



# La Valse

Raimund Hoghe

November 23th-26th, 2016

Centre Pompidou - Festival d'Automne - Paris

With my choreographic piece La Valse (The Waltz), I am continuing my confrontation with some of the most iconic works in music and dance history.

After *Sacre – The Rite of Spring*, *Swan Lake*, *4 Acts*, *Boléro Variations* and *L'Après-midi*, I will this time be working with an orchestral piece by Maurice Ravel which was first presented to a Paris audience in 1920. It was not until 1928 that the choreographer Bronislava Nijinska (sister to Vaslav Nijinsky) created a one act ballet to it, using the theme “La Valse.”

In my interpretation, I will use both the orchestral and the piano versions of the work. The Belgian pianist Guy Vandromme will be in attendance at each performance to play. Other waltzes will also be integrated into the piece, among them the Viennese waltzes which were the basis for Ravel's piece. As in my previous pieces, La Valse will be developed first in rehearsal, and its layout will not follow any predefined choreography.

I first began collaborating with the pianist Guy Vandromme in Brussels in 2006, with a performance at the Kaaithheater of *Sacre – The Rite of Spring* and the piano (this particular production also toured to the Sydney Festival in 2013). I have also shared a long artistic journey with the dancers I am planning to work with on this production: Marion Ballester, Emmanuel Eggermont and Takashi Ueno will be joining me on La Valse, and we are also adding Ji Hye Chung. My collaborator Luca Giacomo Schulte will also be joining us on this adventure.

*Raimund Hoghe*  
January 2016

# The genesis of *La Valse*

In 1919, Sergei Diaghilev, the impresario of the legendary Ballets Russes company, commissioned this ballet music from Ravel. The theme was to be “Vienna and its waltzes,” which allowed Ravel to use a previous étude, which he considered “an apotheosis of a Viennese waltz,” and “a fantastic whirlwind which no one escapes.” For Ravel the idea was not only to musically celebrate the waltz and an ideal world but also to explore the fears which bubble to the surface when the full dizziness and exhilaration of the waltz have subsided. He composed a kind of waltz kaleidoscope which is constantly introducing new colors and shapes: bright, brilliant, sprinkled with pastel and golden notes; later, strange, somewhat threatening patterns appear. They slowly drift and erode, creating darker, morbid, more strident tones. In the end the music spins entirely out of control, becoming almost brutal, violent. The percussion thunders, diminishing the glow of the candlesticks, and perhaps the men and women who threw themselves into the passion of the dance. Ravel composed *La Valse* during World War I: as a combat truck driver, he witnessed many atrocities.

But Diaghilev was not happy with the score and refused to commission a choreographic piece to it. So *La Valse* was played for the first time only as an orchestral piece on December 12, 1920 in Paris. Shortly thereafter, Ravel created a version for two pianos. It lost a few of the subtle colors of the orchestral version, but the mechanical aspect of the apocalyptic waltz was much more striking in the piano version.

## Raimund Hoghe

Born in Wuppertal, Raimund Hoghe is now based in Düsseldorf. He first worked as a journalist and author, then from 1980 to 1990 as dramaturg for Pina Bausch. He has been developing his own theatre work since 1989, and since 1992 has also collaborated with the visual artist Luca Giacomo Schulte. He stepped onto the stage himself in 1994 and has been touring internationally since then with his solo and ensemble works. In 2001, he was awarded the Deutsche Produzentenpreis für Choreografie (German producers’ prize for choreography). In 2006, he received the French Prix du syndicat de la critique in the category “best international production” for his *Swan Lake*, 4 Acts. In 2008, he was designated Dancer of the Year in a critics’ survey by *ballet-tanz* magazine.

