

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

CECILIA BENGOLEA

Born 1979 in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Lives and works in Paris, France



Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

CECILIA BENGOLEA

Cecilia Bengolea (b. 1979, Argentina) is a multidisciplinary artist using dance as a tool and medium for radical empathy and emotional exchange. Through collaboration with others – artists, performers, deejays and dancers – Bengolea develops a broad artistry and sees movement, dance and performance as animated sculpture. She herself is both object and subject in her own work.

Bengolea's work has been extensively exhibited at institutions and venues such as the MUDAM, Luxembourg (2022, 2023), the Noor Riyadh Exhibition (2023), The Guggenheim Bilbao (2021, 2022), the Gwangju Biennial (2014, 2021), Bourse de Commerce – Pinault Collection, Paris (2021), Art Basel Parcours, Basel (2021), La Casa Encendida, Madrid (2021), Tank Shanghai (2020), Centre Pompidou, Paris (2010, 2016, 2019), SFER IK Tulum (2019), Fondation Giacometti, Paris (2019), Performa, NY (2019), Desert X, Salton Sea (2019), TBA21, Venice and Madrid (2018, 2019), Dhaka Art Summit (2018), Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015, 2018), ICA London (2015), Elevation 1049, Gstaad (2017), Dia Art Foundation (2017), Hayward Gallery, London (2016), Biennale de Sao Paulo (2016), Tate Modern, London (2015) and the Biennale de Lyon (2015) to name a few.

Bengolea has collaborated with dancehall artists such as Craig Black Eagle, Bombom DHQ, Damion BG, and with artists Dominique Gonzalez Forster and Jeremy Deller. Her collaborative work with French choreographer François Chaignaud, Pâquerette (2005-2008) and Sylphides (2009), has earned several awards such as the Award de la Critique de Paris in 2010 and the Young Artist Prize at the Gwangju Biennial in 2014. They have also co-created dance pieces for their dance company as well as for the Ballet de Lyon (2013), the Ballet de Lorraine (2014) and Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal (2015).

Recent solo exhibitions

- 2024** *Cosmo-Conviviality - there is time that passes even when nothing changes*, Andréhn-Schiptjenko Paris, France.
Galeria Nora Fish, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 2022** *Danza de las materialidades mutantes*, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain.
Museo Eco, Mexico City, Mexico.
MUDAM – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg, Luxembourg.
- 2021** *Animations in Water*, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain.
Oneness Barroco, commission for Art Basel Messeplatz performance, Basel, Switzerland.
Bourse du Commerce, Pinault Collection, Paris, France.

Recent group exhibitions

- 2025** *Thinking Like a Mountain*, GAMeC, Bergamo, Italie.
Les Inaccoutumés, la Ménagerie de Verre, Paris, France.
Corps et âmes, Pinault Collection, Bourse de Commerce, Paris, France.
- 2024** *The Infinite Woman*, Villa Carmignac, Porquerolles island, France.
Reverb, 180 Studio, London, United Kingdom
Sous l'azur, Art Explora Festival, Marseille, France
- 2023** *Refracted Identities, Shared Futures*, Noor Riyadh exhibition, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
Deep Deep Down, MUDAM – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg, Luxembourg.

Public and Private Collections

Fiorucci Arts and Trust, Italy.
Fundación Arco, Spain.
Le CNAP, France.
Le Consortium, France.
MONA – Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania, Australia.
MUDAM, Luxembourg.
Museo Reina Sofia, Spain.
The Tank Shanghai, China.
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Austria.
Vinyl Factory, UK.



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Reverb*, 180 Studios, London, United Kingdom, 2024
©Jack Hems



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Reverb*, 180 Studios, London, United Kingdom, 2024
©Jack Hems



Cecilia Bengolea
The Infinite Woman
2024



Cecilia Bengolea
The Infinite Woman
2024

Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *The Infinite Woman*, Villa Carmignac, Porquerolles island, France, 2024
©Nicolas Brasseur



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *The Infinite Woman*, Villa Carmignac, Porquerolles island, France, 2024
©Nicolas Brasseur

REFRACTED IDENTITIES, SHARED FUTURES

Noor Riyadh exhibition, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2023

Noor Riyadh, the Largest Light Art Festival in the World, has returned for its third edition, which runs until December 16, 2023. Its accompanying exhibition runs through to March 2, 2024. This citywide spectacle will bathe Riyadh in a glow of large-scale light art, captivating building projections, performances, and beyond. Witness artistry unfold in five hubs across the city.

