

# FEMMOSITÉ

A whimsical collaboration between

Sophie Ammann

and

Pauline Raineri

Duration : 45-50 minutes

Languages: can be performed in French, English or Germ-english



## Premieres

Théâtre de l'Usine Genève CH

12-15 December 2019

## Tour dates

Festival Les Chorégraphiques 2020 - Théâtre de l'Oriental Vevey CH

8-12 January 2020

Printemps Carougeois - Halles de la Fonderie, Carouge CH

15-16 May 2020

Plateforme Stratagèmes - Théâtre Sévelin 36 Lausanne CH

7 June 2020

# SUMMARY

Through Jo and Alex, two alter egos who are as absurd as they are lucid, Sophie Ammann and Pauline Raineri attempt to break free from the rigid trajectory of standardized femininity. Throughout fitness circuit, absurd games, and physical exhaustion, the two heroines ask themselves, "When does the performance of oneself start, and where does the show end?"



## CREDITS

### ARTISTIC TEAM

Conception, choreography & performance Pauline Raineri et Sophie Ammann

Assistant Arnaud Mathey

Dramaturgical support Merel Heering

External Eye Sidonie Simon

Scenography Valeria Pacchiani

Music Timothée Giddey

Lights Tiago Branquino

Video Erika Nieva da Cunha and Richard Johnson

Photography Eden Levi Am, Martin Reeve et Aline Paley

### CO-PRODUCTIONS

Théâtre de l'Usine, Oriental Vevey and Dansomètre - espace de création chorégraphique.

### SUPPORT

With the support of Ville de Genève, Ville de Carouge & Loterie Romande.

A project supported by Danse & Dramaturgie, an initiative by Théâtre Sévelin 36, in association with Dampzentrale Bern, Tanzhaus Zürich, TU-Théâtre de l'Usine, ROXY Birsfelden, with the financial support of Pro Helvetia and SSA Société Suisse des Auteurs, Dansomètre, FLUX Laboratory – Accompagnement à la création and ADC - studios du Grütli.

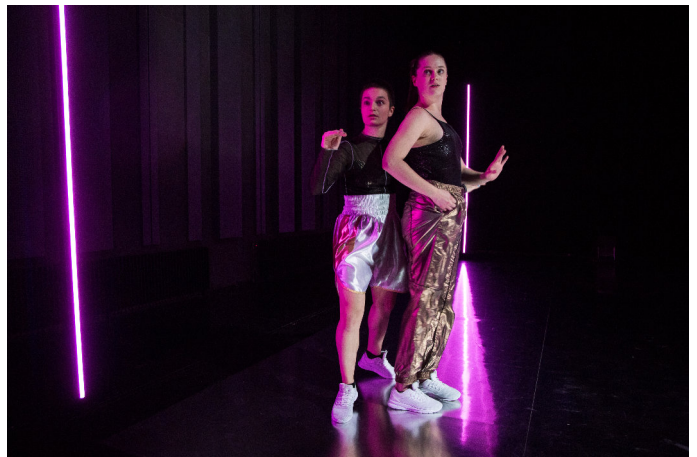
# NOTE OF INTENT

"We decided to join forces to form a kooky and concerned duet. With this piece, we playfully question our relationship with what is traditionally perceived as "femininity", specifically the pressure placed upon appearing and behaving according to a certain set of rules - to "be a lady". Society and media vehicle so many contradictory and yet restrictive visions of how women should act and look like, advocating a feminine ideal that is unattainable.

We explore how this pressure contributes to the construction of ones identity, and create characters to free ourselves from expectations and playfully reclaim them: introducing Jo and Alex, our two heroines in search of their "femmosité". The word "femmosité" is our invention, a combination of femininity, animosity, animality, monstrosity, famous... "Femmosité" is an attempt to dismantle the boxes women\* are so often constrained in, with humour but also gritty pop and caustic glitz.

