

# MAYDAY

TRANSLATE INTO GESTURE THE STATE OF THINGS AND BEINGS...





## MAYDAY

Since its creation in 2007, MAYDAY has chosen to be a place of exchange and reflection, some sort of an artistic think tank, for the artists working with Mélanie Demers. They come from various spheres, some from Montreal, home base of the company, others from around the world. Their personalities are both dazzling and eclectic. Here, the maturation of the work is a collective process. The physicality, the rhythm and the images used in the choreographies are characteristic elements of MAYDAY, which find all their meaning when encountering with the public.

MAYDAY uses the stage as a platform to examine the role of the artist and uses the theatre as a space to meditate on the fate of the world and individuals. Her works, unquestionably committed, are at the same time distress signals and an invitation to change. This is why she called her company MAYDAY, a name in which she perceives at once hope and despair.



## MÉLANIE DEMERS

Mélanie Demers is a choreographer, word lover, moviegoer and art addict. She starts her career working with emerging choreographers before joining O Vertigo with whom she collaborated for nearly ten years. She founds her dance company MAYDAY in 2007, to explore the darker zones of the human condition. Socially engaged as an artist, Mélanie Demers travelled to teach dance in Kenya, Niger, Brazil and Haiti. The harsh reality of the developing countries strengthened her beliefs that the role of art is to address political issues and to stimulate a debate of ideas. **Les Angles Morts** (2006), **Sauver sa peau** (2008), **Junkyard/Paradise** (2010), **Goodbye** (2012), **MAYDAY remix** (2013) and **WOULD** (2015 full length version) have all been created from this perspective. To date, Mélanie Demers choreographed over fifteen works and was presented in some thirty cities across Europe, America, Africa and Asia.



## ANIMAL TRISTE

in creation

Humans like to believe they are at the center of the world. They know their fate but believe in eternity. On a clear day, they may see themselves poor and perishable. The next day, free, glorious and triumphant.

In the great march of the world, humans are nothing more than sad little animals. But animals that console themselves in beauty and in desire for immortality. For this, men will invent religions, philosophies and civilizations. They will conquer, dominate, oppress. And procreate. They will make up stories and write History. But very rarely will they understand where they stand and never really escape their condition. And deep down, men are those animals of no significance who only aspire to more and better.

**Animal Triste** might be a freeze frame to try to understand the nature and posture of Man in all his humanity.

CHOREOGRAPHY : MÉLANIE DEMERS PERFORMERS : MARC BOIVIN, JAMES GNAM, BRIANNA LOMBARDO and RILEY SIMS LIGHTS : ALEXANDRE PILON-GUAY ORIGINAL MUSIC : JACQUES POULIN-DENIS CREATION : 2016



## WOULD

30 or 55 min

Drawing its inspiration from all possible futures, **WOULD** is a meditation on potentiality, utopia, and our mania for projecting ourselves into the future. Imagining the best, fearing the worst. And adapting as best we can to the present. Fuelled by the energy of two powerful dancers, **WOULD** is a reflection on the failures, falls and miscues that inevitably mark our imperfect paths. Marc Boivin and Kate Holden confront each other like two wild beasts warily approaching each other.

For this piece, Marc Boivin received the 2014 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Performance Male.

DIRECTION, TEXT and CHOREOGRAPHY : MÉLANIE DEMERS WITH THE COLLABORATION OF PERFORMERS PERFORMERS : MARC BOIVIN, KATE HOLDEN LIGHTS : ALEXANDRE PILON-GUAY MUSIC : JOSHUA VAN TASSEL TECHNICAL DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION : ALEXANDRE PÉLOQUIN CREATION : 2013

*On ne peut que saluer la cohérence du langage chorégraphique de Mélanie Demers, l'excellence des deux interprètes [...] et l'adresse avec laquelle a été intégré le texte bilingue, qui nous fait passer du rire franc au questionnement sans que l'un ou l'autre des registres semble forcé.*

L. Renaud,  
Revue JEU, avril 15

*Une mise en scène brillante, exploitée de façon la plus simple et efficace possible, rendue par des interprètes qui sont entrés à fond dans le travail de la chorégraphe.*