Cecilia Bengolea, *Astrophysical Light*, 2023

Two 3D hologram fans, transparent screen, video projector and speakers
300 x 500 cm

Cecilia Bengolea's *Astrophysical Light* (2023) is a holographic video installation that explores 'cosmo-choreography,' a new genre that applies cosmology and astrophysics to dance and choreography. The 3D-video, holographic installation is inspired by the encounters, gravitational movements and eventual collapse of two massive stars, such as supernovae. It features a choreography of bodies that meet, move around each other and then fall apart.

The installation explores how forces in the universe make elements such as galaxies, stars and cosmic dust attract other elements. This attraction causes the elements to collapse, creating light. From this, Bengolea suggests we can draw parallels with human DNA, which is made of elements that originated from the stars—such as oxygen, nitrogen and phosphor—and is released back into the cosmos once it collapses.



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Refracting Identities, Shared Futures* at Noor Riyadh, Riyadh,
Saudi Arabia, 2023



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Yet It Moves!* at Copenhagen Contemporary,
Copenhagen, Denmark, 2023



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Yet It Moves!* at Copenhagen Contemporary,
Copenhagen, Denmark, 2023



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, Solo presentation at The Armory Show, New York, USA, 2022



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, Solo presentation at The Armory Show, New York, USA, 2022

Cecilia Bengolea
Maria's Transformation, 2022
Video work, 13:12 minutes
Edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs





Cecilia Bengolea
Series-Birth Machine, 2022
Multichrome ink, biological resin, acetate paper
60 x 40 cm (23 5/8 x 15 3/4 in.)

Cecilia Bengolea
Ocean Life Under the Bridge and Chimneys, 2022
Multichrome ink, biological resin, acetate paper
65 x 50 cm (25 5/8 x 19 3/4 in.)





Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Deary Steel* at Red Light Green Light
(In the Realm of Senses) at Kunsthal Charlottenborg – The
historical University Library at Copenhagen University,
Copenhagen, Denmark, 2022

DEARY STEEL

MUDAM, Luxembourg, Luxemburg, 2022

The European Capital of Culture Esch 2022 and Mudam Luxembourg have commissioned artist and choreographer Cecilia Bengolea to create a new body of work bringing together dance, performance, sculpture and video installation. The project will be premiered on the occasion of the Luxembourg Museum Days, unfolding across two spaces: Socle C, the concrete foundations of the former Blast Furnace C in Esch-Belval, and the Great Hall of Mudam in Luxembourg City.

Deary Steel is a new body of work set on the site of the historic steel industry of Belval. Inactive since the late 1990s, the three blast furnaces of the former Esch-Belval plant mark the landscape of the Minett region in the South of Luxembourg by their monumental functional and symbolic architecture where industrial knowledge and memories converge. The piece explores the genesis of the social and material dimensions of the industrial era, and how they have choreographed the post-industrial era including connections to the early 20th century dance form danse libre (Free Dance).

During the interwar years of the 1930s a group of naturist dancers in Monte Verità (Switzerland) created a community who sought to represent a harmony lost between human action and nature. Inspired by this moment and its relevance to today, Bengolea studied the danse libre repertory, instructing dancers from the Jeune Ballet du Conservatoire National Supérieur Musique et Danse de Lyon (CNSMD Lyon).

Through the collaboration with nine dancers from the school, Bengolea choreographed a 30-minute piece, *La Danse des Éléments* mixing dance and ritualistic gestures from different cultures around the world. Collapsing established categories, the artist's work combines ancient ceremonial forms with street dance, drawing attention to their common social function and bringing people together.

The video installation shows the moving bodies of ten ballet dancers superimposing depictions of rituals that involve fire as a symbol of energy, empowerment and healing. Images of the active ArcelorMittal Belval steel plant are juxtaposed with found footage from Manga, images of Chinese medicine and archival footage depicting the struggles of female industrial workers and early twentieth century leisure activities.



