

BALLET de l'OPÉRA GRAND AVIGNON

UNITED DANCES of AMERICA

Choreographies by Rena Butler, Mike Tyus & Luca Renzi, Stephen Shropshire



Echoing Martin Harriague's impetuous fresco on Trump's America presented in the fall of 2024, three American choreographers are in the spotlight in this program dedicated, in a more abstract but just as impactful way, to the universal quest for freedom, authenticity, identity.

Three different perspectives, but the same fervor to denounce confinement, whether physical or social, and explore the liberating force of dance. Each piece is in its own way a declaration of artistic independence.



UNITED DANCES_{of} AMERICA

Three choreographers, three views, 1 evening

Length	60 minutes
Choreographies	Rena Butler, Mike Tyus & Luca Renzi, Stephen Shropshire
Music	Chance The Rapper, Justin Hurwitz, J.S Bach, Allen Ginsberg, Frederic Rzewski
Dancers	Daniele Badagliacca, Sylvain Bouvier, Lucie-Mei Chuzel, Elisa Cloza, Mariana Faria, Aurélie Garros, Joffray Gonzalez, Léo Khébizi, Hanae Kunimoto, Tabatha Longdoz, Kyril Matantsau, Marion Moreul, Ari Soto
Ballet master	Brigitte Prato
Lights	K.J
Choreographers assistants	Aimée Lagrange & Luca Renzi
Ballet technical manager	Michele Soro
Costumes making	Opéra Grand Avignon
Production	Opéra Grand Avignon - 2025

PREMIERE

MAY 17 & 18, 2025
OPÉRA GRAND AVIGNON

THIS THAT & THE THIRD by Rena Butler

Music Chance The Rapper, Justin Hurwitz | **Length** 25 min | *piece for 8 dancers*

Drawing on her African-American roots, the emerging choreographer from Chicago reveals the ambiguity and violence of code-switching: to survive in our society, know how to put aside your identity and conform to dominant norms! Carried by the energy of urban music (Chance the Rapper), the piece is a powerful metaphor for the struggle for authenticity and freedom.

HOLY by Mike Tyus & Luca Renzi

Music J.S. Bach, Allen Ginsberg | **Length** 25 min | *piece for 2 dancers*

Choreographer Mike Tyus is from Los Angeles. He has acquired worldwide fame by directing breathtaking video clips since the pandemic (Zendaya, FKA Twigs, among others...). *Holy* is a duo created in 2023 with his partner Luca Renzi at Benjamin Millepied's LA Dance Project. It is an intimate and unique work, based on a poem by Allen Ginsberg, a founding member of the Beat Generation, the hippie movement and the American counterculture. *Holy* is a delicate and striking piece that invites us to a deep immersion in the spiritual and sacred dimension of the human experience, the ultimate freedom.

MYTHOLOGY by Stephen Shropshire

Music Frederic Rzewski | **Length** 18 min | *piece for 12 dancers*

Stephen Shropshire comes from Miami but has lived in the Netherlands for several years. He has created for several internationally renowned companies (Ballet BC in Canada, Hong Kong Ballet, São Paulo Dance Company, New Zealand Dance Company, Danish Dance Theater, Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, etc.)

Mythology is the masterful alliance of three major arts: the letter-poem of Sam Melville, political prisoner and leader of the Attica insurrection, reveals all its emotional power in the music of Frédéric Rzewski and fully resonates in the frenetic choreography of Shropshire.

TRAILER

Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon

UNITED DANCES of AMERICA

Chorégraphies Rena Butler, Mike Tyus & Luca Renzi, Stephen Shropshire



A black and white portrait of Rena Butler, a woman with dark, curly hair, looking slightly to the left of the camera. The image is high-contrast and grainy. The text is overlaid on a dark rectangular area on the left side of the image.

RENA BUTLER

Rena Butler is a Chicago native who began her dance studies at the Chicago Academy for the Arts and then the National Taipei University of the Arts in Taiwan. She went on to earn a BFA from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance. Rena has performed with various companies throughout the United States, including Hubbard Street Dance Chicago.

In 2019, Rena received the prestigious Choreography Prize from the Princess Grace Foundation. Her commissions include creations for BalletX, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, GroundWorks DanceTheater, Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Summer Program, Parsons, Charlotte Ballet, The Juilliard School, Boston Dance Theater.

