

Choreographer of the voyage, Olga de Soto has devised an all-encompassing creation with five dancers and a strong visual universe.

Although she has brilliantly incorporated documentary into many of her recent pieces, unmitigated dance is offered in *Mirage*, whose visual elements were designed with the complicity of Sophie Whettnall. [...] Far from imposing itself, the device integrates subtly within the choreography, the group and these women, with their propulsion and releasing movements. Integrating with time also, a capital ingredient of this opus. The force of *Mirage*, its intense, discreet elegance, lies in the formidable generosity with which the piece invites everyone into its space-time.

Oscillation, ritual, vibration, slow trance, increasingly slow, then an acceleration, vague rhythms and frank expressions: the energies that are present dialogue with no more respite than insistence. It is fluid, whilst never maintaining the spectator in warmth or comfort. It is strong, but offers no imposed interpretation, like huge white pages, which unfurl or crumple, preserving the immaculate memory of the gesture. It is profuse and profound, through the magic of the body that is present and the imagination which accompanies, observes and moves it.

Marie Baudet, *Mirage or the Infinite Generosity of Space-Time*, La Libre Belgique

Olga de Soto is a Spanish choreographer, dancer and dance researcher based in Brussels. She graduated from CNDC / Centre National de Danse Contemporaine d'Angers, after having studied classical ballet, contemporary dance, and music theory in her native country. As a dancer, she has worked with choreographers such as Michèle Anne de Mey, Pierre Droulers, Felix Ruckert, Meg Stuart, Boris Charmatz and Jérôme Bel, being his choreographic assistant for five years in *The Show Must Go On*.

Olga began creating her own choreographic work in 1992, exploring different formats in numerous pieces, some of them created in dialogue with works by contemporary music composers such as Kaija Saariaho, Salvatore Sciarrino, Stefano codanibbio, Michael Jarrell, Frederic Rzewski, Denis Pousseur.

Since the end of the 1990s, her work deals specifically with the role of memory in live art, questioning its value and lasting quality along two lines of research. The first centers on the study of physical memory through a pluralistic approach to dance and the body, in works such as *anarborescences* (Théâtre de la Cité internationale, Paris, 1999), *Éclats mats* (Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2001), *INCORPORER ce qui reste ici-au dans mon cœur* (Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2004-2009) or *INCORPORER — (re)activation* (Elipsiak, Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao, 2018).

The second axis explores works from the history of dance from the perspective of the perceptual memories of both spectators and dancers. The resulting projects, such as *histoire(s)* (Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels, 2004), *An Introduction* (Tanz Im August, Berlin, 2010), *Débords / Reflections on The Green Table* (Festival d'Automne, Paris, 2012) or *(Elle) retient* (Biennale de Charleroi danse, 2015), deal with documentation, testimony, archives, oral sources, narrative, and storytelling. These projects are interested in the experience of the viewer and in the anthropology of the spectacle, while developing through an approach that studies the aesthetic experience based on the oral history of creative works. Her work mixes the languages of choreography with those of documentary, performance, visual arts, and installation, playing with the porousness of those disciplines. Generally speaking, these are projects in which the choreographer works in atypical temporalities, outside the classical logics of production.

Olga's works have been presented in about twenty countries and she is regularly invited to teach at universities and lead workshops in universities in Europe, South America and most recently the USA.

Between 2009 and 2012, Olga de Soto has been artist in residence at Les Halles, in Brussels. In 2013, de Soto was awarded the Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers - SACD Prize (Belgium), in the category of Performing Arts, for her artistic trajectory as well as her creative research on dance history, especially her work on Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table*.

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MIRAGE

Olga de Soto



MIRAGE

After her recent creations, in which the choreographer combines the languages of documentary and installation with that of choreography, Olga de Soto is revisiting her corporeal work with *Mirage*, a creation for which she has collaborated for the first time with the visual artist Sophie Whettnall, alongside a team of five dancers.

A mirage is an optical phenomenon caused by atmospheric refraction, which deflects the rectilinear trajectory of light beams passing through superimposed layers of air of different temperatures. The deviation of rays gives the impression that the object seen, inverted, is in a location different than its actual location. This projection is visible to the eye, the displaced image is not just an optical illusion, it is not a hallucination, it really exists as a 'spectral' reflection.

This idea of the displaced image taking shape in the air is at the origin of this project, in which I reinvest the body and explore the possibility of a double score, in order to give shape to a scenic object made of physicalities and visible (embodied) dynamics, while relying on images and invisible, mentally projected dynamics. I also go back to my research on movement and body states, as well on the exploration of sub-texts as possible motors of corporeal action. I continue my plastic work as well as my research into perception, thanks to a first foray into the plastic universe of visual artist Sophie Whettnall.