An important element in the creation of "Femmosité" was relating the construction of the piece to that of our gender expression. We wish to give a new spin to the notion of performance, as well as that of gender and identity performance. When and where does the show start, as well as the performance of oneself? Putting our costumes on in front of the audience, openly discussing the choices in our creative process with the audience, all of these are tools that enable us to blur the codes of theatre and dance, and by the same occasion, the codes of a traditional femininity which has been hammered home and mapped out for us.

We wish to flip the audience's perspective on its head: to do this, we make use of metatheatre and « choreographed scenography ». We become Jo and Alex, thanks to whom we navigate a multitude of kooky situations: our two heroines are trapped in the scenography and a clearly defined trajectory. We combine voice work and theatricality with our dance practice, to juxtapose absurdity and humour with more abstract situations, to explore different interpretations of "controlled" bodies, and discover what arises from the friction between the formal and the informal.



Through this physical and theatrical practice, different personality traits gradually emerge during the piece, which question the influence of the external gaze on the creation of ones identity, and continuously hijack the audience's expectations: Jo and Alex transform into modern-day clichés, famous depictions of women throughout art history, even animals and mythical creatures. Throughout fitness circuit, absurd games, bodily exhaustion and more, one quirky situation leads to another in order to destabilise the way the action on stage is read.

"Femmosité" proposes onstage a process of dismantling and reclaiming, personal to our duet - one which we hope will nevertheless resonate in the audience's own experiences, independently from body type and gender.

"Femmosité" is an ode to audacity, to courage, but above all it celebrates the choice of being together in order to move forwards."

Pauline and Sophie



## ABOUT THE MUSIC

We are accompanied live on stage by composer and musician Timothée Giddey. The soundtrack features different elements.

It starts with upbeat, electronic music, playing with the codes of fitness and "motivational" voice recordings... to get "beach body readyyyyyy!"

He also plays the saxophone towards the end, to insert a more raw and organic atmosphere, which accompanies the dramaturgy of the piece towards freer bodies, in opposition to the controlled and restricted physicality in the beginning of the piece.

We collaborated with Timothée to create interactions between our bodies and the music, by sampling and looping vocal material for example, recorded live during the performance. The recordings serve to distort the melody of the saxophone, to shift away from the obvious sensual undertones of the instrument.



## ABOUT THE SCENOGRAPHY - COOL DOWN PINK

Our characters Jo and Alex evolve in a peculiar scenography, constructed in such a way as to present spatial constraints, which affect the bodies and the trajectories of our two heroines: a mirror-like, rectangle-shaped dance floor and four 3-meter long light tubes (Flextubes) suspended vertically at each corner.

Two of these Flextubes can move in the space in two parallel, diagonal lines, thanks to a pulley system we've devised (see pictures in technical rider). The colour in these light tubes can shift, from cold or warm white tones to pinkish hues.

The pink shade was inspired by the colour known as P-618, or "Cool Down Pink", discovered in 1979 by Dr Alexandre G. Schauss. It has calming effects after approximately 15 minutes, which is why certain Swiss detention facilities have used this discovery in order to reduce inmates' hostility and painted small cells entirely in pink.

# PRESS FOR FEMMOSITÉ

## ARTICLE IN "LE TEMPS"

*This choreography, signed Pauline Raineri and Sophie Ammann, two graduates of Ballet Junior de Genève, navigates in a gentle and subtle way between "care", fashion, the idea of a dream figure or even endurance, several themes still associated with women in 2020. (...)*

*The two performers, renamed Jo and Alex, swap their casual attire for bling-bling trackies and shiny boxing shorts, and begin a series of trajectories, straight lines and metronomic diagonals, during which they remind the audience of the importance of care, this concern for others, and self-love. The audience is already cackling. (...)*

*In between, in slow-motion, the lacerated body is brought into question, a body eaten like a piece of meat (...)*

*It's clear to see: the two young artists distort the imposed feminine figures without aggression, and reclaim these models with an air of nonchalance that gives this show a pleasing flexibility in its reading grid."*

Marie-Pierre Genecand, "Le Temps"