In 2022, Rena created an evening-long work for the Swedish dance company Norrdans, and in the fall she choreographed *Orfeo and Eurydice*, directed by Matthew Ozawa, for the San Francisco Opera. In 2023, Rena makes her choreographic debut in Canada with a new creation commissioned by the National Ballet of Canada. Other work in 2023 included new creations for Hubbard Street Dance, Oregon Ballet and Oklahoma City Ballet. In 2024, Rena will create new works for the Cincinnati Ballet, the Gauthier Dance Jr. Company in Germany and the Dutch National Ballet.

A black and white photograph of two men, Mike Tyus and Luca Renzi, looking towards the camera. Mike Tyus is on the left, and Luca Renzi is on the right, slightly behind him. Both are wearing dark clothing. The background is a plain, light color.

MIKE TYUS

+

LUCA RENZI

MIKE TYUS is... a dancer, choreographer and creative director from the vibrant city of Los Angeles, California. With more than 20 years of experience, he has become an essential figure in the world of dance, captivating audiences both on stage and on screen. As a performer, Tyus has graced the stages of renowned productions, including Cirque Du Soleil's IRIS. In 2013, Tyus joined the prestigious Pilobolus Dance Theater, collaborating with visionary choreographers like Sidi Larbi Cherkou and Israeli choreographers Inbal Pinto and Avshalom Pollack. Tyus also had the privilege of performing a choreography by Ryan Heffington created for Sia and walking the Oscars stage under the direction of Philippe Decouflé. He is a founding member of Jacob Jonas The Company and served as Associate Producer for Films.Dance, a platform dedicated to pushing the boundaries of dance film through unconventional collaborations. Her choreographic portfolio spans dance companies, museums and pop stars. Tyus' choreography extended to a Facebook ad directed by FKA Twigs.

In 2020, he created Mike Tyus & Co, a dance company dedicated to bringing his visionary work to life, with an impressive repertoire of over 13 films. Beyond his accomplishments in dance, Mike Tyus has demonstrated his creative prowess as a director by directing campaigns for major brands such as Vaara, Anthropologie, Veuve Clicquot, Club Monaco, SONY, Apple and Abercrombie & Fitch.

LUCA RENZI is a choreographer, movement/creative director and videographer. He was born in Bern, Switzerland and is based in Los Angeles. He trained at the University of Zurich with Jochen Heckmann (Germany) and Andrea von Gunten. He graduated from NYU Tisch School of the Arts with his Master of Fine Arts in Dance with a concentration in Choreography and Dance/Technology under the direction of Sean Curran. Luca was a member of the contemporary dance company Vivo Ballet in New York. Luca was on tour with Romanian artist INNA, danced in music videos for Jackson Wang and directed music videos for Soaky Siren. Recently, he has been assisting Mike Tyus & Co. with videography and choreography.

STEPHEN SHROPSHIRE



Stephen Shropshire (Miami, 1972) is a choreographer, curator and dance researcher. He graduated from the Juilliard School in New York, holds a master's degree from Maastricht University and is currently a doctoral candidate at PhDArts, Leiden University and the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague (KABK).

Her work has been performed by companies and festivals around the world, including Hong Kong Ballet, São Paulo Dance Company, New Zealand Dance Company, Danish Dance Theatre, Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, National Dance Company Wales, Holland Dance Festival, Schrit_tmacher Festival Just Dance!, Julidans, Colors International Dance Festival, Nederlandse Dansdagen, Stiftsmusik Stuttgart and Jacob's Pillow dance festival. Shropshire has received numerous awards and recognitions for his work, including a 2017 Special Honorary Award from Dansersfonds '79 for the "coherent aesthetic harmony" of his work, and a 2018 "Zwan" VSCD for We Are Nowhere Else But Here as the most outstanding dance performance of the Dutch theater season. In 2020, Shropshire received a "Fast Forward" international production and research grant from the Dutch Performing Arts Fund.

In 2016, the Shropshire Foundation was established to facilitate the continued development and presentation of new choreographic works. The foundation supports the creation of dance shows, collaborations with artists and/or organizations in the field of dance or related to dance.

The Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon is based in the medieval city of Avignon in France, known internationally for its Theater Festival.

The Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon, with a heritage spanning several decades within its house, has long been at the service of Opera shows. Today, it is towards a more contemporary aesthetic that the Ballet is approaching these next seasons with the presence of contemporary choreographers with in particular this brand new program composed of three promising American choreographers.

Made up of 12 permanent dancers, accompanied since the 2021/2022 season by two apprentice dancers, the Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon goes on tour each season on numerous national and international stages, bringing the influence of Avignon everywhere France and around the world. The Ballet also invests in mediation actions and increases its interventions with new audiences, particularly since the 2021/2022 season, with the Choreographic Intervention Center, in order to develop encounters between the company and residents, in the urban spaces of the cities of Greater Avignon.