Concept, choreography and set design **Raimund Hoghe**

Artistic collaboration **Luca Giacomo Schulte**

Dancers **Marion Ballester, Ji Hye Chung, Emmanuel Eggermont, Raimund Hoghe, Luca Giacomo Schulte, Takashi Ueno**, and **Ornella Balestra** as guest

Piano **Guy Vandromme**

Lighting **Raimund Hoghe, Amaury Seval**

Sound **Nicolás Kretz**

Photography **Rosa Frank**

Administration, production **Mathieu Hillereau, Les Indépendances**

Production: Raimund Hoghe — Hoghe & Schulte GbR (Düsseldorf)

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Landeshauptstadt  
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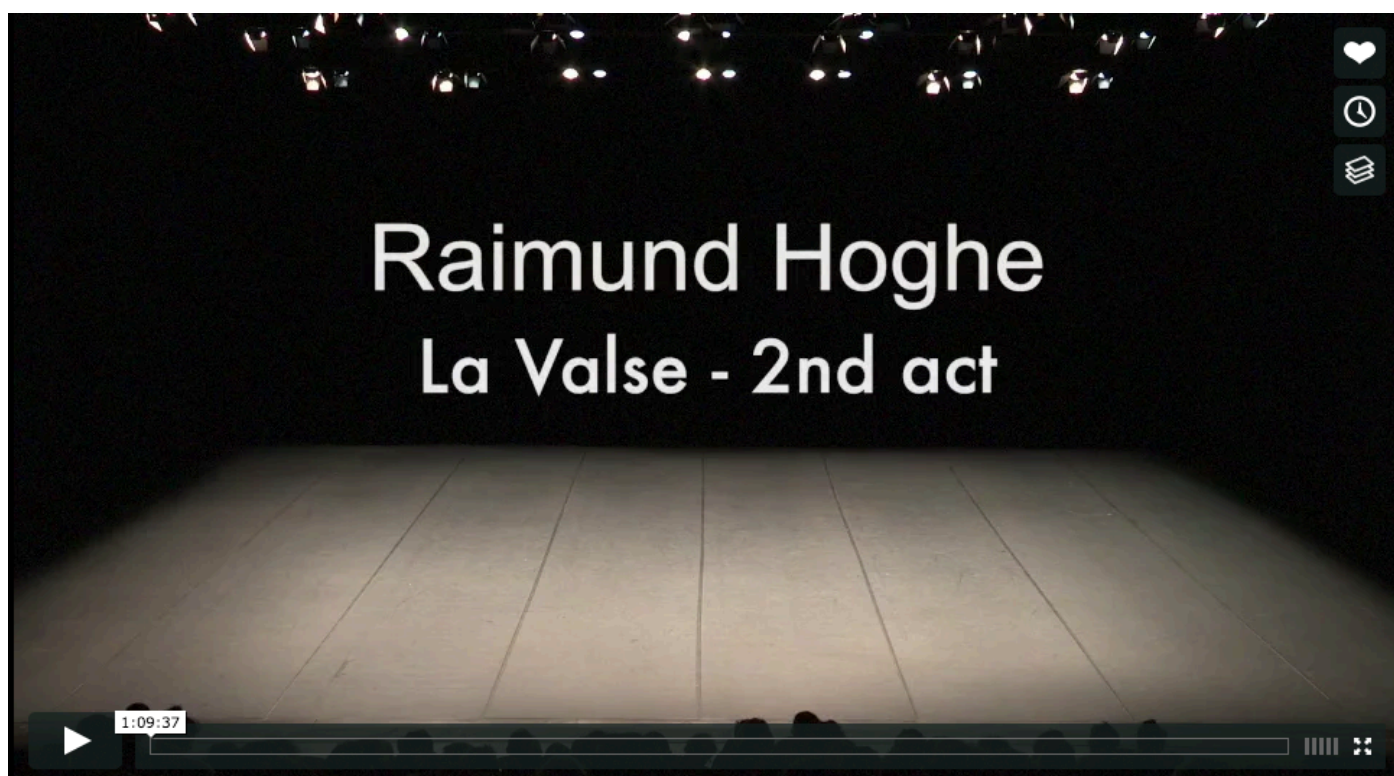
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