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation View, *Deary Steel* at MUDAM, Luxembourg,
Luxemburg, 2022



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation View, *Deary Steel* at MUDAM, Luxembourg,
Luxembourg, 2022



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation View, *Deary Steel* at MUDAM, Luxembourg,
Luxembourg, 2022



Cecilia Bengolea
Deary Steel, 2022
Video work
13:12 min



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Shelly Belly inna Real Life*, Art Basel Parours, Basel, Switzerland, 2021

LIQUID GURU

Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden,
2020

Cecilia Bengolea (b. 1979, Argentina) is a multidisciplinary artist using dance as a tool and medium for radical empathy and emotional exchange. Through collaboration with others – artists, performers, deejays and dancers – Bengolea develops a broad artistry and sees movement, dance and performance as animated sculpture. She herself is both object and subject in her work.

Dance may be one of our most advanced forms of bodily expression. Unlike sport or other related forms of physical communication, dance demands that we consider the figure as pure medium devoid of functionality. Adaptive physical intelligence may well be the indirect quest of most dance but, for Cecilia Bengolea, it is the basis of a practice that has been centered around the creation of new bodies of thought. The other mind that is the focus of her attention is less about what Deleuze & Guattari would term the body without organs, than a body without boundaries, a fully eroticized being born of a state of constant rehearsal.

The spirit and rhythms that infuse this body move in several directions at once. Often, they are found played out in transient or boundaries places such as the side of the road where passing cars choreograph another kind of risk. Sweat and tropical rain further dissolve the boundaries between inside and outside, reminding us perhaps that inner body fluid is an electrical conductor that functions for the body in ways similar to the synapses of the brain – creating new pathways and communication highways redefining sentence.

The exhibition consists of two video works – *Bestiaire* and *Danse au fond de la Mer* – as well as sculptures and lenticular prints, best described as two-dimensional 3D images in constant motion.

In *Bestiaire*, Bengolea has scanned her body in her favourite dance positions while morphing into a bestiary of imaginary three-dimensional video animations.

Danse au fond de la Mer re-enacts dances by François Malkovsky, a disciple of Isadora Duncan. His short choreographies animate the elements and movements of life in the seas and in the film, we see Bengolea's re-enactment of his repertory with dancers in Vienna in 2012. Later, in 2019, Bengolea made a video collage bringing deep-sea life footage to accompany the dance performance. The pulsating movements of the deep-sea creatures are superimposed on the footage of the dancers, creating a filmic collage.

The very same deep-sea creatures have also been models for the exhibition's clay sculptures.

The colourful lenticular prints, collages made from photos from performances, films and other collaborations, create movement in themselves as the image is constantly changing depending on the position of the viewer.



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Liquid Guru* at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden, 2020



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Liquid Guru* at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden, 2020



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Liquid Guru* at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden, 2020



Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Liquid Guru* at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden, 2020



Cecilia Bengolea
Pampa Kingston Sunrise, 2020
 Ed. of 3 + 1 AP
 Lenticular print
 94 x 120 cm (37 1/8 x 47 1/4 in.)



Cecilia Bengolea
Pampa Kingston Sunset, 2020
Ed. of 3 + 1 AP
Lenticular print
102 x 120 cm (40 1/8 x 47 1/4 in.)



Cecilia Bengolea
Salton Friends, 2020
 Ed. of 3 + 1 AP Lenticular print
 Diameter: 117 cm (46 1/8 in.)



Cecilia Bengolea
Bombom in the Salton Sea, 2020
Ed. of 3 + 1 AP
Lenticular print
Diameter: 117 cm (46 1/8 in.)

Cecilia Bengolea
Deep Sea Worm, 2019
Natural, fired earthenware
61 x 40 x 80 cm (24 1/8 x 15 3/4 x 31 1/2 in.)





Cecilia Bengolea
Umbrella Fish, 2019
Natural, fired earthenware
68 x 37 x 38 cm (26 3/4 x 14 5/8 x 15 in.)

Cecilia Bengolea
Anchor Fish, 2019
Natural, fired earthenware
44 x 35 x 22 cm (17 3/8 x 13 3/4 x 8 5/8 in.)





Cecilia Bengolea

Anemone Fragment, 2019

Natural, fired earthenware, painted with acrylic colour

Body: 44 x 55 x 45 cm (17 3/8 x 21 5/8 x 17 3/4 in.)