Dfdanse, avril 15



## GOODBYE

60 min

**Goodbye** is a little handbook to saying farewell to the thousand deaths that we experience daily, which stages our tendency to invent and reinvent ourselves to face our own imperceptible grief. As a monstrous creature, gifted with intelligence and instinct, emancipated from its creators, **Goodbye** multiplies and fractionates itself, only to become fragmented and lost in its own labyrinth. Circling back and breaking up as if caught in a maze of its own making, **Goodbye** finds its way through by dismantling and revealing the codes and the ropes of representation, questioning both the world and art as the two ultimate forms of creation.

DIRECTION, TEXT and CHOREOGRAPHY : MÉLANIE DEMERS PERFORMERS : MÉLANIE DEMERS, BRIANNA LOMBARDO, CHI LONG, JACQUES POULIN-DENIS MUSIC : JEAN-SÉBASTIEN CÔTÉ LIGHTS : ALEXANDRE PILON-GUAY CREATION : 2012

*Goodbye first fascinates by its labyrinthine structure, like distorting mirrors where the same scenes are being replayed and are becoming increasingly crazy, spooky and phantasmagorical [...] the genius of Demers resides in this finely thought structure [...] her works are intelligent, unconventional, daring and fascinating.*

I. Gagnon-Paradis,  
Dfdanse, June 12



## JUNKYARD/PARADISE

65 min

*Une signature dans la gestuelle et dans la structure de l'espace physique et émotif. Une parole, politique et poétique, urgente et nécessaire. Une hyper-conscience de ce qu'est la représentation, de ses magies et de sa portée circonscrite. Autant de traits d'intelligence qui permettent de dire que Junkyard/Paradis est un foutu beau désordre. Et que Mélanie Demers est en train de devenir une grande chorégraphe. Chapeau.*

Catherine Lalonde  
Le Devoir, février 11

**Junkyard/Paradise** exists in a fragile balance between beauty and atrocity, between elegance and aversion, between grace and desolation. When junkyard is often a shelter for what is still precious and paradise a dump for our disposable love stories, the piece sways between opposing forces. What can be read as a child's play soon becomes a power game. What is passion becomes compassion. What is inoffensive becomes fatal. And what is imminence of death turns out to be a ticket for life. Welcome to a world where nothing is exactly what it seems.

DIRECTION, TEXT and CHOREOGRAPHY : MÉLANIE DEMERS PERFORMERS : ANGIE CHENG, MÉLANIE DEMERS, BRIANNA LOMBARDO, NICOLAS PATRY, JACQUES POULIN-DENIS LIGHTS : ALEXANDRE PILON-GUAY ORIGINAL MUSIC : JACQUES POULIN-DENIS CREATION : 2010



## SAUVER SA PEAU

55 min

Mélanie Demers and Laïla Diallo join forces for this new opus with the shared aspiration of investigating some delicate questions linked to identity. Created between Kenya, Canada and the UK, **Sauver sa Peau** has already left its marks on three continents. The piece unfolds as a fluid succession of physical tableaux offering as many perspectives on the multilayered nature of identity. As skin is always renewing itself, is identity not also in a constant state of becoming?

We wonder about what is valuable and ready to throw. On what makes us human beings or vulgar pawns, our ability to read the world, understand it and detect a little beauty in the daily discharge of our lives.

CHOREOGRAPHY, TEXTS and INTERPRETATION : MÉLANIE DEMERS and LAÏLA DIALLO  
LIGHTS : DAVID PERREAULT NINACS ORIGINAL MUSIC : JACQUES POULIN-DENIS  
ARTISTIC ADVISOR : BOYZIE CEKWANA CREATION : 2008

*Dans ce spectacle à l'esthétique surréaliste, trois duos font écarquiller les yeux: éblouissement devant l'échange de flux d'énergie, parfait roulement à billes avec accélérateur intégré. [...] les vagues déroulées par Mélanie Demers et Laïla Diallo nous attirent dans leur ressac.*

