



COMPAGNIE
JEAN-CLAUDE
GALLOTTA

Ga//otta
GROUPE ÉMILE DUBOIS



My Rock

Choreography
Jean-Claude Gallotta

Re-creation at
MC2 : Grenoble



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My Rock Re-creation

Rock and contemporary dance started life in the same country and at the same time : the United States in the early 1950s. However these two movements have never crossed paths, with Elvis Presley in Memphis and Merce Cunningham in New-York.

Jean-Claude Gallotta, who grew up with these two movements and who was naturally inspired by both, set himself the task of bringing about this long-overdue meeting and provoking a "rockagraphical" shock with those who motivated him creatively, from Elvis to the Rolling Stones, from Bob Dylan to the Who, from the Velvet Underground to Nick Drake, from Iggy Pop to the Clash, and from Leonard Cohen to Nirvana and Kurt Cobain...

Choreography **Jean-Claude Gallotta**
Choreographer's assistant **Mathilde Altaraz**

Text **Jean-Claude Gallotta , Claude Henri Buffard**
Costumes **Marion Mercier**
Assisted by **Anne Jonathan and Jacques Schiotto**
Pierre Escande by Benjamin Houal
Video editing **Agnès Canova, Ximena Figueroa, Paul Gouëlle,**
with the dancers of the Groupe Émile Dubois **Ibrahim Guétissi, Georgia Ives, Fuxi Li,**
(show available in 2 versions: 10 or 13 dancers) **Bernardita Moya Alcalde, Lilou Niang,**
Jérémy Silvetti, Gaetano Vaccaro, Thierry Verger,
Béatrice Warrant et Jean-Claude Gallotta
Production **Groupe Émile Dubois**
Co-production **Centre chorégraphique national de Grenoble**
With the backing of **MC2: Grenoble**

length 1 hour 05 mins

The Groupe Émile Dubois / Compagnie Jean-Claude Gallotta is backed by the Ministry of Culture and Communication (Ministère de la culture et de la communication-DGCA) as well as the DRAC Auvergne - Rhône-Alpes, the Région Auvergne - Rhône-Alpes, and the Département de l'Isère and the town of Grenoble.

My Rock Re-creation

Calendar / Season 2017 - 2018

// 5 and 6 January 2017

Perpignan - L'Archipel, scène nationale

// 18, 19, 20 January 2017

Caen - Théâtre de Caen

// 21 January 2017

Saint Lô - Théâtre Saint Lô

// 24 January 2017

Meudon - Centre d'Art et de Culture

// 27 January 2017

Bezons - Théâtre Paul Eluard

// 31 January 2017

Compiègne - Espace Jean Legendre

// 2 February 2017

Bastia - Théâtre de Bastia

// 4 February 2017

Sainte-Maxime - Le Carré

// 16, 17 February 2017

Angoulême - Théâtre Angoulême, scène nationale

// 4 April 2017

Voiron - Le Grand Angle

// 9, 10 May 2017

Blagnac - Odyssud

// 12 May 2017

Cahors - Théâtre de Cahors

// 19 May 2017

Villejuif - Théâtre Romain Rolland

// 2, 3 June 2017

Ollioules - CNCDC Châteauvallon, Scène Nationale

My Rock Explanatory note

Elvis Presley and Merce Cunningham. Two names we never see together on the US billboards and stages. However, rock and contemporary dance started life with those two artists in the same country and at the same time: the United States in the 1950s. In fact, we can precisely date their "birth" to the year 1953, which saw both the arrival of the first rock tracks including the famous *My Happiness* by Elvis Presley and the creation of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company.

Over the space of half a century, rock and contemporary dance have never combined or influenced one another. Each has followed its own path, each with its own history and variants, one over in Memphis and the other in New York.