Strings: 16 x 63 x 30 cm (6 1/4 x 24 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.)



Cecilia Bengolea
Alliga, 2019

Installation view at Sfer ik, Tulum, Mexico, 2019
Unglazed ceramics, variable sizes



Cecilia Bengolea
Alliga, 2019
Installation view at Sfer ik, Tulum, Mexico, 2019
Unglazed ceramics, variable sizes

Cecilia Bengolea
Alliga, 2019
Installation view at Sfer ik, Tulum, Mexico, 2019
Unglazed ceramics, variable sizes





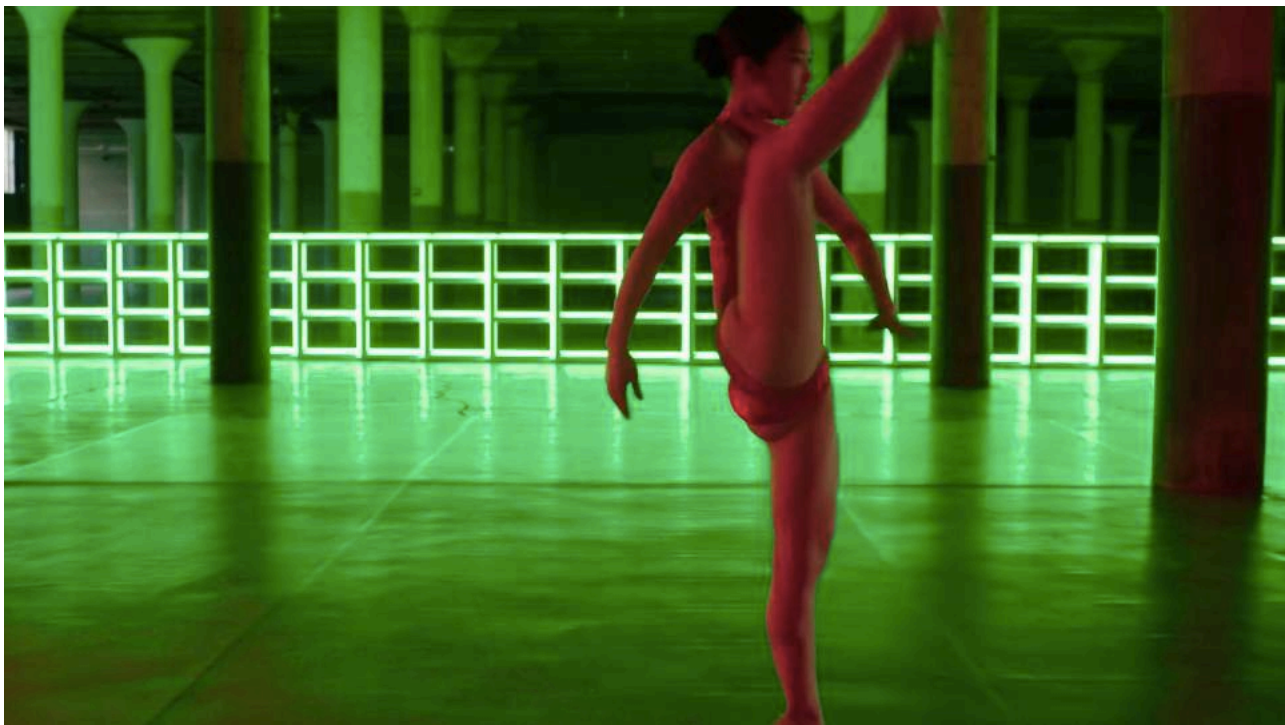
Cecilia Bengolea
Installation view, *Bestiaire*, 2019 at FAENA Miami, USA, 2019



Cecilia Bengolea
Mosquito Net, 2019
Installation view at the Salton
Sea DesertX, California, USA
Cut outs printed on wood

Cecilia Bengolea
Mosquito Net, 2019
Installation view at the Salton
Sea DesertX, California, USA
Cut outs printed on wood





Cecilia Bengolea
Dub Love, 2017
Performance commissioned by Dia Art Foundation

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SELECTED VIDEO WORKS





Cecilia Bengolea
Maria's Transformation, 2022
Video work, 13:12 minutes
Edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs

Viewing link:
<https://vimeo.com/746087766>
Password:
ASmariastransformation

Maria's Transformation reads as an invocation of the sci-fi character of the Metal Woman from Fritz Lang's 1927 film *Metropolis*, superimposed upon the evolving industries of steel for which Belval is known. The film functions as an exploration of hard manufactured objects, their alchemical secrets and memory. Its central character - a 3D avatar of a pregnant body - dances through the inventory of history and the militarization of the objects that simultaneously construct and threaten our ecosystem.

