

Saturday, February 24, 2018, 8pm

Sunday, February 25, 2018, 3pm

Zellerbach Hall

Company Wang Ramirez

Borderline

(West Coast Premiere)

<i>Artistic Direction and Choreography</i>	Honji Wang and Sébastien Ramirez
<i>Performers</i>	Louis Becker, Johanna Faye, Saïdo Lehlouh, Alister Mazzotti, Sébastien Ramirez, Honji Wang
<i>Rigging Development</i>	Jason Oettlé and Kai Gaedtke
<i>Composition</i>	Jean-Philippe Barrios
<i>with the participation of</i>	Christophe Isselee
<i>and the voices of</i>	Chung-Won Wang and Henri Ramirez
<i>Light Design</i>	Cyril Mulon
<i>Dramaturgical Collaboration</i>	Catherine Umbdenstock
<i>Set Design</i>	Paul Bauer
<i>Costume Realization</i>	Anna Ramirez
<i>Production Management Services</i>	Academy for Dance and Theatre Arts
<i>Technical/Production Manager</i>	Bartolo Cannizzaro
<i>Tour manager</i>	Clare Cannizzaro

Borderline is a co-production of:

Théâtre de l'Archipel, scène nationale de Perpignan (in the frame of a creation residency);

Théâtre de la Ville, Paris; Parc de La Villette, Paris;

*Initiatives d'Artistes en Danses Urbaines (Fondation de France – Parc de la Villette
with the support of Caisse des Dépôts and Acsé);*

Mercat de les Flors Barcelone (in the frame of creation residencies at Graner);

Act'art – Conseil départemental de Seine-et-Marne;

*Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne/Company Käfig;
and TANZtheater INTERNATIONAL, Hannover.*

With the support of:

Regional council Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée;

Regional Cultural Affairs Directorate Occitanie;

County council Pyrénées Orientales

These performances are made possible, in part, by Rockridge Market Hall and Manicaretti.

Cal Performances' 2017–18 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.



From the Company

Borderline marks a turning point in Sébastien Ramirez and Honji Wang's research and choreographic language. The dance expands in a dialogue between technique and the art of rigging, while the reflection on human relationships now includes the reality of living together in our democracies. Social boundaries are evoked by the interplay of physical forces on stage as well as through testimonies collected from the dancers' friends and relatives, or from the media, and presented as voice overs.

The rigging element, a scenic tool as notorious as *deus ex machina* in Greek tragedy, allows us to approach weightlessness to create a kind of timeless poetics. In the interaction with the rigger, the body becomes the object of a "weight game" of balance and freedom. Attached to cables, the five dancers bring to light and transpose the desire for freedom inherent in all forms of dance, especially hip-hop. With a wealth of experience in levitation, hip-hop discovers new ways to thwart gravity through the virtuosity of its footwork.

The gestures and the costumes create images that reflect Greek and Korean traditions in animality, as well as in our desires and angsts. Between the promise of freedom and the violence of keeping our bodies on the ground is a space that allows for the invention of a new gestural approach. With great fluidity, the piece displays accents of acrobatics, visual poetry, and the urban universe. It extends to the ground where the gravitational borderlines shift horizontally, in a mobile scenography that continues to evolve throughout the performance.

Since the creation of **Company Wang Ramirez**, Honji Wang and Sébastien Ramirez have produced and choreographed dance-theater works that have won many awards and accolades, including the New York Dance and Performance ("Bessie") Award and a nomination to participate in the Rolex Mentor & Protégée Arts Initiative Program.

Acclaimed by international audiences and critics, the company has appeared in major theaters and festivals including Théâtre de la Ville, La Villette, and Théâtre National de Chaillot

(Paris), Sadler's Wells (London), the Apollo Theater (New York), and Mercat de les Flors (Barcelona), and receives the support of important international co-producers.

The company developed a conceptual dance performance for the opening celebration of the arts space MADE in Berlin. And in 2015 the ensemble contributed to the creation phase and choreographed for the live show of Madonna's Rebel Heart tour. In 2016 Sadler's Wells invited the company to direct and perform a dance work made to Nitin Sawhney's *Dystopian Dream* album.

Wang Ramirez never ceases to deepen and expand its quest to find new choreographic languages and means of expression built on technical virtuosity, poetry, humor, and the questioning of human identities. The group encourages and explores strong artistic collaborations with artists from different fields.

Honji Wang (*dancer, choreographer, and artistic director*) was born and raised in Germany by Korean parents. Her dance language is an abstraction of hip-hop dance and shows influences of earlier martial arts and ballet training. She is recognized as an artist who brings contemporary and hip-hop together in an exceptionally organic fashion.

