

LE CONCERT

New creation 2023



PEEPING TOM 

About *Le Concert*

“Music is at once the most wonderful, the most alive of all the arts – it is the most abstract, the most perfect, the most pure – and the most sensual. I listen with my body and it is my body that aches in response to the passion and pathos embodied in this music.” – Susan Sontag

Music will be at the centre of Peeping Tom’s new creation *Le Concert* (2023). Directed by Franck Chartier, the piece interweaves the company’s unique cinematographic and surreal universe with a dance-theatre performance that is, at the same time, live concert. In a challenging but exciting work of research, Peeping Tom will investigate the connection of its disrupted narrativity with a concert.

Music as a pathway to endless possibilities

Already from the early days of the company, music has been essential to Peeping Tom’s work. Mezzo-soprano Eurudike De Beul was one of the company’s founders, all performances have a unique soundscape not unlike a film and both *Moeder* and *The hidden floor* include foley techniques that allow the performers to create parts of the soundscape live on stage. In 2021, Franck Chartier created and directed *Dido & Aeneas*, the company’s first foray into opera, which was considered to be ‘Peeping Tom’s promising debut on a lyrical stage’ by French newspaper *Le Monde*.

Nourished by this opera experience, Franck Chartier has developed an appetite for an even more precise work with music. Indeed, *Dido & Aeneas*’ original score by Henry Purcell was extended with new work by Atsushi Sakaï, composed specifically for Peeping Tom’s adaptation of the 1688 opera. For *Le Concert*, Sakaï will write a full original score for the performance – a first for Peeping Tom. Moreover, longtime Peeping Tom collaborator Raphaëlle Latini will return to create the unique soundscape of the performance. Over the past ten years, Latini has worked on the creations of Peeping Tom, guiding the unconscious of the viewer via her cinematographic sound. The new creation will therefore offer a rich musical dramaturgy, combining a unique composition, live music and a filmic soundscape. Inspiration for the musical composition will come from pop music, adapted to the specificities of the piece and live musicians will be an integral part of the performance.

Expressing the inexpressible

Music will be a tool to guide both performers and audience into their memories, fears, traumas, past, present and future. As the author Aldous Huxley wrote, some of the most fundamental things to the human spirit – love, pleasure, pain, mystical ecstasy and death – can only be experienced rather than expressed, and “*that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music.*” Music can have a deep impact on both the masses and the individual and can create a sense of hypnosis, open up the imagination and lead people towards transcendental states, ecstasy, fanaticism and the unconscious.

The effect of music, then, influences the imagery and movement in *Le Concert* and the specific devices in musical compositions can offer a sense of meaning. For example, rhythm can “induce a wide range of emotional expressions”¹, and the interaction between chords can guide the viewer into the progress of events, the characters of a narrative, or emotions or threats. Certain elements from musical compositions, such as repetitions or rhythm, can sometimes even go beyond what dance or theatre are able to achieve. Imagine an Alzheimer’s patient. He would not be able to recognize his wife, but would still remember how to play the piano. This can be attributed to him dedicating his knowledge to muscle memory when he was young, and those memories never fade. The neurologist Oliver Sacks explains how “*the cerebellum, a portion that coordinates movement and stores muscle memory, responds well to the introduction of music.*” It is clear that musical devices can offer a fascinating point of departure for the creators to explore movement and character from a different vantage point, offering new possibilities to Peeping Tom’s dislocated and heterogeneous movement style.

Music and manipulation

Music can fortify the emotional experience – for example, when watching a film – but it can also generate a desire, playing with the human unconscious¹. In the second instance, it is a device to manipulate. For *Le Concert*, Franck Chartier wants to look into the influence of music on a group of people, asking how the performance can play with the audience, entering their unconsciousness and even arriving at trance through the effect of the rhythm and at the hypnosis of a group of people. Up to now, the audience in a Peeping Tom performance has been an external voyeur and the fourth wall is hardly broken. What happens, though, if the audience becomes an active participant in the performance? What if they can be hypnotized and manipulated – starting from the present and the awareness of surroundings to then explore other, deeper unconscious levels? What if the audience themselves become part of Peeping Tom’s *huis clos*?