Cecilia Bengolea
Deary Steel, 2022
Video work, 13:12 min
Edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs

Viewing link:
<https://vimeo.com/746082829>
Password: ASdearysteel

Deary Steel takes as point of departure the historic steel industry of Belval, inactive since the late 1990s. The piece explores the genesis of the social and material dimensions of the industrial era, and how they have choreographed the post-industrial era including connections to the early 20th century dance form *danse libre* (Free Dance).

Collaborating with dancers from Jeune Ballet du Conservatoire National Supérieur Musique et Danse de Lyon (CNSMD Lyon), Bengolea has choreographed the moving bodies of ballet dancers and superimposed depictions of rituals that involve fire as a symbol of energy, destruction and healing. Images of the active ArcelorMittal Belval steel plant are juxtaposed with found footage from Manga, images of Chinese medicine and archival footage portraying the struggles of female industrial workers and early twentieth century leisure activities.





Cecilia Bengolea
Shelly Belly inna Real Life, 2020
Video work
Edition of 5
23:47 minutes

<https://vimeo.com/497901483>
Password: ASBengolea2020

Shot in Jamaica between 2015 and 2019 *Shelly Belly inna Real Life* is collaboration between Cecilia Bengolea and the dancehall scene in Kingston and Bog Walk. It explores the influences of culture and nature within the Caribbean island art community. Narrated through movement and music it follows the language of dancehall to the choreography and steps of the people whose passion practice it follows. Its uniquely insider view grants unprecedented access to the characters whose vitality and influence has shaped a view of movement and life that reaches from its Jamaican founders to the world beyond.

Cecilia Bengolea

Tryptique – Oneness, 2020

Colour and black & white 4K video with sound

Six hours mixed randomly with a software of algorithms

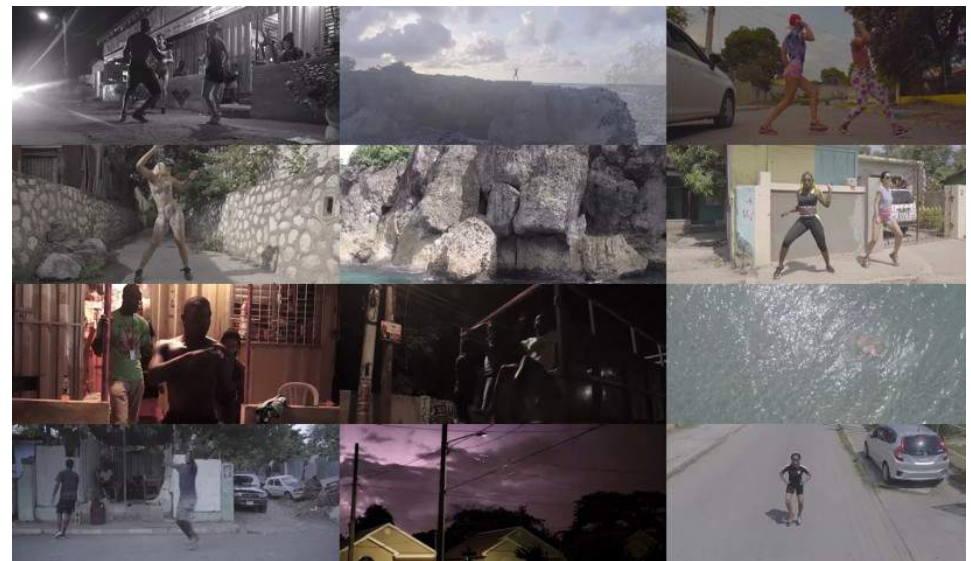
Edition of 5

In the collections of TBA21, Consortium Dijon, the Store Vinyl Factory
Commissioned by the city of Geneva.

