

MOVING FORWARD STANDING STILL

a production by Jan Martens / GRIP
CREATION 2020



A dance performance for 17 dancers

Premiere: April 2020

Rehearsal period: January - April 2020

Co-produced by
deSingel, Antwerp
Stadsschouwburg + Julidans, Amsterdam
Théâtre de la Ville, Paris
Le Gymnase CDCN Roubaix Hauts-de-France
(in progress)



1. ON MOVING FORWARD STANDING STILL

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Jan Martens has been creating work since 2011 that often talks about how we as humans relate to each other and/or to the nowadays. For each production this theme was looked at from a different angle, resulting in very different works, as there were: the love duet SWEAT BABY SWEAT (2011), the jumping piece for 8 dancers THE DOG DAYS ARE OVER (2014), a solo for himself with his computer ODE TO THE ATTEMPT (2014), THE COMMON PEOPLE (2016) which gave a stage to encounters between people who had never met and the ecstatic piece RULE OF THREE (2017), driven by a hyperkinetic live drummer. These works were performed in small theaters as well as bigger stages, but in 2020 he will make his first production solely for the big stage.

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In MOVING FORWARD STANDING STILL the main media are movement, stillness and light. 17 performers wonder what's the purpose of moving forward. They wonder what's the purpose of adding on. They wonder what the purpose of was Obama if Trump is next. They wonder what the purpose was of going to the moon if by now bombs can travel half the world. They question progress. They will undertake an attempt to stop time. They will question how standing still can be moving forward. How moving forward can be standing still.

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There's a romanticist vibe to MOVING FORWARD STANDING STILL: it questions industrialization and progress, it's way of structuring will look simple and naïve in a childish way. But on the other hand reason will be very much present as well: through the act of precise and complex scoring.

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Imagine a big surface with on it 17 dancers. They are not moving. It's 17 people and light. For this creation Jan Martens works again with light designer Jan Fedinger. Intensifying their collaboration with each creation, light will form a huge identity-defining role for this work. And maybe there will be some music too. But that's going to be about it.

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To create his work, Jan works a lot with limitations and constraints. The big limitation for this work is the choice to have one of the performers standing still in the middle of the stage for the whole performance long. He or she will not make any movement during the entire show. For Martens this is the ultimate idea of rebellion, of not taking part. Maybe needless to say, but this role will however demand a lot of focus and presence, and have a huge iconic quality.

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Following out of the choice written above, the individual vs group dynamic will become a big theme. What is a majority and which effect does that majority have on the rest of the world. On stage there is a Moving group and there is a Silent group. As said all performers will start in stillness, as one group. One by one they start moving, which will make a lot of choreographic options possible.

For example:

0M + 17S

1M + 16S

3M + 14S

8M + 9S

12M + 5S

16M + 1S

The odd number of performers is important, because in this way one group will be always bigger in number than the other group. But because of one person always being silent it also opens the possibility to work completely with symmetry and mathematics, as this 17th person is always in the middle.

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A piece in which in the beginning half of the performers are nailed to the ground. Doubtful arms rise and wonder which direction to go. Uncertainty and what seems to be unwritten becomes clear and more readable and defined and choreographic in an almost ecstatic way. And then small shifts take place which together have the



power of an earthquake. The performers start to move in space; they create a chaos which after a while becomes an extremely ordered chaos: patterns that have never been walked before.

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For MOVING FORWARD STANDING STILL Martens will look closer at the organisation of space. He will go more abstract than ever, in the hope that it will tell something more concrete than ever.

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MOVING FORWARD STANDING STILL is 17 dancers moving between moving and stillness. The summum of standing still against the summum of dance, of adding, of filling the space. There are only 2 options after all.

2. CREDITS & DATES (IN PROGRESS)

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|------------------------------------|---|
| BY: | Jan Martens |
| LIGHT DESIGN: | Jan Fedinger |
| WITH: | 15 dancers: a mix of long time collaborators with new performers selected at auditions in march 2019 |
| REHEARSAL DIRECTOR: | Anne-Lise Brevers |
| OUTSIDE EYES: | Marc Vanrunxt, Renée Copraij, Rudi Meulemans |
| REHEARSAL PERIOD: | January - April 2020 |
| PRODUCTION: | GRIP |
| INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION: | A Propic / Line Rousseau and Marion Gauvent |
| CO-PRODUCTION: | deSingel international arts campus, Théâtre de la Ville - Paris, Julidans/Stadsschouwburg Amsterdam, Le Gymnase CDCN Roubaix Hauts-de-France more tbc |
| WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF: | the Flemish Government |
| DATES (SOME STILL IN NEGOTIATION): | |
| 23 - 25 April 2020 | deSingel Antwerp BE premiere |
| 10 May 2020 | Theater Freiburg DE premiere |
| May 2020 | Vlaamse Opera icw Vooruit/Campo Ghent BE |
| Spring or Fall 2020 | STUK Leuven BE |
| Spring or Fall 2020 | Paris icw Théâtre de la Ville FR premiere |
| Summer 2020 | Julidans Amsterdam NL premiere |
| 2021 | Sadler's Wells London UK premiere |
| 2021 | Le Grand Bain - Le Gymnase CDCN Roubaix Hauts-de-France FR |

+ more to confirm

3. CONTACT

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4. BIOGRAPHY

Jan Martens (b. 1984, Belgium) studied at the Fontys Dance Academy in Tilburg and graduated in 2006 from the dance department of the Artesis Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp. Since 2010 he has been making his own choreographic work which, over the years, has been performed with increasing regularity before a national and international audience.