Together with Sébastien Ramirez, Wang received the 2013 "Bessie" Award for Outstanding Performers following the presentation of *API5* at the Apollo Theatre in New York. Their work *Monchichi* was a 2017 "Bessie" nominee for Outstanding Production following its performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

In 2015 Wang was invited to Madonna's final auditions in New York, where her performance earned her an invitation to tour with and perform in the Rebel Heart tour.

She was also invited as a guest artist to perform a duo with acclaimed British choreographer Akram Khan titled *The Pursuit of Now*, which was accompanied by pianist Shahin Novrasli. Wang also collaborated with the avant-garde female flamenco dancer Rocío Molina in the duet *Felahikum* as well as with New York City Ballet principal dancer Sara Mearns in the duet *No. 1*.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sébastien Ramirez (*dancer, choreographer, and artistic director*) was born in the south of France and specializes in the use of aerial work, as well as the development and use of choreographic rigging. Since the foundation of the company, he has explored a new vision of space and choreography, bringing hip-hop dance to a wider audience.

Following the presentation of *AP15* at the Apollo Theatre in New York, Ramirez and Honji Wang received the 2013 “Bessie” Award for Outstanding Performers. Their work *Monchichi* was nominated for the 2017 “Bessie” Award for Outstanding Production.

Ramirez contributed to the creation phase of Madonna’s Rebel Heart tour in New York City and choreographed for her live show. Akram Khan invited him to direct a personal workshop at the Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, in recognition of Ramirez’s unique quality of movement. Ramirez was also included by Sadler’s Wells as one of the five choreographers of *RIOT Off-Spring*, a dance piece performed to Igor Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring*, performed by the Southbank Sinfonia.

Louis Becker has a strong base in b-boying and has broadened his artistic expressions through contemporary dance, acrobatics, and drama. He is also part of the contemporary dance productions of Company Constanza Macras, which tours internationally.

Johanna Faye has her dance roots in breaking, with a strong background in contemporary dance and improvisation. She has worked with choreographers including Amala Dianor, Jérémie Belingard, Tishou Aminata Kane, and Sylvain Groud.

Saïdo Lehlouh is a charismatic b-boy who was noticed early on for his extraordinary dance skills, stage presence, and artistry. From the very beginning, he participated in important

dance-theater productions with artists such as Storm (Paris and Berlin), Constanza Macras (Berlin), and Norma Claire (French Guiana).

Alister Mazzotti has performed and coordinated stunts, fights, and physical effects for more than 500 movies, commercials, and theatrical productions during the past 25 years. He headed action departments for Oscar-winning movies including *The Pianist* and *The Lives of Others*, and received nominations (Taurus, DAFF) for outstanding stunt work.

Cyril Mulon is Wang Ramirez’s lighting designer and technical director. As lighting and stage manager for Peter Brook’s Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris, for over a decade, he gained a wide range of artistic and technical experience. Mulon’s eclectic career ranges from documentary, video, and photography to light design for theater productions, operas, and dance.

Jean-Philippe Barrios, aka lacrymoboy, a successful percussionist and drummer, is *Borderline*’s composer. For dance classes, he works with contemporary companies such as Angelin Preljocaj, Jean-Claude Gallotta, and Norrdans Company. As a musician, dancer, and actor, he is part of many international companies, including Brodas Bros (Barcelona).

www.wangramirez.com

www.facebook.com/WangRamirez

Company Wang Ramirez and Clash66,
executive production

John Luckacovic and Eleanor Oldham

(www.2luck.com | info@2luck.com),

exclusive North American representation

Manon Martin, *production manager*
and bookings

Claudia Tanus, *communication*

Corinne Aden, *administration*

Cyril Mulon, *technical director*

The original soundtrack of *Borderline* is available on
lacrymoboy.bandcamp.com and on iTunes (artist: lacrymoboy).

SPOKEN TESTIMONIES

Solo: Sébastien Ramirez (Sébastien's father)

Do you know what “democracy” means? It’s when the people govern. People have never governed! It’s never the people who rule.

No, the world has never been fair, never. When they demonstrate below... those who cash in three to 4,000 euros per month, who have fortunes, they don’t accept others demonstrating. “What are they demonstrating about, those good-for-nothings? What’s it for?” Just leave them alone. Life needs to be normal, like a quiet river...

When I’m told, “When you retire, you’ll travel.” Travel where? You want to go to Africa to see the poor people? Yes, go to Africa, make the most of it! A meal costs, what... 1€, 1.50€. You think I’d go there? I’d be ashamed. I won’t go to poor countries. To save a nickel!

Many countries live off of tourism. But the people don’t live off of tourism! It’s the capitalists who are there and who live off of tourism. I remember in Spain, the first tourists I saw, I was young.... The Brits and Germans used to come. How my mother despaired! Because before, a kilo of potatoes cost three pesetas and when the tourists came, it cost 10!

My father was always poor. We were always poor even with all the tourism.