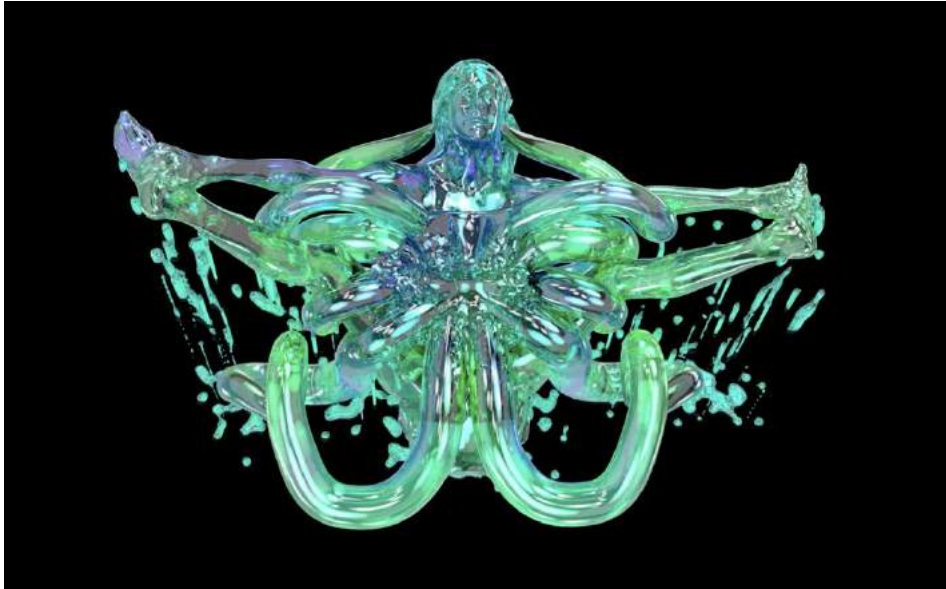
For the past ten years, Cecilia Bengolea has collaborated with dancers and deejays in Jamaica and Japan, such as Equinox, Craig Black Eagle, PrettyPrettyStickyWhine, Bombom. *Oneness* is a six-hour archive randomly mixed using a software algorithm. Her *Tryptique* installation is a multifaceted work, in which she shares the practise of global dancehall, while juxtaposing images of a choreography created with the Jamaican national synchronised swimming team. *Tryptique* combines 15-metre-wide panoramic views, weather conditions, wildlife, land and water, with footage created in collaboration with the urban dancehall community. The multi-author choreographies, the vibrations of the sound systems and the natural sound environment, perceptible on the ground as well as in the water, give rise to the forms and rituals that lead to deep states of consciousness that builds and empower the dancehall community.

« Dancing in the wet weather of the Caribbean, sweat and tropical rain further dissolve the boundaries between inside and outside, reminding us perhaps that inner body fluid is an electrical conductor that functions for the body in similar ways to the synapses of the brain – creating new pathways and communication highways redefining sentience. Working on steps is just one part of the endeavour to synchronize and compose ourselves within a state of greater liquidity. »

The movements I'm drawn to are those in which the body is driven by a physical intelligence of its own. Through ritual and repetition, arms, legs and torso seem to develop an independent memory. Relieved of the cumbersome call and response mechanism that separates action from thought, the body begins to describe a life of its own.