## ARTICLE IN "LE COURRIER"

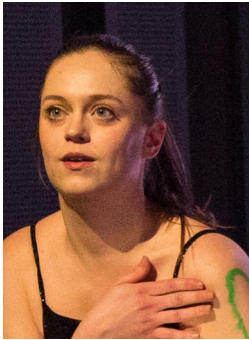
### Knocking down stereotypes

*(...) Their theatrical prologue is followed by a fitness session dedicated to body cult, accompanied by a DJ-set (Timothée Giddey). They strut like models on a podium, whilst throwing a few well-timed uppercuts with humour.*

*The two dancers then take a detour through an imaginary museum filled with references to female bodies, from the Mona-Lisa to Baubo, an ancient Greek Goddess, and passing through Dalida. They end up in a choreographic melee in a chiaroscuro lighting, supported by the sound of the saxophone."*

Cécile Dalla Torre, "Le Courrier"

# BIOGRAPHIES

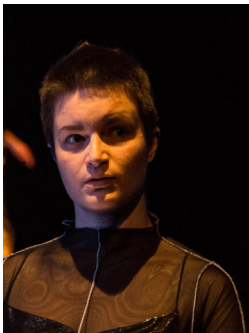


## **Sophie AMMANN - Choreographer & dancer**

Born in Switzerland, Sophie Ammann trained at the Tanz Akademie Zürich, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and the Ballet Junior de Genève. After completing her training, she founded the collective Junebug Company, with whom she co-signed and performed pieces in Switzerland and abroad, including at the Théâtre de la Parfumerie (CH), Echo Echo Festival of Movement Derry (UK), Edinburgh Festival Fringe (UK), Festival Electron (CH), Cottier Dance Project (UK), among others.

Sophie regularly works with Swiss choreographer Marie-Caroline Hominal, as assistant and understudy on Taxi-Dancers (2016) and Hominal/Xaba (2019), as well as performer for her short film "Le Triomphe de la Renommée". Sophie will perform in Hominal's next creation "Sugar Dance" in October 2020. Beginning of 2018, Sophie started working with French collective (LA)HORDE for their short film and live performance "CULTES". She regularly works with Woman's Move (CH), in the creations "Drop The Gogo" (choreography Elsa Couvreur) and "Gender Cubicles" (choreography Iona D'Annunzio), as well as with Beaver Dam Company (CH) in "Into Outside".

She co-created "Femmosité" with Pauline Raineri in 2019.



## **Pauline RAINERI – Choreographer & dancer**

Born in France, Pauline trained in Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional d'Annecy, Virginia School of the Arts (USA) and Ballet Junior de Genève. After graduating in 2013, Pauline worked with several artists such as Roméo Castellucci, Cindy Van Acker, Tamara Bacci, Carmen Perrin, James Finnemore, Sally Marie, Trần Tran and BudGe amongst others.

She worked as an actress with La Compagnie du Fond du Bus where she played the role of Clitandre and Dubois in Le Misanthrope. Since 2017 she collaborates with the association Lang'Art in Tunisia and takes part in performances and residency programs.

Last season, she assisted French choreographer Olivia Grandville on her new creation commissioned by Ballet de Lorraine (FR). Pauline founded WAVE in 2016 in Geneva and the company has been touring in Switzerland and Europe: France, Germany, England, Scotland and Luxembourg. She also collaborated with the film maker Mei Fa Tan and with the plastic artist Aline Morvan.

Pauline occasionally teaches contemporary pro classes as well as workshops for community dancers.