¹ As found in *Music and Manipulation*, Brown and Volgsten.

Starting from this play with the group, *Le Concert* will then go into more detail, focusing on the individual and the human relationships that have been a rich domain since the early days of the company. Now, Franck Chartier intends to explore manipulation and gaslighting within a couple's relationship. Indeed, lovers usually confide in each other and surrender to one another, not always aware of the manipulation – even small daily manipulations – that might happen, sometimes even in a very violent way. Several questions rise to the surface: on what levels do we manipulate – and are we conscious of that? How is it expressed? In the end, we can arrive at the transformation of the other, possibly even going so far as causing the destruction of that other. In that sense, manipulation is also about power and power struggles – a confrontation we all face every day in even the smallest of actions.

Description of the Creation

Le Concert will be directed by Franck Chartier, with the dramaturgical assistance of Gabriela Carrizo. Conceptually, the performance will be on the crossroads between live concert and dance-theatre performance. In that sense, *Le Concert* will be performed in front of a sitting audience.

We will find back some of the familiar faces that have been part of the story of Peeping Tom for a long time, already from the early days of *Le Jardin*, *Le Salon* and *Le Sous-Sol*. The casting will also be completed with some new faces. The creation period of *Le Concert* is foreseen in spring 2023, with a premiere in September 2023. Peeping Tom is currently looking for more coproducers.

Peeping Tom in the press

"In Dido & Aeneas, Peeping Tom creates a breathtakingly colourful, imposing and intensely tender design of the battlefield that is love." – Knack (BE) about *Dido & Aeneas*

"Franck Chartier and his company Peeping Tom follow in the footsteps of Pina Bausch and Sasha Waltz. His choreographic version of Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas" shimmers between Shakespeare and Beckett." – Neue Zürcher Zeitung (CH) about *Dido & Aeneas*

*"Almost acrobatic danced actions, of such an originality, beauty and perfection that they are difficult to grasp." ***** (5 stars)* – Diario de Sevilla (ES) about *Triptych*

"Their productions swirl with strange, surreal images. They swing from silly to unsettling in a few steps, until audiences are bamboozled. These are shows that refuse to be shaken off." – The Guardian about *Moeder*

*"What a difference a day makes'. Trust us, ultimately it all boils down to having seen 'Vader' or not." ****1/2 – De Morgen about Vader*

"Told through a combination of theatrical performance, dance, movement and song, the production offers a form of total theatre we see only rarely on the British stage." – The Sunday Herald about Le Salon

About Peeping Tom

Our Story

Peeping Tom is a Belgian dance theatre company founded in 2000 by choreographers Gabriela Carrizo (I/AR) and Franck Chartier (F). Together with would-be long-time collaborator Eurudike De Beul, they created a location project that took place in a trailer home, Caravana (1999), followed by the film Une vie inutile (2000).

Before starting their own company, they had earned praise as dancers at internationally renowned companies such as Les Ballets C de la B (Alain Platel), Rosas, Maurice Béjart, Angelin Preljocaj and Needcompany.

A hyperrealist aesthetic

Peeping Tom's hallmark is a hyperrealist aesthetic anchored to a concrete set: a garden, a living room and a basement in the first trilogy (Le Jardin, 2002; Le Salon, 2004; and Le Sous Sol, 2007), two trailer homes in a snow-covered landscape in 32 rue Vandenbranden (2009), a burned theatre in A Louer (2011) or a retirement home in Vader (2014).

In these settings, the directors create an unstable universe that defies the logic of time and space. Isolation leads to an unconscious world of nightmares, fears and desires, which the creators deftly use to shed light on the dark side of a character or a community. They explore an extreme language of movement and performance: nothing is ever gratuitous, and the human condition is throughout a main source of inspiration.

Using film editing techniques, they manage to extend the limits of the plot, which always comes across more as a contour than as something you can pin down with any certainty. The 'huis clos' of family situations remains for Peeping Tom a major source of creativity. In 2019, the company finished a second trilogy – Vader, Moeder, Kind – around this theme. A year later, Peeping Tom presented TRIPTYCH: The missing door, The lost room and The hidden floor, an adaptation of the three pieces previously created with NDT I. In 2021, the company will create for the first time a performance for an existing space. *La*

Visita is a continuation of some of the stories of the characters in *Moeder*. However, they have been rehoused, to the Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia. The museum, a symbol of stability in time, is confronted here with the temporary and the volatile. *La Visita* will premiere on 4 November 2021 in Reggio Emilia.