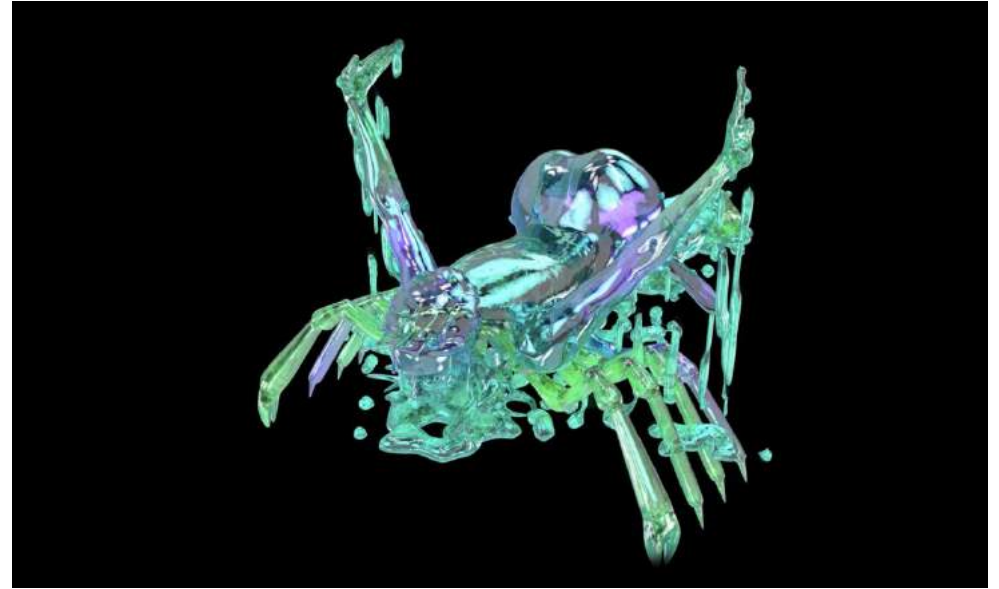


The beginning and ends of the spiritual and the profane dance are here forgone in favour of an actualization of a polymorphous erotic identity – conforming a collective body. »



Cecilia Bengolea
Bestiaire, 2019
 Video colour 3D animation 7 minutes
 Edition of 5

Viewing link: <https://vimeo.com/481632928>
 Password: ASBengolea2020



Bestiaire takes descriptions found in the *Book of Imaginary Beings*, by Jorge Luis Borges and the principles of Baruch Spinoza to compose oneself with others to expand our extensive capacities from the book *Ethique* as its starting point. Hybridizing herself Bengolea scanned her body in her favourite positions while morphing into a bestiary of imaginary three-dimensional video animations.



Cecilia Bengolea
Danse au fond de la Mer, 2019
Video colour and sound
12:52 min
Edition of 5

<https://vimeo.com/500050812>
Password: ASBengolea2020

Danse au fond de la Mer re-enacts dances by François Malkovsky, a disciple of Isadora Duncan. His short choreographies animate the elements and movements of life in the seas and in the film, we see Bengolea's re-enactment of his repertory with dancers in Vienna in 2012. Later, in 2019, Bengolea made a video collage bringing deep-sea life footage to accompany the dance performance. The pulsating movements of the deep-sea creatures are superimposed on the footage of the dancers, creating a filmic collage.

Cecilia Bengolea

Lightning dance, 2018

Video B/W HD and sound 6:03 min

Edition of 5

In the collections of TBA21, Le CNAP, Peter Handschin
and Martin Hatebur

Lightning Dance investigates the influence of electric weather on bodily imagination. It features Craig Black Eagle, Oshane Overload-Skankaz and their respective teams, in company of the artist, perform solo and group dance routines while heavy rain falls. As the dancers take centre stage, their movements refer to popular Jamaican dancehall, a highly sexualized dance style, which Cecilia Bengolea sees as infused with magical healing powers. The unapologetically rough setting of the piece in combination with its illuminating effect—reinforced by the black-and-white aesthetics—highlight the dynamic gestures of the performers captivating the gaze of the viewer, while the sounds of thunderstorm become the beats to which the choreography is synched. The only trace left of dancehall music is the low-frequency base in the background, amplified by the intensity of the choreography. By dissolving the boundaries between the nature and the human, *Lightning Dance* captivates the viewer to the point of channelling life through movement and light.





Cecilia Bengolea

Bombom's dream, 2016

Edition of 5

In collaboration with Jeremy Deller

Video colour HD and sound 12:48 min

Bienal de Sao Paulo, Incerteza Viva 2016

The Infinite Mix, Vinyl Factory, London

In the collections of TBA21 and The Store Vinyl Factory

Bom Bom's Dream (2017) is a surreal highlight from Hayward Gallery's off-site exhibition *The Infinite Mix* made in collaboration with The Vinyl Factory. This collaborative piece follows the fantastic adventures the Japanese dancer Bombom as she travels to Jamaica to compete in a local dancehall contest. A children's book illustrate by trade, Bombom lives a fantasy life when she's in Jamaica. The video features extremely raw footage of Bombom and her dancehall opponents rolling around in the dusty yard of a shopping center as Bombom, with her gymnastic moves out-dances the competition to come out on top. Her prize? An electric fan.

