrates, hops, crosses over land and space, and stops in balance. He is almost imperturbable.

He meets another character (performed by dancer Robert Abubo) who becomes his Man Friday, the Other, always present in the shadows. The appearance of another naïve, eccentric character, who is just as strange as the knight, allowed me to continue in duet form in this work as well. This doubling is the pretext for a fanciful surrealist quest, but one which questions the meaning of existence. I like the philosophical questions that Calvino poses through his knight, who doesn't need to exist to be. At first, he is devoid of feeling and we only see his rigid intransigence. But he will change: perhaps he will even be humanized a little.

I play with extensions and balancing while continuing to explore and deepen my research on persistent, obsessive rhythms, syncopation in fluidity, and trance. With *Battleground*, I approach dance in a colder, more mechanical way that resembles the workings of obsession or absence. I have aimed for a more graphic dance in both the solo and duet forms. While the movement is a continuation of the choreography of my preceding piece, the gestures are less feverish and wild, constructed more for their mechanics. The character goes forward with confidence and dignity; he can be ridiculous for his naiveté, but he stays upright, even when he is thrown for a loop. He doesn't talk about himself; he only exists through movement.

For *Battleground*, I worked again with lighting designer Alain Lortie, a long-time collaborator whose contribution is always so rich and definitive, and with Yso, also the costume designer for *So Blue*.

Composer and musician Antoine Berthiaume, continually present during the development of the work, has created a textured soundscape, at times percussive and rhythmic, and at others, melancholic and dark."

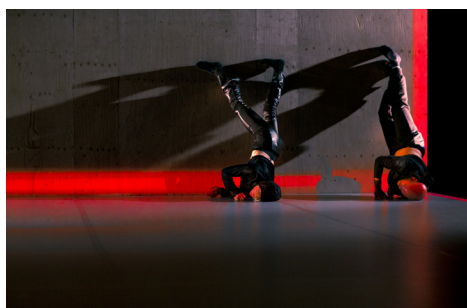


PHOTO: ANDRÉ CORNELLIER

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

\ LOUISE LECAVALIER AND COLLABORATORS



PHOTO: MASSIMO CHIARADIA

LOUISE LECAVALIER, choreographer, dancer and artistic director

Born in Montreal, Louise Lecavalier joined La La La Human Steps in 1981 in *Oranges* and went on to perform in all of the company's productions until 1999. In 1985, she became the first Canadian to win a Bessie Award in New York for her performance in *Businessman in the Process of Becoming an Angel* (1983).

Louise starred in *Human Sex* (1985), *New Demons* (1987), *Infante* (1991), and finally, in *2* (1995) and *Salt* (1998), works in which she attained remarkable maturity as a performer. As the La La La Human Steps icon and luminary for nearly two decades, she gave her heart and soul to her art, embodying dance at the outer edge with passion and unrestrained generosity, dazzling audiences everywhere. She also participated in all the company's spectacular collaborations, including the David Bowie *Sound and Vision* tour in 1990; *The Yellow Shark* concert by Frank Zappa and the Ensemble Modern of Germany in autumn, 1992; and Michael Apted's film, *Inspirations*, in 1996.

In 2003, Louise Lecavalier worked with choreographer Tedd Robinson, who created the duet *Lula and the Sailor* for Louise and himself, and *Cobalt rouge*, a piece for Louise and three male dancers which premiered at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. In 2006, choreographers Benoît Lachambre and Crystal Pite each created a solo for Louise. These two works, *"I" Is Memory* and *Lone Epic*, together with *Lula and the Sailor*, made up a program that was performed 80 times between 2006 and 2009 in North America, Europe, and Japan. The above works were produced under the banner of Louise's company, Fou glorieux, a flexible working structure that she established in 2006.

The duet *Is You Me*, a collaboration between Louise Lecavalier and Benoît Lachambre produced by the company Par b.l.eux, was created in spring 2008 at Festival Transamériques in Montreal and was performed 54 times in international tours until the summer of 2011. The double bill comprising *Children*, a duet choreographed by Nigel Charnock, and *A Few Minutes of Lock*, three updated Édouard Lock duets, was presented 92 times from 2009 until the end of 2013 in North America, Europe, and Australia. In parallel to her intense touring schedule, Louise choreographed, staged, and performed a new work, *So Blue*. The first part of this piece previewed at Festival Sommerszene in Salzburg in July, 2012; the world premiere was on December 7, 2012, at tanzhaus nrw in Dusseldorf. *So Blue* continues to tour in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. In June 2015, in Toronto, it won the Dora Mavor Moore Prize for Outstanding Production following its presentation at the 2104 Luminato Festival. The world premiere of Louise's new work, *Battleground*, took place in Germany in February, 2016.