Jan Martens' work is nurtured by the belief that each body can communicate, that each body has something to say. That direct communication expresses itself in transparent forms. His work is a sanctuary in which the notion of time becomes tangible again and in which there is room for observation and emotion as well as reflection. To achieve this result he creates not so much a movement language of his own, but shapes and reuses existing idioms in a different context so that new ideas emerge. In each new work he tries to redraw the relation between public and performer.

Jan Martens' first show *I CAN RIDE A HORSE WHILST JUGGLING SO MARRY ME* (2010) was a portrait of a generation of young women in a society dominated by social networks. It was followed by two love duets that he made at Frascati Amsterdam. *A SMALL GUIDE ON HOW TO TREAT YOUR LIFETIME COMPANION* (2011) was selected for Aerowaves 2011 and *SWEAT BABY SWEAT* (2011) for the Dutch Dance Festival 2012 and Circuit X 2013. He then created three shows about unconventional beauty, with performers whose bodies you do not expect in the context of contemporary dance: *BIS* (2012) for the 62-year-old Truus Bronkhorst, *LA BETE* (2013) for the young actress Joke Emmers, and *VICTOR* (2013), a duet for a boy and a grown man that Jan created with director Peter Seynaeve.

In 2014 Jan Martens focused attention on the jump as movement in the group performance *THE DOG DAYS ARE OVER* (2014). The show was selected for the Flanders Theatre Festival and is still touring, just like Jan's solo *ODE TO THE ATTEMPT* (2014) and the project *THE COMMON PEOPLE* (2016), a performance, social experiment and workshop in one, created in collaboration with film director Lukas Dhont. Jan Martens' latest show *RULE OF THREE*, a collaboration with the American sound artist NAH, had its premiere at deSingel in Antwerp on 28 September 2017. The performance got nominated for a Zwaan (Swan) in the category 'most impressive dance production 2018.' De Zwanen are seen as the most prestigious dance prize within the Dutch performing arts field.

In the 2018-19 season, Jan Martens will engage in three new collaborations. Together with 13 youths and *FABULEUS*, he will create *PASSING THE BECHDEL TEST*, a theatrical production in which the voices of the youths are interwoven with the voices of famous and less famous women from the present and the past. He will also revise the successful 2011 production *A SMALL GUIDE ON HOW TO TREAT YOUR LIFETIME COMPANION* with two new dancers under the title *PAULINE THOMAS* as commissioned by CDCN Le Gymnase in Roubaix. In January 2019 Jan himself will be back on stage with the solo *lostmovements*, in which he plunges into the universe of choreographer and friend Marc Vanrunxt (Kunst/Werk).

Jan Martens makes regular guest performances, such as *MAN MADE* (2017) for the Dance On Ensemble. He also coaches young makers with their own creations. Jan Martens has won the North Brabant Prize of the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds (2014) and the prestigious Charlotte Köhlerprijs (2015) for his oeuvre. He is 'Creative Associate' at deSingel international arts campus from 2017 until 2021 and 'Artiste Associé' at CDCN Le Gymnase in Roubaix, Nord-Pas-de-Calais with support from the ministry of Culture and Communication (2016-2018).

In 2014 Jan Martens founded, together with business manager Klaartje Oerlemans, the choreographic platform GRIP in Antwerp / Rotterdam, from where they jointly produce and distribute his work as well as support the work of Bára Sigfúsdóttir, Steven Michel and Michele Rizzo.



5. ON GRIP

GRIP is a choreographic platform that produces and supports the work of choreographer Jan Martens. Jan Martens' work is focused on man and nurtured by the belief that each body can communicate. That direct communication expresses itself in transparent forms by which he not so much creates a movement language of his own, but shapes and reuses existing idioms in a different context so that new ideas emerge. Jan Martens is currently 'Creative Associate' at deSingel in Antwerp (2017-21) and 'Artiste Associé' at CDCN Le Gymnase in Roubaix (2016-18). Apart from Jan Martens' work, GRIP also supports a changing number of makers. In season 2018-19 these makers are, for the second season in a row, Bára Sigfúsdóttir, Steven Michel and Michele Rizzo. GRIP is based in Antwerp and Rotterdam and is supported by the Government of Flanders (2017-21).

6. ONLINE

Website: www.grip.house / www.apropic.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/grip.artists

Instagram: www.instagram.com/grip.artists



GRIP is supported by the Flemish Government (2017-21)