So taking up again a thread, a path, a physical research motivated by the necessity to revisit my corporeal work and occupy the body, to give substance to a dance carried, projected, deported. A sometimes vaporous dance, a dance of silence amid the shrill tumult of our world. A dance of withdrawal, a dance of abstraction, but also a dance in varying densities, a dance traversed, a dance of passage, a double dance, both physical and mental, extending in a spatiotemporal environment, which refuses excess.

Starting from the notion of "mirage" in order to conceive of a form through which to explore various possible modes of presence where body, dance, and light are offered not only on the basis of the visible, but also on that of the invisible, in a place other than where they seem to be. In *Mirage* we also address the question of incarnation and presence in the production of dance, of affirmation in movement and in thought, observing how the movement of thought takes shape. We choose the body in opposition to a "loss of body" and probe sensory paths in order to question, through movement and gesture, these multiplicities that can resonate in the imaginary.

Olga de Soto



For *Mirage*, Olga de Soto has chosen a heterogeneous team made up of five dancers from different and complementary generations, experiences, origins and profiles: Albane Aubry, Talia De Vries, Meri Pajunpää, María De Dueñas López and Edith Christoph, a dancer who has featured in all of the group pieces created by the choreographer since the early 2000s.

The visual work is the result of an initial collaboration with the multidisciplinary Belgian artist Sophie Whettnall, whose works have been exhibited in several countries and whose universe resonates astonishingly with that of Olga de Soto. Sophie's work proposes a reflection on the forces that define our relationship with the surrounding world, by materialising and documenting them. With a fondness for natural materials, her work focuses amongst other things on the trace of the gesture and on light, by analysing its presence, its zones of passage and absences. The material Sophie proposes here is paper. Olga sees in it a material originating from trees, the body of the document, the support for text and images, a sound element, but also a surface and volume.

Entrusted to Philippe Gladieux, the lighting creation began with the notion of displacement and forms a spatiotemporal work, which diffuses abstractly throughout the piece, in an ongoing dialogue with the bodies, sound and material. An organism as much as a landscape, the score explores light as a living material and is embodied in an autonomous, physical entity, with its own dramatic composition.

Benoît Pelé's sound creation also explores the idea of displacement and surveys the notion of sound like an image. The environment begins with the sounds produced on the stage, the bodies and the material, then gradually introduces natural sounds from exterior environments/events, notably the sound frequencies emitted by cracking icebergs and sliding ice sheets that result from glaciers melting. His work cohabits with the sound universe of the Italian composer Fausto Romitelli, in three extracts from his work, *An Index of Metals*, proposed by Olga de Soto for this work.

The performance *Mirage* has been conceived in such a way that it can be shifted from the theatre's stage to the exhibition space, thus becoming *Mirage – displacement*. The displaced work unfolds in two stages and displays itself as an experiment during which two different temporalities are explored, the temporality of the exhibition and the temporality of the performance. The two works, *Mirage* and *Mirage – displacement*, contain some similar elements but exist as separate entities, each reflecting the distinct frameworks of their presentation.



CONCEPT, CHOREOGRAPHY and DOCUMENTATION Olga de Soto | **DANCERS** Albane Aubry, Edith Christoph, Talia De Vries, Meri Pajunpää and María De Dueñas López | **LIGHTING** Philippe Gladieux | **LIGHTING TECHNICIAN** Gaspar Schelck | **SOUND CREATION AND TECHNICAL DIRECTION** Benoît Pelé | **MUSIC** Fausto Romitelli, *An Index of Metals*, excerpts (*Primo Intermezzo*, *Hellucination 1*, *Secondo Intermezzo*), recorded by Ictus, directed by Georges-Elie Octors / Cypres Records | **VISUAL ELEMENTS** Sophie Whettnall, in collaboration with Olga de Soto | **COSTUMES** Line De Munnynck | **CREATION PRODUCTION MANAGERS** Quentin Legrand and Tiphaine Marcq | **PRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION MANAGER** Julia Alix | **PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION** Niels Production | **COPRODUCTION** Charleroi danse — Centre Chorégraphique de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Pôle Sud — CDCN de Strasbourg, Le Vivat d'Armentières — Scène Conventionnée d'intérêt national pour l'art et la création, in partnership with NEXT festival, ICI— Centre chorégraphique national Montpellier - Occitanie (Direction Christian Rizzo) | **SUPPORTED** by Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles — Service de la danse, Wallonie-Bruxelles International and Grand Studio | **RESIDENCIES OF CREATION** Charleroi danse — La Raffinerie (Brussels), Grand Studio (Brussels) and Pôle Sud — CDCN (Strasbourg)

Première on 2019 at Charleroi danse / La Raffinerie, in the frame of *Brussels Dance!*

Length 60 minutes