

KASHYL  
ASHLEY CHEN

# HABITS/HABITS

Habits/ Habitudes : Clothing/Habits

**CREATION 2013**

**CAST**

**CHOREOGRAPHY**

**ASHLEY CHEN**

**PERFORMERS**

**ASHLEY CHEN, PIERRE LE BOURGEOIS**

**MUSIC**

**PIERRE LE BOURGEOIS AND ANIMAUX VIVANTS**

**LIGHTING**

**PATRICE BESOMBES**

**COSTUMES**

**CATHERINE GARNIER**

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Habits/ Habits is a piece for one dancer, one musician and one chronometer. Based on repetition and accumulation, it aims to carry the audience to a certain level of oppression and frustration. It is a display of the performers' tenacity in completing a task.

## **Choreography**

The Choreography starts with a simple phrase and becomes increasingly complex. The accumulation of phrases within the dance score is not systematic. The way it proceeds requires that the spectator follow the progression of the piece with watchful attentiveness.

The dancer illustrates his tenacity by repeating his routines. It is a ritual in which he finds comfort, satisfaction and a form of self-assurance generated by his own stubbornness.

The precise way in which the performer follows the directions in space, tends to provide clarity to the complex choreography.

## **Sound environment**

The score is intended to make the listener feel frustrated. It includes an irritating irregular beat and aggressive sounds. The latter occur to get a listener familiar with more melodic sounds to adjust to unpleasant and unusual frequencies.

The succession of unfinished pieces of music causes the public to feel dissatisfied and makes them want to hear the score unfold and expand.

## **Costumes**

As the choreographic sequences accumulate, the clothes fall off. The wardrobe style evolves, beginning in a suit. The performer removes layers to reveal street-wear and ultimately finishes nude. A sense of contrast is suggested between the physical effort and the slow shedding of the clothing. During a second cycle of disrobing, more colourful clothing and traditional dancewear appear. Loose-fitting clothes, for example a unitard, represent the wide range of costumes worn by the dancer throughout his career.

Finally, the clothes left on the floor during the piece, create an ever-changing set. They become obstacles intended to make it more difficult for the performer to complete his task.

## **Lighting**

Like the choreography and the score, the lighting enhances the atmosphere of frustration. Cyclically, the scene has a diffuse, unstable and austere feel to it. A warm, powerful and directional light source attempts to create an aesthetic effect without quite pulling it off. On the floor, the clothing appears to be animated by strobe-like spasms, echoing the dance that occurred. During the second unclothing cycle, they seem to be snatched up by the wild gyrations of a mad chronometer.

## Ashley Chen (choreography)

Ashley Chen trained at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse (the Paris National Conservatory of Music and Dance) from 1994 to 1999. After having collaborated in a creation with Thomas Duchâtelet, he went to New York to join the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. He stayed there four years, took part in five creations and danced ten pieces from the repertory. He then returned to France and joined the Ballet de l'Opéra de Lyon (the Lyon Opera Ballet) where he interpreted productions by choreographers Christian Rizzo, Anglein Preljocaj, William Forsythe, Russel Maliphant, Mathilde Monnier and Trisha Brown.

In 2006 he left the Lyon Opera Ballet to travel around Europe and collaborate in different productions. He worked with John Scott and Liz Roche in Dublin, Michael Clark in London, Jen-Luc Ducourt and Michèle Ann de Mey in Brussels, Philippe de Decouflé, Boris Charmatz, Mié Coquempot and Fabrice Dugied in France.

IN 2002, Ashley wrote the choreography of *We're all grown up now* in New York. One year later, he cooperated with Marise Lagave in the making of a dance video filmed in New York State, called *I'm not a Gurre!!!* In 2008, he worked on creations with the association Loge 22 *I meant to move* in Lyon. In 2012, he founded the Kashyl Company.

## Pierre Le Bourgeois (music)

Pierre le Bourgeois is a musician who has been in the industry for over 15 years. He started out as an accompanist. As a cello player, he took part in various musical projects, including French songs and rock and roll and freed himself from the constraints of styles and genres. He collaborated with various bands as a musician or as an arranger or composer. One can sample recordings of the work he produced for many artists like Bertrand Belin, Nosfell, Alain Bashung or Daniel Darc.

