

BUT THEN, WE'LL DISAPPEAR (I'D PREFER NOT TO)

CHOREOGRAPHY

LIGHT DESIGN

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MUSIC

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COSTUME DESIGN

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CHOREOGRAPHY ASSISTANT

Jamie Wright

DANCERS

Mathias Stoltenberg

Caroline Eckly

Adrian Bartczak

Ole Martin Meland

Dawid Lorenc

Max Makowski

Aslak Aune Nygård

Nadege Kubwayo

Timothy Bartlett

Anne Lise Rønne

Vilja Kwasny

Lin van Kaam

Daniel Mariblanca

ORIGINAL SONGS BY

Frédéric Gravel

CO-PRODUCED WITH

**Bergen International
Festival 2021**

FRÉDÉRIK GRAVEL

CHOREOGRAPHY & LIGHT DESIGN

Tell us a bit about yourself!

– I like to move, and to do some research with dance and music together. I like the concept of effort. I think that love really requires putting in some efforts, but these efforts are often rewarded.

What does the title mean for you?

– The title was found in the first moments of research for the piece, more than a year and a half ago. It can be interpreted in many ways, and it has even evolved in my head over time.

The way that I'm thinking about it now is to say that the *I* as a concept – the triumphant individuality – is not constructive, yet the «*D*» is very attached to its own existence. And *We'll Disappear* is also related to some existential threats – for instance, ecological threats, that from a rational perspective, we are facing.

Irrational fear is also used by a lot of politics, using the *We* as something to protect against any threat, real or invented. That *We* is dangerous, because we never exactly know how inclusive it is.

What can you tell us about your artistic vision for this project?

To put it simply: I want to see humans on stage. I like to see dancers work. I like to see unresolved movements. I want to see the complexity of sharing one's experience, and the fact that it's impossible to ever be truly understood.

That being said, the struggle to find connections is something that we all live, and something we all share, in our own peculiar ways. I like to work with the concept of awareness. I like channeling it to different places, and to see what unfolds.

What role does music play for you, in general, and in this performance?

– I normally play music in my shows. For this one, that won't happen, *Carte Blanche* didn't offer me this role in the show, I have to sit and watch! So, I'm asking the composer to work on music that will accompany the choreographic structure that the dancers are going through. A score that *listens* and follows the dancers' rhythm – which is not set in time.

This music can be extended or compressed. That will bring an element of live music to the show.

This performance was postponed from last year due to the pandemic. How has the situation affected your work with this project? Or in general?

– The company has changed a lot since I was here last time. So, this Spring we more or less started from scratch. We kept only one element from the first research. This means that we have a lot of terrain to cover in a small amount of time, and also, I lost a bit of my footing with the pandemic. I mean, I couldn't dance with a partner or in a group for more than a year back in Canada! So, being here is diving back into creation. I feel that the experience has changed me, in ways that I can't really tell yet.

How is working with *Carte Blanche* different from other projects? (if it is - in what way?)

– In some ways I feel that I'm less the boss than with other projects. And in other ways – because we have to move fast and to make a lot of decisions quickly – I also feel that I'm more the boss than with other projects.

It's hard to get everybody on board quickly, and to talk through everything. It's hard for me to change my mind fast enough, to change my plans fast enough. So, I sometimes have the clear feeling that I made up my mind without having the time to even notice it. So, there are efforts that are needed, efforts to accept what has to move, and what cannot move.

So yes, it is quite different. Which is nice, and more complicated, but mostly nice.

Another complicated but nice thing is that *Carte Blanche* has a really diverse team of dancers. All strong and opinionated individuals. That is a clear strength, this non homogenous group. But it takes time to figure out its rich complexity, and to embrace it with the work. I'm also well surrounded here. I think that the speed of production is not usual for me. But I enjoy having a big team around, that makes things more efficient. Which is great, because that means we should be able to premiere something on time.

How is it to work in Bergen compared to Montreal? Is it different? Are you inspired by the places you visit and work in?

– It's different, yes. There are some culture gaps that are sometimes hard to foresee, because at first, we might think that because I'm also from northern country I would be quite similar to people here. But, it's subtly not the case. It's interesting to witness that, to feel it.

I really enjoy being in Bergen. I like to go run and get lost in the mountains around the city. And it's also a nice change after a locked down Montreal. And, I like to feel that the ocean is always close by.

Finally! The whole Carte Blanche team and the guest artists have been waiting for this moment so long. Indeed, *But Then We'll Disappear (I'd Prefer Not To)* was planned for Bergen International Festival last year, and for a long time this year, it was uncertain if choreographer Fr d rick Gravel and his assistant Jamie Wright could enter into Norway.

The creative process started already in November 2019 and has been on hold until April 2021 due to the ongoing situation. Through the year we have been in dialog to monitor the situation in the two countries. In Canada, the strict lock down did not even allow for dancers to work together in a studio. In Carte Blanche, we have under strict conditions, had the opportunity to work and dance together through most of the pandemic, luckily, Fr d rick and Jamie were allowed into Norway just in time.

It brings us joy and purpose to dive into the creative process with them. The meeting with the 14 dancers of the company in the studio was both overwhelming for Fr d rick and Jamie, and gave all of us a certain normality again. They bring with them impulses from the vibrant Montreal dance scene. It feels great to be able to take part in the international dialogue and to dance across borders once again.

Several questions have been raised through this journey: how has the pandemic shaped new behaviors? How has it affected our relationships to one another? What will be our new normal?

With humour, Fr d rick speaks to our perception of universal matters such as the complex and extremely challenging question about the individual's role in society. He likes to challenge our own patterns and enhances the fragility and resistance that emanates from it.

We have been looking forward for this creation for a long at time, therefore we are elated and excited to share this new work with you!