Organic and intuitive collaborations

In Peeping Tom, everything connects to everything else. The organic and the intuitive are the breeding ground for collaborations and for creation processes. Their work is a collective and continuous research, coupled with long-term relations with creative and unique performers that ensure the continuity of form and content.

Each finished production is for the dancers/actors a – temporary – surrender of the flow of short scenes generated during the creation period. Each creation process represents for the choreographers a new step in their search for a graceful intertwining of movement with the theatrical, the emotional, with text, sound and set design.

Over the years, the company has developed a strong relation with theatres and audiences. The performances attract a wide, faithful, mostly young public, both at home and abroad. The list of tour dates is exceptionally long, as is the – growing – number of countries they visit each year. With Peeping Tom, creation periods tend to be long, and the productions grow and ripen during the tours. This means that on average, there is a new production every two years.

Opening up to external collaborators

Since 2013, Peeping Tom has opened up to external collaborations with other artists, companies and organizations. In 2013, Gabriela Carrizo created the short piece *The missing door* with and for the Nederlands Dans Theater – NDT I, while Franck Chartiers adapted *32 rue Vandenbranden* for the Opera of Göteborg (as *33 rue Vandenbranden*, 2013).

In 2015, Gabriela Carrizo directed *The Land*, a joint production created with members of Peeping Tom and the actors of the Residenztheater that premiered on May, 8th in the Cuvilliéstheater (Munich, DE) in the frame of festival DANCE 2015. October 1st, 2015, marked the premiere of Franck Chartier and NDT I's *The lost room* in The Hague (NL). The short piece is a sequel to Gabriela Carrizo's *The missing door*.

In 2017, Peeping Tom and NDT I collaborated once again for the creation of *The hidden floor*, directed by Franck Chartier with the dancers of the Dutch dance company. This closed the trilogy of *Adrift*, comprising of *The missing door*, *The lost room* and *The hidden floor*. Gabriela Carrizo will direct her second short piece with NDT 1 in 2022.

Peeping Tom's offices are situated in Molenbeek (Brussels). The company benefits from structural support from the Flemish authorities.

Did you know?

- The team at Peeping Tom – artists, choreographers, technicians, designers, collaborators – is made up of 16 nationalities.
- The oldest artist at Peeping Tom is 83 years old, the youngest is 21.
- Over 280.000 people worldwide have seen a Peeping Tom show.
- More than 1500 local extras worldwide have performed in a Peeping Tom show.
- In 2015, Peeping Tom won a prestigious Olivier Award in London for 32 rue Vandenbranden and in 2021, *La Visita* received the FEDORA Van Cleef & Arpels Prize for Ballet.

Awards

2021

- LA VISITA: Winner of the FEDORA Van Cleef & Arpels Prize for Ballet 2021
- TRIPTYCH: Nominations for a Critics Award as Best International Dance Production and Best International Theatre Production (Barcelona, ES)

2018

- MOEDER: ‘Best Theatre Performance’ at the Festival Internacional de Teatro y Artes de Calle in Valladolid (ES).

2017

- THE MISSING DOOR: Herald Angel at the Edinburgh International Festival (UK) (together with Stop-Motion and Shoot the Moon by Paul Lightfoot and Sol León)

2016

- THE LOST ROOM: Swan for ‘Most Impressive Dance Production’ (Maastricht, NL)

2015

- 32 RUE VANDENBRANDEN: ‘Best New Dance Production’ at the Olivier Awards (London, UK)
- VADER: Selection for Het Theaterfestival (BE)
- A LOUER: Nomination for a Critics Award as Best International Dance Production (Barcelona, ES)

2014

- VADER: ‘Best International Dance Production’ at the Barcelona Critics Awards (ES)
- VADER: ‘Best Dance Performance of the Year’ by Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad

2013

- 32 RUE VANDENBRANDEN: ‘Best Dance Show of the Year 2013’ in São Paulo by magazine Guia Folha.
- A LOUER: Nomination for the Ubu Awards in Italy in the category ‘Best Performance in a Foreign Language’.