M. Barthome,  
Danser, avril 09

*Une création de grande qualité [...] qui a la profondeur mystérieuse du rêve et l'intelligence lucide de la conscience.*

M.-C. Scholl,  
Dfdanse, février 08



*[...] Pour la courageuse remise en question du rôle de l'artiste et de l'humain en lui, pour la charge émotive et la cohérence d'une œuvre tout en images et en atmosphères signée Mélanie Demers [...]*

F. Cabado,  
Voir, décembre 07

*Mélanie Demers does not waste a single second in submerging us in herworld [...] It is very difficult to qualify or even quantify Les Angles Morts because it works at such an experiential level that discussing it inevitably feels futile. The only way to truly appreciate it is to experience it. It will move you to action, and even maybe to creation.*

## LES ANGLES MORTS

35 min or 60 min

**Les Angles Morts** moves as a small manifesto. As an invitation to open our eyes collectively. As an incentive to look at our blunders, our times of distress, and our missteps. As a declaration of humanity. There are 1000 reasons for wanting to close our eyes to the unceasing spectacle of misery and barbarism. But there is good reason to look and confront? A good reason to see, to move and be moved? This is the question that trying to meet the protagonists of the play, both perpetrators and victims of their history. Trying to escape their condition, they invent a new order where it may be possible to live with open eyes.

CONCEPT AND CHOREOGRAPHY : MÉLANIE DEMERS PERFORMERS : MÉLANIE DEMERS  
and JACQUES POULIN-DENIS LIGHTS : DAVID PERREAULT NINACS ORIGINAL MUSIC :  
JACQUES POULIN-DENIS ARTISTIC ADVISOR : BOYZIE CEKWANA CREATION : 2006



## SPECIAL PROJECT

## MAYDAY REMIX

*Le pari est réussi, dynamique et très vivant. Une magnifique manière d'honorer le travail des dernières années de Mélanie Demers.*

É.Boileau  
Dfdanse, mars 14

*C'est un nouveau souffle rafraichissant pour le milieu montréalais, mais aussi des plus audacieux et des plus agréables pour son public. Une soirée mémorable.*

P. St-Onge  
MonTheatre.qc.ca,  
mars 14

Atypical event, indefinable artistic object, **MAYDAY remix** is an exploded rereading of the company's repertoire. With selected excerpts of the company's repertoire, Mélanie Demers plays the full-scale deconstruction game. Add to these new collaborators to revisit, reinterpret, pervert or corrupt the proposed material. In collaboration with many guest artists, the project is imagined as a course where each station reveals a part of the whole, **MAYDAY remix** splits, fragments and recomposed, offering a kaleidoscopic vision of the universe of the choreographer.

PERFORMERS : ANGIE CHENG, FRANCIS DUCHARME, CAROLINE GRAVEL, BRIANNA LOMBARDO, CHI LONG, NICOLAS PATRY, JACQUES-POULIN DENIS ET MÉLANIE DEMERS  
COLLABORATORS : POIRIER, OLIVIER CHOINÈRE, XAVIER CURNILLON, LES FERMÈRES OBSÉBÉES, CATHERINE GAUDET, CATHERINE LEROUX, CATHERINE VIDAL LIGHTS : ALEXANDRE PILON-GUAY ARTISTIC ADVISOR : ANNE-MARIE JOURDENAIS

# MAYDAY

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**MAYDAY** is supported by Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and Conseil des arts de Montréal  
**Goodbye** is a co-production with Festival TransAmériques. The project is supported by Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Conseil des arts de Montréal and Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique.

**Goodbye** was created during creative residency periods at Garage Nardini (Bassano), Compagnie Marie Chouinard (Montreal), Usine C (Montreal) and the Creation Centre O Vertigo (Montreal).

**Junkyard/Paradise** is a co-production with Rencontres chorégraphiques internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis and Agora de la danse (Montreal) with support of Canada Council for the Arts and Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique, Usine C (Montreal), Operaestate Veneto (Bassano) and CCN of Caen/Basse-Normandie through creative residency periods.

**MAYDAY** receives Diagramme Gestion culturelle services.

**MAYDAY** is member of Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique.

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