It’s all lies. This is why I don’t like this society. I rebelled. I don’t care about any of it. I don’t want to know anything about it. I’m not interested at all.

There is nothing to do. Just lock yourself up. Someone said: “If you are happy, don’t tell anyone.” Happy people aren’t liked. It’s against nature, it’s not natural. It’s not normal. “Let’s live in hiding.” That’s why I feel good with my own people. I have nothing more to say.

It’s shameful.

What does it all mean? It’s over my head. Because once you’ve eaten, once you’ve drunk, once you’ve made love, what else do you want to do? Why have 200 million in the bank? To do what with?

Duo of Dancers: Bowls of Rice

There was a doctor, Masaru Emoto. A Japanese man. He did experiments with water.

He did an experiment where he realized that the water molecule reacted to sound and energies. He took three bowls of rice and placed them in an apartment and three different people came to visit them during the day.

Here, I’ll give you a bowl, imagine it... I’m going to say: “I love you” to my bowl of rice. And you say: “I hate you.” And no one say a thing to the third bowl. It’s not calculated. The doctor proved that the bowl of rice that was said “I love you” to was edible for almost a month. What do you say to your bowl of rice?

I hate you.

Well, your bowl of rice, after just one week, is no longer edible because it received bad energies.

And the third bowl that stayed alone on the table without receiving any emotion rotted after one or two days because it was ignored. Indifference kills. Even a “I hate you” keeps you living. Are you listening? What I’m saying is very important!

It has to do with everything alive. We are made of 80% water! Understand?

I have ears! I’m listening to you.

Berkeley **RADICAL** – BLURRING BOUNDARIES

These performances are part of the 2017/18 Berkeley **RADICAL** *Blurring Boundaries* programming strand, which presents artists who are dissolving the very boundaries of their art forms and creating performances that cut across cultures and disciplines, accepted definitions of classical and contemporary, and even time and space. *Blurring Boundaries* concludes this season with a performance by soprano Julia Bullock and pianist John Arida (Mar 25). For more information, please visit calperformances.org.

Calligraphy: A Teacher's Testimony

Monday, November 17, 10:30am. Trade School, Gers, France.

I was giving my class when suddenly, without notice, four determined policemen accompanied by a dog handler decked out with his dog, barged in. They didn't say hello or introduce themselves. With no preamble, the dog was let loose. The students were extremely surprised. I questioned the intruders, asking what the purpose of their visit was. Radio silence. I insisted and quickly understood that I'd better just shut up. The students were shocked; the atmosphere was heavy, threatening. I opened a window, and then without a word, one of the policemen preemptorily closed it.

The dog ran all over the place. It bit onto one of my student's bags and he was then asked to exit the class. The dog drooled on a young man's legs, terrorized. On hats, on clothes. The animal detected something suspicious in someone's pocket, and once again, the student was asked to exit. I tried to intervene but I was silenced.

The bags were emptied in the hallway. Wallets were opened. This operation took place in 10 classes and lasted more than an hour. Thirty suspected students were sent into a different room and were thoroughly searched. Some were stripped to their underwear. Amongst the students were minors.

In the HND class, the dog ripped apart a bag. The student then discovered his smashed computer. He's told he can press charges if he wants.

In another room, the students were lined up in front of the blackboard. According to them and their teacher, the dog handler yelled, "One move and he'll bite your artery and you'll end up in the hospital." Policemen paced up and down the hallways outside the classrooms.

I learned later that no particular event took place in the establishment to justify such a raid. The students were dumbstruck and scared.

They interrogated me once the group left. I didn't know what to say. I remained speechless. The element of surprise freezes you.

Beyond the legal or illegal aspect of the operation was the ill-mannered, threatening, sarcastic, aggressive, and scornful attitude of the policemen. They left a classroom saying: "Bye, girlies!" when, of course, there were only young men, and congratulated them for having well stashed their dope and abusing their dogs. Real thugs wouldn't have reacted any differently.

It was in France, in a school, in 2008. I thought policemen were here to help people, support us, be our lucid and conscious guides. But instead of that, they barged in, flaunting their power like cowboys terrorizing the young students. I wanted this to be known because it's happening here in our schools. And it's absolutely unacceptable.

Thank you.

Thank you to Centre Culturel Jacques Prévert à Villeparisis for the creation residency, and HAU – Hebbel am Ufer for the research possibilities in Berlin.

With the support of Montpellier Danse, residency at Agora, cité internationale de la danse.

Company Wang Ramirez – Clash66 receives structural support from the Regional Cultural Affairs Directorate Occitanie, Regional council

Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée, and the county council Pyrénées Orientales.

The company receives the support of Foundation BNP Paribas for the development of its projects.

Sébastien Ramirez & Honji Wang are associated artists of Théâtre de l'Archipel, scène nationale de Perpignan, for the 2014–15, 2015–16, and 2016–17 seasons.