



© Mathieu Doyon

PRELUDES

A diptych in situ for 20 dancers


Sylvain Emard
DANSE



© Mathieu Doyon

PRELUDES

The origin of this project is [Rhapsodie](#), a stage piece for 20 performers inspired by the ritual aspect of dance and its multiple manifestations. The current crisis has traced new contours for these bodies in movement. The world premiere was to have been presented at Danse Danse in November 2020, but was postponed to February 22 to 26, 2022.

In response to the pandemic Sylvain Émard conceived [Preludes](#) as a performance event, harmonized overtures announcing [Rhapsodie](#), using the constraints to explore the very essence of the piece, deeply shaken by the crisis. The 20 intertwined, dancing bodies of [Rhapsodie](#), often clutched in an embrace, now avoid coming into physical contact. Like a sudden, unexpected change of course, [Preludes](#) have propelled the choreography into new territories.



Clip - [Preludes](#)

[Prelude #1 – The Circle](#)

The dancers form a big circle in the public space. The circle represents the cycles of nature. It evokes ritual, a spirit of communion, unity. [Prelude #1](#) reconsiders the notion of ritual in a context where the very idea of people gathering together is being called into question. – 25 minutes

[Prelude #2 – The Square](#)

A symbol of a fixed, balanced world, the square is a human invention, an attempt at stabilization echoing the urban world around us, where the right angle reigns unopposed. The square suggests more regulated, more orderly behavior than the circle, even if the two forms are, in a way, complementary. With [Prelude #2](#), the quadrilateral comes to life, pulsating in the heart of the townscape. – 25 minutes



CREATIVE TEAM

Choreographer Sylvain Émard

Dancers Rodrigo Alvarenga, Sophie Breton, Charles Cardin-Bourbeau, Luis Cabanzo, Karina Champoux, Matéo Chauchat, Félix Cossette, Dylan Crossman, Marilynne Cyr, Marie-Michelle Darveau, Aurélie Figaro, Janelle Hacault, Mathieu Hérard, Kyra Jean Green, Christopher LaPlante, Nikita Perruzini, James Phillips, Matthew Quigley, Cara Roy, Marie-Philippe Santerre, Camille Trudel-Vigeant

Rehearsal coach Daniel Villeneuve

Original score Martin Tétreault & Poirier

Costumes Marilène Bastien

ON TOUR

During this unprecedented time, it is more than ever apparent that dance responds to a fundamental, irrational human need, and its roots extend back to the dawn of humanity. Art is necessary now, more than ever. Like the rhapsodes of ancient Greece, the dancers reach out to their fellow citizens by performing in public spaces. Structured so that the audience encircles the dancers, these **Preludes** reveal a dance that is decompartmentalized.

Presented as diptychs or individual pieces, these in situ shows are adapted and transformed according to the constraints of the presenter and the host city. Sylvain Émard directs the rehearsals. The number of dancers can vary and feature the Montreal original cast or local dancers. In addition, local teams will also have access to tutorials and a notebook outlining the choreography. Flexibility is particularly important in times of crisis (and post-crisis).

This touring structure is inspired by **Le Grand Continental**[®] and its multiples offshoots. That gigantic contemporary line dance piece has been bringing hundreds of local amateur dancers together all over the world since 2009.

PARTNERS

Danse Danse is an invaluable partner in **Rhapsodie** and **Preludes**. The creation of **Preludes** was made possible thanks to support from the **Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec**.

It must also be mentioned that **Preludes** exists thanks to **Rhapsodie**, which received support from the **National Art Centre's National Creation Fund**, the **Centro de Producción de Danza Contemporánea (CEPRODAC)**, the **Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y de Literatura (INBAL)** in Mexico and the **Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie**. The piece also benefited from an exploratory artistic residence at **FringeArts** in Philadelphia.



© Robert Etchevery

REVIEWS

"Émard's choreography involves a lot of naturalistic-feeling movements. Watching, it feels as though the dancers are speaking a universal language of physical expression. It's a nice reminder of dance's ability to communicate cross-culturally, even when the dancers themselves can't travel." ★★★★★ *The Stage*, London, August 2021

"Both pieces are hypnotic to watch, and the dancers' technical mastery is tremendous, keeping subtle unity against a fluid, repeating soundtrack. Even as the choreography becomes more curved and intricate, they maintain the crispness of their formation. It creates the effect of a society, individually human, but moving as one." *The List*, Edinburgh, August 2021

CALENDAR

PAST PERFORMANCES

September, 2022 – [Preludes](#), esplanade of the Amphithéâtre Cogeco, Trois-Rivières, Canada

October, 2021 – [Preludes](#), Place des Festivités, Théâtre Gilles-Vigneault, Saint-Jérôme, Canada
[Preludes](#), Esplanade of Place des Arts, Hors les murs, Danse Danse, Montréal, Canada

September, 2021 – [Preludes](#), plaza of the Théâtre Alphonse-Desjardins, Repentigny, Canada

FILM FESTIVALS

December, 2021 – [Prelude #2 – The Square](#), Athens Video Dance Project, Cinema Trianon, Greece
[Prelude #2 – The Square](#), InShadow Festival Lisboa, Galeria de Arquitectura, Portugal

September 2021 – [Prelude #1 – The Circle](#), Light Moves Festival's official selection, Ireland, online

August 2021 – [Prelude #1 – The Circle](#) and [Prelude #2 – The Square](#), Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Scotland, online

March 2021 – [Prelude #1 – The Circle](#), 39th International Festival of Films on Art's (FIFA) official selection, Montreal, Canada, online



SYLVAIN ÉMARD DANSE

A prolific and internationally respected artist, Sylvain Émard created his own dance company Sylvain Émard Danse in 1987, quickly establishing a reputation for a very original style. Highly theatrical at first, his work soon evolved into a more formal approach to dance. Ever since [Ozone, Ozone](#) (1987), his first solo, up to [Rhapsodie](#) (2022), he has been exploring the territory of human nature through the force and strength of the body. His repertoire now includes over thirty original pieces that have had a resounding impact all over the world.

Renowned for his refined style and precise movement, his presentation in 2009 of [Le Grand Continental](#)[®] at the Festival TransAmériques must have come to some as a surprise. Inspired by line dancing and contemporary dance, this unique piece has featured over 3,000 local non-dancers in over 20 editions across Canada, the United States, Mexico, South Korea, New Zealand, Chile, Germany and Austria, attracting some 125,000 spectators. In September 2017, [Le Super Méga Continental](#) boasted 375 dancers in Montreal to celebrate the city's 375th anniversary in monumental fashion.

Sylvain Émard's unique style has led to invitations to work as guest choreographer in theatre, opera and cinema. These collaborations include his joining forces with Robert Lepage in 2005 to work on the opera [1984](#) by Lorin Maazel, presented at Covent Garden in London and La Scala in Milan.

Sylvain Émard has received numerous prestigious awards, such as the [Jean A. Chalmers Choreographic Award](#). Sylvain Émard is also co-founder of the Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique.

*The dancing body does not lie,
and truth is too rare to be ignored.*

Sylvain Émard

Contact :

Maya Daoud, Co-general Director/Administration
T : +1 514 836-3003 mdaoud@sylvainemard.com