Louise Lecavalier's career path has been strewn with awards and distinctions. In May 1999, she received the Jean A. Chalmers National Award, the first time this major Canadian dance award was given to a performer. In February 2003, Louise received a career grant from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. In December 2008, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada for her illustrious contribution to contemporary dance. In June 2011, she was named Dance Personality of the Year 2010-2011 by the Syndicat professionnel français de la critique (French Critics' Union) in Paris. In November 2011, she became the first winner of the new Prix de la danse de Montréal, and in September 2013, in Positano, Italy, she won the Léonide Massine prize for Outstanding Female Dancer of the Year on the Contemporary Scene. The following year, Louise Lecavalier and Fou glorieux won two prestigious awards in March: Louise was among the winners of the 2014 Governor General Performing Arts Award for lifetime artistic achievement, while the company received the 29th Grand Prix du Conseil des arts de Montréal. In March 2015, the dancer was named a Companion of l'Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec, one of 35 personalities honoured for their contribution to the resonance of Quebec's culture in the world.



ROBERT ABUBO, dancer

Robert Abubo is a graduate of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School, where he studied under David Moroni in the professional division. He worked with Le Groupe Dance Lab in Ottawa from 1994 to 2006 under artistic director Peter Boneham, and with Dancemakers from 2008 to 2015 (under artistic director Michael Trent until 2014). As an independent dancer, he has worked with Tedd Robinson, Sylvain Émard, Lynda Gaudreau, Shannon Conney, Bill James, Luc Dunberry, Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers, Heidi Strauss, Kate Hilliard, Ame Henderson, Dana Gingras, and Ben Kamino. His choreographies have been presented at the Canada Dance Festival, Tangente, Dancer's Studio West, Kaeja d'Dance, Dancemakers, and Nuit Blanche Toronto. Robert was Louise Lecavalier's partner in the duet *Lula and the Sailor*, choreographed by Tedd Robinson in 2004.



ANTOINE BERTHIAUME, original music

Antoine Berthiaume, a Montrealer, is a composer and guitarist active in the fields of improvisation, contemporary music, and dance. His artistic development has been enriched through his work with contemporary dance creators such as Annie Gagnon, Thierry Huard, Aurélie Pedron, Audrey Bergeron, Louis-Élyan Martin, Audrée Juteau, and Alan Lake. His music features on dozens of albums on the Ambiances Magnétiques, Audiogram, Vos Records, Incus Records, and Starkland labels, in collaboration with major improvisation artists Guido del Fabbro, Philippe Lauzier, Pierre-Yves Martel, Michel Donato, Pierre Tanguay, Fred Frith, Tim Brady, Derek Bailey, and Elliott Sharp. Grants from the Conseil des arts et lettres du Québec and from the Canada Council for the Arts gave Antoine the opportunity to hone his playing and improvising skills in the United States and in Europe under Charlie Banacos, David Binney, and Mordy Ferber, among others. Holder of a master's degree in contemporary composition, he is now pursuing his PhD in electro-acoustic composition at l'Université de Montréal, after completing a tour with Cirque du Soleil's latest production, *Kurios*.



ALAIN LORTIE, lighting design

Alain Lortie has pursued his chosen career with passion for over thirty years. First associated with multidisciplinary artists Michel Lemieux, Marie Chouinard, and Édouard Lock, he went on to collaborate with Québécois and European singers Jean-Pierre Ferland, Diane Dufresne, Robert Charlebois, Daniel Bélanger, Peter Gabriel, Francis Cabrel, and Eros Ramazzotti. Named Lighting Designer of the Year several times at the ADISQ Awards, he also received the Masque for Best Lighting for *Les âmes mortes* (1996) and the Dora Mavor Moore Prize in Toronto for *Ædipus Rex* (1997). From 2001 to 2005, Alain was artistic director of the Celebration of Light at the Montreal High Lights Festival. He designed the lighting for several musicals in Asia, as well as two permanent circus productions for Shanghai Circus World: *Era* (2005) and *Kaleido* (2010). Among Alain's major achievements are *Starmania* (1993), *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1998), *Arturo Brachetti* (1999), *Cavalia* (2003), and *Odysseo* (2011). His work with the Cirque de Soleil includes *Soleil de minuit* (2004), *Delirium* (2006), *Zarkana* (2011), and *Toruk, the first flight!* (2015), which was inspired by the James Cameron film, *Avatar*. In addition, Alain collaborated with Franco Dragone in the *Han Show* in Wuhan, China, in 2014.



YSO, costume design

Born in Vientiane, Laos, Montreal-based Siphay Southidara, better known as Yso, holds a diploma in fashion design from the Collège Marie-Victorin in Montreal. Passionate about fashion design, artistic direction, and all forms of contemporary creation, he applies his many talents to each of these domains, and has been rewarded with numerous prizes. After beginning his career with Marie Saint Pierre and Todd Lynn, he went on to direct his own ready-to-wear line for women: "Yso." A long-time collaborator with fashion designer Denis Gagnon, he has worked as artistic director on several of his shows. All sectors of the artistic community, including contemporary dance, theatre, music, film and visual arts, have called upon his creative talents: Guy Maddin, Brigitte Haentjens (Sibyllines), Louise Lecavalier, 45 Degrees (Cirque du Soleil), Moment Factory, Julie Charland, Lhasa de Sela, Patrick Watson, Tedd Robinson, Sylvain Émard, BJM Danse, the Biennale de Montréal, etc. In 2010, Yso joined the Folio Montreal Agency as a stylist.