After three years under the direction of Emilio Calcagno, the Opéra Grand Avignon and its director Frédéric Roels are pleased to announce the arrival of Martin Harriague as director of the Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon, effective September, 1st, 2024.

"Martin Harriague knows the Grand Avignon Opera Ballet having already choreographed with our dancers, PITCH, a show inspired by the personality of Piotr Illitch Tchaikovsky. His language is characterized by a very original and precise vocabulary, permanently connected to the music. For the Ballet, he carries a project strongly anchored on the questions of our time and on the link to the world in which we evolve. It is extremely relevant and very much in line with the vision that I myself defend for the Opera. I look forward to our future collaboration" **Frédéric Roels**

"My artistic project for the Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon will give priority to physical, virtuoso, inventive dance... in touch with the issues of our time, and revealing new talents. I want a Ballet that is both an ambassador for the City of the Popes, in France and internationally, and firmly anchored in its territory by meeting audiences, in a logic of cooperation and partnerships" **Martin Harriague**

MARTIN HARRIAGUE

Originally from the Basque Country, Martin Harriague began classical and contemporary dance at the age of 19. He joined the Ballet National de Marseille in 2008, then the Noord Nederlandse Dans in the Netherlands in 2010. From 2013 to 2018, he danced in Israel at the Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company. He has notably performed pieces by great personalities of the international choreographic scene: Emanuel Gat, Roy Assaf, Stephen Shropshire, Thierry Malandain, Itzik Galili...

At the same time, he developed his own choreographic writing, and stood out for his multiple rewarded creations, notably in competitions in Hanover, Stuttgart, Copenhagen and Biarritz.

For a decade, Martin Harriague has multiplied collaborations with numerous ballets and companies in Europe: Malandain Ballet Biarritz, Leipzig Ballett, Hessisches Staatsballett Wiesbaden, Chemnitz Ballett, Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, Dantzaz Konpainia, Korzo, and the Ballet de l'Opéra du Grand Avignon. He was associated with the CCN Malandain Ballet Biarritz from 2018 to 2021 and, currently, he is an associated artist at Scène 55 in Mougins.

He becomes the director of the Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon in September 2024.



ON TOUR

2024

Sept. 11	Biarritz (France) - Festival Temps d'Aimer	<i>Les nuits d'été</i>
Oct. 6	Suresnes (FR)	<i>7*7 Salon chorégraphique</i>
Oct. 9 > 12	Paris (FR) - Théâtre du Rond Point	<i>7*7 Salon chorégraphique</i>
Oct. 29	Nancy (FR) - Opéra National de Lorraine	<i>D'un matin de printemps</i>
Nov. 30	Opéra Grand Avignon	<i>America</i>
Dec. 1	Opéra Grand Avignon	<i>America</i>
Dec. 21 > 22	Ludwigshagen (DE)	<i>Boléro / Oiseau de feu</i>

2025

January 11 > 12	Montélimar (FR)	<i>Boléro / Oiseau de feu</i>
January 15	Alençon (FR)	<i>Storm</i>
January 25	Auxerre (FR)	<i>Boléro / Oiseau de feu</i>
Feb. 4	Saint-Étienne (FR)	<i>Les nuits d'été</i>
Feb. 7	Epinay (FR)	<i>Boléro / Oiseau de feu</i>
March 11 > 27	Italy (dates to be announced)	<i>Boléro / Oiseau de feu</i>
March 18	Le Thor (FR)	<i>Histoire du soldat</i>
March 17 > 18	Opéra Grand Avignon (FR)	<i>United Dances of America</i>

CONTACTS

Martin Harriague Director of the Ballet de l'Opéra Grand Avignon
production@martin-harriague.com

Lisa Navach Production director
04 90 14 26 14 - 06 34 38 75 59
lisa.navach@grandavignon.fr

Marie Genoud Production administrator
07 86 01 99 31
marie.genoud@grandavignon.fr

Arnaud Lanez Communication director
04 90 14 16 06 - 06 74 39 06 05
arnaud.lanez@grandavignon.fr

Sylvie Rogier Public relation
04 90 14 26 07
sylvie.rogier@grandavignon.fr

19.10 Prod - Emmanuelle Guérin Touring Agent
06 10 44 02 83 e.guerin@19-10prod.com
19-10prod.com

Follow us