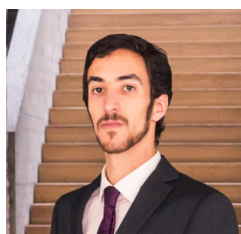
### **Valeria PACCHIANI - Set designer**

Valeria Pacchiani obtained a Masters degree in International Relations at the Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales et de Développement in 2008. She decided to pursue her artistic career by acting and later designing sets. After designing her first few sets in the Lemanic region, she studied for a Masters degree in Scenography at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff, Wales. She obtained the May Edwards prize for her work accomplished during her studies, and was selected for the Linbury Prize along with eleven finalists. Furthermore, she presented her scenographic project at the National Theatre in London. She obtained a bursary to assist in the production of the opera *Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Royal Opera House, London, alongside scenographer Mia Stensgaard and director Kasper Holten. Back in Switzerland, she taught set design workshops at the Grand Théâtre de Genève for schools. In 2018, she worked on different projects, including during the first season of the Théâtre du Poche with directors Manon Krütli, Jean-Daniel Piguet and Lucile Carré. She also collaborated on the creation *Automne* written by Julien Mages and directed by Jean-Yves Ruf at the Théâtre du Grütli in Geneva. *For more information* [valpac.ch](http://valpac.ch)



### **Timothée GIDDEY - Composer**

A polyvalent composer and musician, Timothée studied at the Ecole de Jazz et de Musique Actuelle in Lausanne, where he developed his musical knowledge under teacher Guillaume Perret. In 2016, he obtained his Bachelor's degree in saxophone at the Haute Ecole des Arts of Berne. He is interested in diverse jazz styles, such as acoustic jazz (*Thérèse Lechat Trio* or *Mireille, Trio Augmenté*), jazz-rock (*Kharbon*), and fusion (*Monkey Strikes Back*). He participates in different projects touching on klezmer and balkan music (*Fanfare Balkanique illimitée*), funk (*Sunday June*) and gospel (*Glo-gospel*). He also plays the electric bass in the soul group *The Fifth is a Girl* and electronic music group *Chinzilla*. In addition to the bass, he uses sequencers and rhythm machines. His main focus during his studies at the Haute Ecole in Berne being composition, he writes music for the bands he plays in. In December 2018, he participated in the project *Bernarda*, directed by Giulia Belet, for which he composed and played the music live.



### **Tiago BRANQUINO - Lighting designer**

A cultural actor in Switzerland's Riviera, Tiago Branquino is first and foremost lighting designer, and works at the Bout de Monde in Vevey, the NED, the Décal'Quai and the Rocking Chair as such. He is also administrator for the association Trois Petits Points, responsible for the funding of Autour du Monde, and an elected political official. He is also improviser, rapper and editor for A Song Per Day. In December 2018, he worked on the lighting design for *Bernarda*, directed by Giulia Belet and performed at the Théâtre 2.21 in Lausanne. Tiago has been working with WAVE since 2018, and created the lighting design for *W.A.Y.T.*, presented at the Théâtre du Galpon in Geneva.



### **Arnaud MATHEY - Theatrical assistant**

Born in Geneva, Arnaud studied in the pre-professional course at the Conservatoire de Genève during three years, and pursued his studies at Les Teintureries, a drama school in Lausanne, from which he graduated in June 2017. In 2013, he worked for Théâtre Am Stram Gram as part of "Théâtre dans ta classe". Member of the theatre company Les Batteurs de Pavés since 2013, he performs in *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, a moving street performance lasting more than five hours, adapted from the novel by Alexandre Dumas and directed by Matthieu Béguelin. During the season 2017/2018, he played in *Hamlet* and *La Nuit des Rois* written by Shakespeare and directed by Eric Devanthery. He continued the season with the creation of the piece *Mère Courage* written by Bertold Brecht, directed by Gianni Schneider at the Théâtre du Jorat. Arnaud is also a member of Groupe B, which presents pieces by B. Brecht, among others *Tambours dans la Nuit* at the Théâtre des Clochards Célestes in Lyon in March 2018. In parallel to his work as an actor, he is interested in movement, and has collaborated with WAVE since 2017. He worked as assistant during *W.A.Y.T.*

*For more information* <https://www.comedien.ch/comediens/arnaud-mathey/>

### **Sidonie Simon - Assistant**

Contemporary dancer, choreographer and feminist based in Geneva. Co-organiser of the Feminist Queer Festival *Ratures*.



# CONTACT

**Trailer (1min46)** <https://vimeo.com/394216771/8592e96ce3>

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