FRANCE BRUYÈRE, rehearsal director and assistant choreographer

Classically trained, France Bruyère quickly widened her field of interest to include contemporary and jazz dance. After her professional debut at seventeen with Groupe Nouvelle Aire in Montreal, she danced for numerous choreographers and with several dance companies which, besides Nouvelle Aire, included Groupe Axis, the Louise Latreille dance troupe, Pointépiénu, and the Danny Grossman Dance Company in Toronto. After working as rehearsal director for La La La Human Steps for ten years, she now teaches at UQAM and also works for Louise Lecavalier.

louise LECAVALIER
 \ 2016-2017 TOURING SCHEDULE

DATES	CITY COUNTRY	THEATRE/ FESTIVAL	PROGRAM
2016			
February 13-14	DÜSSELDORF GERMANY	tanzhaus nrw	<i>Battleground</i>
February 19-20	DRESDEN GERMANY	Hellerau	<i>Battleground</i>
March 2	BRUGGE BELGIUM	Magdalenazaal	<i>So Blue</i>
March 5	KORTRIJK BELGIUM	Schouwburg	<i>So Blue</i>
March 9	HASSELT BELGIUM	Cultuurcentrum	<i>So Blue</i>
April 7-8-9	PARIS FRANCE	Centquatre	<i>Battleground</i>
April 29-29	STRASBURG FRANCE	Pôle Sud	<i>So Blue</i>
May 3	VILNIUS LITUANIE	Arts Printing House New Baltic Dance Festival	<i>So Blue</i>
May 31- June 1-2	MONTREAL QUEBEC	Monument-National Festival TransAmériques	<i>Battleground</i>
August 11	SAINT-SAUVEUR QUEBEC	Big Top Festival des arts de Saint-Sauveur	<i>So Blue</i>
September 26-27	OULLINS FRANCE	Théâtre de la Renaissance Biennale de la danse de Lyon	<i>Battleground</i>
September 29	ANNEMASSE FRANCE	Château Rouge La Biennale en région	<i>Battleground</i>
October 6	VICTORIAVILLE QUEBEC	Le Carré 150	<i>So Blue</i>
October 14	MONT-LAURIER QUEBEC	Espace Théâtre	<i>So Blue</i>
November 26	BANFF CANADA	The Banff Centre Eric Harvie Theatre	<i>Battleground</i>

DATES	CITY COUNTRY	THEATRE/ FESTIVAL	PROGRAM
2017			
January 5-6-7	CALGARY CANADA	DJD Dance Centre High Performance Rodeo Festival	<i>So Blue</i>
February 7	SHERBROOKE QUEBEC	Salle Maurice O'Bready	<i>Battleground</i>
March 8-9-10	MONTREAL QUEBEC	Usine C	<i>Battleground</i>
March 18-20	BREMEN GERMANY	Theater Bremen, Kleines Haus Tanz Bremen	<i>Battleground</i>
March 24-25	SEVILLA SPAIN	Teatro Central	<i>Battleground</i>
March 29	GRANADA SPAIN	Teatro Alhambra	<i>Battleground</i>
April 1 st	MARSEILLE FRANCE	Klap Maison pour la danse	<i>Battleground</i>
May 12-13	VERNIER SWITZERLAND	Salle du Lignon	<i>Battleground</i>
May 16-17	BASEL SWITZERLAND	Kasern	
May 23	GUADALAJARA MEXICO	Teatro Degollado Festival de Mayo	<i>Battleground</i>
June 9	TROIS-RIVIÈRES QUEBEC	Maison de la culture Festival DansEncore	<i>Battleground</i>
June 20-21	SALZBURG AUSTRIA	Republic Szene Salzburg	<i>Battleground</i>
June 24	VENICE ITALY	Biennale Danza	<i>So Blue</i>
July 15-16	STUTTGART GERMANY	Theaterhaus Halle 3 Colours International Dance Festival	<i>Battleground</i>
September 29	ST-JÉRÔME QUÉBEC	Théâtre Gilles-Vigneault	<i>Battleground</i>
October 7	MILAN ITALY	MilanOltre Festival	<i>Battleground</i>
October 8	MILAN ITALY	MilanOltre Festival	<i>So Blue</i>
October 11-12-13-14	COPENHAGEN DENMARK	Republique Theater	<i>Battleground</i>
October 17-18	STRASBOURG FRANCE	Pôle Sud	<i>Battleground</i>

* This schedule is subject to change 24/01/2017.