Since 2010, he has worked on Philippe Decouflé's shows (contemporary dance) as a performer or composer. In 2015, at the Paris Philharmonie, his band "Animaux Vivants" took part for one week in *Wiebo*, a tribute to David Bowie, staged by Philippe Decouflé. Pierre was completely in charge of the musical direction and accompanied singers Jeanne Added, Sophie Hunger and Jenny Beth. He is now an established composer and arranger and has worked on a great number of shows (dance, theatre, visual art) in particular in collaboration with the Kashyl company. He composed *Habits* for Ashley Chen's piece, "**HABITS/HABITS**" (created in 2013) and the music for "**Chance, Space & Time**" ( created in 2016).

At the same time, he continues to perform with different bands and tours around different venues in France and abroad (New-York, Rio, Tokyo...)

## Patrice Besombes (lighting)

When Patrice Besombes works on a creation, he focuses in a quiet and thoughtful way.

He started his career at the Maison de la Danse in Lyon. He left his home town and went on tour, first with the choreographer Jean-Claude Gallotta, then Carolyn Carlson who employed him as one of her official lighting technicians.

He developed his skills working with very different people, ranging from Catherine Diverrès and Dominique Boivin, to experimental artists, Kitsou Dubois and Christophe Huysman and contemporary classical choreographer, Benjamin Millepied.

In the eighties, he was a regular participant in the International Festival of Dance in Montpellier and the Vienna Jazz Festival. In 1993, he started to work for DCA (Philippe Decouflé's Dance Company). He worked as stage manager in *Petites Pièces Montées* and *Decodex*.

Then he transitioned smoothly into lighting for the following shows: *Denise*, the ceremony celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Festival de Cannes, *Marguerite*, *Shazam! Triton*, *Iris,liris*, *Sombréros*, *Octopus and Solo*. Patrice has both the patience of a gifted craftsman and a taste for research which correspond to the delicate and contrasted moods that Philippe Decouflé enjoys experimenting with visually.

## Catherine Garnier Costumes

After training in the ready-to-wear clothing trade, Catherine Garnier started to work on costume design for opera and dance with Patrick Terroittin.

In 1993, she trained in stage costume design and joined Phillippe Guillotel's workshop to take part in a show by Philippe Decouflé. She then contributed to events, advertising, fashion, films and dance productions.

She designs costumes for dance, the theatre, musical events and shows for young audiences, especially with artists like Hervé Robbe, Laurence Salvadori, Virginie Mirabaut, Christine Bastin, Raphael Cottin, Patrice Petitbon,loge 22, Paco Decina,Daniel Dobbels,Christine Gérard, Tatiana Julien, Nans Martin. Since 1996 she has been designing the costumes for the Junior Ballet of the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris. She has worked for different choreographers like Robert North, Lucinda Child, Serge Ricci, Jo Stromgren, Philippe Trehet, Ashley Page, Lara Barsacq, Douglas Becker, Hervé Robbe,Paco Decina,Lionel Hoche,David Bombana, Yvan Alexandre, Thomas Lebrun, M.A.Gillot, Nicolas Paul and Marie Claude Pietragalla.

## Kashyl Company

Ashley Chen founded the Kashyl Company in 2012 in the county of Calvados in Normandy, France. After a career as a performer with a wide and eclectic range he has the urge to write original and unusual choreography through which he can take the liberty of creating in depth exploratory pieces for the stage. His choreographic interest is to be found more in the way the audience is plunged into diverse moods –rather than on a harmonious composition of movement or a narration of situations. He tends towards experimenting with what is real in the dancer's physical performance, as he pursues the task conscientiously and determinedly, thus revealing the performer's deep-seated raw dedication. He pushes the dancer's body to a certain physical state of commitment In order to reach a stage of exhaustion in which movement is to be found both ethereal and true. He therefore puts to question various topics, such as the need for the dancer to rehearse until he's exhausted, or the persistence of the performers as they go about their tasks in *Habits / Habits* (2013). Or again the need for the man to outdo the other and the absurdity of that competition in *Whack!* (2015). He questions the way the audience's view is influenced by the way light, props, music or choreography affect them, or by playing on the unexpected in *Chance, Space and Time* (2016)

Kashyl company has presented its pieces in Paris (le Regard du Cygne studio, l'Etoile du Nord), in New-York (LaMama Experimental Theatre Club, Dance Festival: a French-American festival of Performances and Ideas), in Le Havre (Le Phare / CCN du Havre, Festival Pharenheit), in Ireland (Dublin, Cork, Carrick on Shannon, Limerick and Galway),in Tours (CCN de Tours, Thomas Lebrun at Soirées Spots).

Last November, Kashyl organized a show called *Restricted Area* at the Regard du Cygne studio and invited several European artists to show extracts of their pieces. The aim was to introduce different kinds of choreographic aesthetics to the public. The Kashyl Company was founded in 2012 by Ashley Chen.