Jean-Claude Gallotta, who grew up with these movements, has naturally been inspired by both. As he explains: "*rock was part of my teenage world and perhaps by enabling me to meet other lost souls it helped me to escape my existential angst*"

My Rock, which had only been viewed privately a decade ago as a type of work in progress is today being produced as a full show. It comprises around 15 short sequences danced to tracks taken from classic albums from the history of rock, combined with commentary from the choreographer to place each performer in context.

It begins with **Elvis** who represents the very soul of rock, a pop Idol and living legend, the eternal *King* in any terms, whose media stature dominates the rock movement. A man who, just like his larger-than-life bronze statue, reigns over his hometown of Tupelo;

But also the **Beatles**, a major 1960s group thanks to whom rock would no longer be considered as entertainment but as a form of culture in its own right;

The Rolling Stones, the blues enthusiasts who championed the adoption of this black American style by white Western youth, and who are widely recognised as "the world's greatest rock 'n' roll group";

Bob Dylan, an icon when it comes to protest songs, whose work drew upon folk, blues but also country and gospel to give rock an anti-establishment, violent or poetic dimension;

The Who, who exploded onto the music scene in 1965 with *My generation*, creating pure English rock in the process;

The Velvet Underground and Lou Reed, the New York group which had the greatest influence on the history of rock from the 1970s onwards;

The wistful and introspective **Nick Drake** who sadly left us 26 years ago;

Iggy Pop and the Stooges, sexual, unrestrained, ready to try anything and rolling back boundaries wherever they encountered them;

The Clash, pioneers when it comes to combining rock, reggae and punk;

Leonard Cohen, a Canadian poet with a deep, moving voice;

Nirvana and its legendary lead singer **Kurt Cobain**, who expressed their disillusionment with life in terms which a whole generation identified with;

Patti Smith, a singer from New York who created a link between the literary folk blues represented by Bob Dylan in the 1960s and the punk rock which started life with the austere violence inherited from the Velvet Underground;

And finally **Wilson Pickett**, a legendary artist with a hoarse voice and rasping vocals, who gave us among other things *In the midnight hour*, immortalised in 1991 in the prestigious Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame of Cleveland (an institution which includes the cream of international rock), who died in January 2006, and who will be remembered as the undisputed master of soul music.

C.-H.B

My Rock Interview with Jean-Claude Gallotta

You knew Merce Cunningham well: did he listen to rock (or anything other than John Cage?)

We have something in common: we both started out doing tap-dancing. And during our few conversations about music, especially when he was invited to Grenoble in the 80s, he told me that he liked very rhythmic “beat” music that made him want to “get up and dance”. But he also liked birdsong which, he said, was a way of “balancing his ears”.

Was Presley's rock really a raw, emancipated form of art in its early days? Or was it already a commercial product?

I think that, when he first started out, Elvis Presley was natural and independent. He was paying tribute to his idols, the black Americans who had created the blues and its derivatives. He saw them singing and dancing quite freely, with no ulterior motives. The commercial aspect came later when Elvis’ “promoters” accepted his way of singing only because he was white.

Was there a piece of music that really started things off? A voice? A sound that opened the way to “My Rock”? A “genesis”?

Yes, in fact it was an artiste, Nick Drake, who’s a particularly good illustration of my project, in that he shows that rock isn’t just about “show biz”, it’s also a culture, a way of thinking, an absolute that’s sometimes driven to the point of suffering and death.

You're working on thirteen pieces with twelve dancers: how do you link each sequence together? Is it a chronological link? Or is it a perceptible link?

The link is made up of my memories. Elvis, the Beatles, the Stones, Dylan, the people I listened to as I daydreamed over their record sleeves. I’ve recreated history in my own way, like everyone else does, it’s “my rock”, the title says it clearly. Each sequence is illustrated by the record sleeves. Between the pieces, I say a few words about each artiste, anecdotes or a particular point of view. I sometimes come on stage, I dance, talk...

Do you dance to rock differently to how you would dance to the voice of Bashung, or to Bach? Does the music dictate the movement?