2012

- A LOUER: Selection for Het Theaterfestival (BE)

2007

- LE SALON: Montblanc Young Directors Award at the Salzburg Festival (AT)
- LE SALON: Patrons Circle Award at the International Arts Festival Melbourne (AU)
- LE SOUS SOL: Selection for Het Theaterfestival (BE)

2005

- LE SALON: Prix du Meilleur Spectacle de Danse (FR)



Le Concert (2023) – Peeping Tom

Artistic Direction

Gabriela Carrizo (°1970, Córdoba, AR)

Gabriela was ten years old when she started dancing at a multidisciplinary school that had, at the time, the only group of contemporary dance for children and teenagers. Under Norma Raimondi's direction, the school went on to become Córdoba's University Ballet, where Gabriela danced for a couple of years, and where she created her first choreographies.

She moved to Europe when she was nineteen, and over the years she worked with Caroline Marcadé, Les Ballets C de la B (*La Tristeza Complice*, 1997, and *Iets op Bach*, 1998), Koen Augustijnen (*Portrait intérieur*, 1994) and Needcompany (*Images of Affection*, 2001). She never stopped working on her own choreographies, and these years saw the production of a solo piece, *E tutto sarà d'ombra e di caline*, and *Bartime*, a collaboration with Einat Tuchman and Lisi Estaras. She also created the choreography for the opera *Wolf* (2002), by Les Ballets C de la B. She plays a leading role in Fien Troch's movie *Kid* (2012), and in 2013 she created the short piece *The missing door* (2013) for the Nederlands Dans Theater – NDT 1 in The Hague. In 2015, Carrizo created *The Land*, a collaboration with the Munich Residenztheater. More recently, she worked with Franck Chartier on *31 Rue Vandenbranden* (2018) an adaptation with Le Ballet de l'Opéra de Lyon of Peeping Tom's original. The new piece opened the prestigious Biennale de la Danse de Lyon in 2018. In 2022, Gabriela will direct her second short piece for Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT 1).

Gabriela has been the artistic director of Peeping Tom, along with Franck Chartier, since they co-founded the company in 2000.

Franck Chartier (°1967, Roanne, FR)

Franck started dancing when he was eleven, and at the age of fifteen his mother sent him to study classical ballet at Rosella Hightower in Cannes. Between 1986 and 1989, he was a part of Maurice Béjart's Ballet du 20ème Siècle. The following three years, he worked with Angelin Preljocaj, dancing in *Le spectre de la rose* at the Opéra de Paris.

He moved to Brussels in 1994, to perform in Rosas' production *Kinok* (1994), and he stayed on, working on duos with Ine Wichterich and Anne Mouselet, as well as in productions by Needcompany (*Tres*, 1995) and Les Ballets C de la B: *La Tristeza Complice* (1997), *Iets op Bach* (1997) and *Wolf* (2002). In 2013, he created *33 rue Vandenbranden* for the Göteborg Opera, based on Peeping Tom's *32 rue Vandenbranden*, and he developed the choreography for the opera *Marouf, Savetier du Caire* by Jérôme Deschamps at the Opéra Comique de Paris. For Nederlands Dans Theater, he directed *The lost room* in 2015, for which he received the prestigious Dutch price 'Swan Most Impressive Dance Production 2016'.

2017 marked the world premiere of *The hidden floor*, his second collaboration with the Dutch company. More recently, he worked with Gabriela Carrizo on *31 Rue Vandenbranden* (2018) an adaptation with Le Ballet de l'Opéra de Lyon of Peeping Tom's original. The new piece opened the prestigious Biennale de la Danse de Lyon in 2018. In 2021, he directed *Dido & Aeneas*, a collaboration between Peeping Tom, Le Concert d'Astrée and the Grand Théâtre de Genève.

Franck has been the artistic director of Peeping Tom, along with Gabriela Carrizo, since they co-founded the company in 2000.

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