

LIVE

# BORIS CHARMATZ

*FLIP BOOK*



Photo: Christophe Urbain, 2012

## BORIS CHARMATZ

*FLIP BOOK*

FRIDAY 28 SEPTEMBER AND  
SATURDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2012  
20.00

AS PART OF THE TANKS AT TATE MODERN  
FIFTEEN WEEKS OF ART IN ACTION  
18 JULY – 28 OCTOBER 2012

**THE  
TANKS**  
AT TATE MODERN

# BORIS CHARMATZ

## FLIP BOOK

### **Boris Charmatz**

*Choreographer and dancer Boris Charmatz explores contemporary movement and its complex histories through acclaimed collaborations, re-staging and institutional learning. Taking David Vaughan's Merce Cunningham, Fifty Years (1997), which charts in pictures Merce Cunningham's choreography over 50 years, Charmatz invited different groups of dancers – from ex-members of Cunningham's company to amateur practitioners – to learn and perform Vaughan's images in Flip Book through rehearsals and full performances. Discussing ideas around movement and gesture, Charmatz recalls working with students to realise his now celebrated work.*

'When I started choreographing dance I was surrounded by people thinking that a 'vocabulary' was what a choreographer had to invent (or pretend to invent) in order to stamp their work with authorship. But, for me, when an arm is lifted there is already a potential knot of gestures inside this one action. With an arm up, you could be one second away from hitting someone, asking for help, showing a dot on the ceiling, holding the subway bar while half asleep, or an American president declaring the truth in front of the Bible. And the oscillation in the middle of these knots is what creates the power of that gesture. Forms permeate and erase other forms as they appear in succession, each new one appearing the most relevant.

The invention of a museum-in-progress interests me more than questions of preservation and reconstruction, but nevertheless those questions arise frequently. I believe that supposedly clear oppositions, such as history and present time, alterity and the subject, archeology and improvisation, are knotted in much more complex ways than they might first appear.

For example, instead of considering how to preserve Merce Cunningham's heritage (which remains a crucial question), I worked with some students and we took Cunningham's archivist David Vaughan's book *Fifty Years*, and learned – via a very rough process – the 300 pictures in order to make a choreographic 'flip-book'. Fifty years of dance squeezed into one book, then used as a score during five days to create 50 minutes of performance comprising a crazy collection of absurd jumps moving from picture to picture. Through this process the students became readers, artists and users of the material.' (Artforum, March 2012)

Boris Charmatz (b. 1973, France) trained as a dancer at the Opera de Paris Ballet School and then at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse, Paris, in the 1980s. In 1992 he co-founded Association edna with Dimitri Chamblas. Charmatz was resident artist at the Centre National de la Danse, Pantin, from 2002 to 2004, and in 2009 was appointed director of the Centre Choreographique National de Rennes et de Bretagne, Rennes, France. He lives and works in Rennes.

### **Flip Book**

First presented 4 April 2008 at the LiFE, Saint Nazaire, France

#### **With**

Boris Charmatz, Raphaëlle Delaunay, Olga Dukhovnaya, Christophe Ives, Olivia Grandville, Mani A. Mungai

#### **Guest artist**

Valda Setterfield

#### **Sound**

Pascal Quéneau

#### **Light**

Yves Godin

Free interpretation from the photographs *Merce Cunningham, Fifty Years*, by David Vaughan, edited by Melissa Harris, Ed. Aperture, 1997

#### **Production**

Musée de la danse / Centre chorégraphique national de Rennes et de Bretagne directed by Boris Charmatz, is supported by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication - the Direction régionale des Affaires Culturelles, the city of Rennes, the regional Council of Brittany and the General Council of Ile-et-Vilaine.

The Institut français regularly contributes to the international touring of the Musée de la danse-Dancing Museum.

#### **Thanks to**

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### **Tate Modern**

#### **Curator**

Catherine Wood

#### **Assistant Curator**

Capucine Perrot

#### **Project assistant**

Laura Hensser

#### **Production Manager**

Steve Wald

#### **Assistant Production Manager**

Adam Hooper

#### **Programme Manager**

Eleanor Pinfield