No, the music doesn’t dictate the movement. I always work in silence to try and find the choreographic style. Dance is not just an illustration. Once I’ve found the right movements, I “immerse” them in the various sounds. I see what effect I’ve obtained and adjust accordingly.

How has the show evolved in ten years?

I still haven’t started rehearsals. In a few months’ time I’ll take up the choreography and music again. Most of the dancers have changed. So, as Bob Dylan would say, something’s going to happen here, but you don’t know what it is, do you, Mr Jones!

Contemporary dance and rock were born together in the 50s in the United States, in Memphis and New York, but when and where will they end?

While rock music and a certain kind of contemporary dance were born together in the 50s, they have never crossed paths. By combining them in this show, I’m offering a meeting-point between their two stories. Will it be a one-off experience? Possibly. Or will it lead to the creation of new art forms? Maybe.

**Interview by Pierre Notte
Théâtre du Rond Point - 2015**

My Rock Jean-Claude Gallotta's biography



After spending time in the late 1970s in New York where he discovered the universe of post-modern dance (Merce Cunningham, Yvonne Rainer, Lucinda Childs, Trisha Brown, Steve Paxton, Stuart Sherman...), Jean-Claude Gallotta returned to Grenoble and – with Mathilde Altaraz – founded the Groupe Émile Dubois which became in 1984 a national center of choreography (Centre chorégraphique national). From the outset the dance company was based in Grenoble's Maison de la culture, which he directed from 1986 to 1989. Jean-Claude Gallotta has created over 60 choreographies and presented them on every continent. Among his creations : *Ulysse*, *Mammame*, *Docteur Labus*, *Presque Don Quichotte*, *Les Larmes de Marco Polo*, *99 duos*, *Trois générations*, *Cher Ulysse*... He also choreographed several shows for the Ballet of the Opéra de Lyon and for the Ballet of the Opéra de Paris. At the invitation of the stage director, Tadashi Suzuki in Shizuoka (Japan), he founded a Japanese dance company and worked with it between 1997 and 2000. In 2009 he choreographed *L'Homme à tête de chou – Cabbage Head Man* (based on the Serge Gainsbourg album in a version by Alain Bashung) ; in 2011 he created *Daphnis é Chloé* (Théâtre de la Ville) and *Le Sacre du printemps – The Rite of Spring* (Théâtre de Chaillot). In late 2012, he presented *Racheter la mort des gestes – Chroniques chorégraphiques 1 (Atoning for Death by Movements – Choreographic Chronicles 1)* at Théâtre de la Ville, then in Grenoble at the MC2. In early 2013, he reprised *Yvan Vaffan* (a show created in 1984) which enabled him to work on his repertory, thus advocating a certain «continuité de l'art», sharing with the public a common history, that of a shared artistic past and future. In October 2013, he co-authored the show *l'Histoire du soldat* by Stravinsky and *L'Amour sorcier* by Manuel de Falla with the orchestra conductor Marc Minkowski and the stage director, Jacques Osinski. He opened the 2014-15 season with *Le Sacre et ses révolutions* at the Philharmonie de Paris, and in June 2015, he created *L'Étranger* based on Albert Camus - *The Stranger*, performed at MC2: Grenoble. He opened the 2015-16 season with *My Rock* at the MC2 and at the Théâtre du Rond-Point in Paris.

On December 31, 2015, Jean-Claude Gallotta stepped down as director of the Centre Chorégraphique national - Grenoble.

Today, with his dance company fully reconstituted under its original name - Groupe Émile Dubois – he continues on his artistic way.

In association with the Théâtre du Rond Point (Paris) and MC2 : Grenoble, where his company is now based, he is creating new forms of work to explore the choreographic universe. In 2016, the Groupe Émile Dubois will go on tour with three shows : *My Rock*, *l'Étranger*, *l'Enfance de Mammame*.