Commissioned by the Hayward Gallery, *Infinite Mix* and The Biennial of Sao Paulo 2016, *Incerteza Viva*.

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

SELECTED PRESS



Le monde à Paris+ The world in

La foire est l'occasion de proposer un musée éphémère d'artistes de tous horizons géographiques.
During the fair, an ephemeral museum of artists from all geographical horizons opens.

PAR/BY JORDANE DE FAÏ, ALISON MOSS, RAFAEL PIC



Wolfgang Tillmans

Afternoon Beer

2017, impression jet d'encre
non encadrée sur papier,
206 x 138 cm.
Galerie Chantal Crousel.

© Courtesy Wolfgang Tillmans et
Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.

Jakob Lena Knebl

Portrait of a Lady, white

2022, polyuréthane, résine,
160 x 150 x 100 cm.
Galerie Loevenbruck.

© Courtesy galerie Loevenbruck,
Paris.

Cecilia Bengolea

Bodies As Protest

2022, encre multichrome,
résine biologique, papier
acétate, 63 x 46 cm. Galerie
Andréhn-Schiptjenko.

Courtesy Daiga Grantina
et Galerie Joseph Tang.



ALLEMAGNE

Wolfgang Tillmans

(galerie Chantal Crousel)

Le plasticien, né en 1968, basé entre Londres et Berlin, a été le premier photographe et non Britannique à se voir attribuer le prix Turner en 2000. Icône de la culture underground, son œuvre est aussi riche qu'hétérogène, comprenant portraits intimistes, scènes de la vie nocturne, natures mortes ou compositions abstraites.

The visual artist, born in 1968 and living between London and Berlin, was the first non-British photographer to be awarded the Turner Prize in 2000. As an icon of underground culture, his work is as rich as it is heterogeneous, and includes intimate portraits, scenes of nightlife, still lifes or abstract compositions. **A.M.O.**



AUTRICHE

Jakob Lena Knebl

(galerie Loevenbruck)

Plus que des œuvres, les pièces de l'artiste née en 1970, basée entre Vienne et Berlin, sont de véritables mises en scène dans lesquelles le spectateur est invité à entrer. Poupées, miroirs, vêtements, sculptures et autres objets habitent ces « desirerooms », ainsi que l'artiste les nomme.

The pieces of the artist born in 1970, based between Vienna and Berlin, are not only works of art but real stagings in which the spectator is invited to enter. Dolls, mirrors, clothes, sculptures and other objects inhabit these «desirerooms», as the artist calls them. **J.D.F.**

ARGENTINE

Cecilia Bengolea

(galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko)

Née en 1979 à Buenos Aires mais installée en France, elle provient de l'univers de la danse qui transparait dans ses créations plastiques. Elle prépare une performance avec 450 personnes pour les 25 ans du Guggenheim Bilbao.

Born in 1979 in Buenos Aires but now living in France, she started out in the world of dance, which is reflected in her plastic creations. She is preparing a performance that includes 450 persons for the 25th anniversary of the Guggenheim Bilbao.

R.P.

Cecilia Bengolea à The Armory Show

Par **Jean Marc Lebeaupin** - 15 août, 2022

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Cecilia Bengolea, *Deary Steel*, 2022 (video still)

Depuis sa fondation en 1994, **The Armory Show** réunit chaque année les plus grandes galeries d'art contemporain et moderne du monde à New York. La **galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko** participe depuis bientôt trois décennies à des foires d'art internationales comme Art Basel, Independent New York et Bruxelles, CHART Copenhagen, Material Art Fair Mexico City, et FIAC Paris.

Cette année, **Andréhn-Schiptjenko**, présente du 8 au 11 septembre 2022 à The Armory Show, des œuvres récentes de **Cecilia Bengolea**, avec notamment **Deary Steel** et **Maria's Transformation**, deux nouvelles œuvres vidéo commandées par la capitale européenne de la culture Esch2022 et Mudam Luxembourg, ainsi qu'une série de nouvelles œuvres sur papier.

Cecilia Bengolea, née en 1979 en Argentine, est une artiste multidisciplinaire qui utilise la danse comme un outil et un moyen d'empathie radicale et d'échange émotionnel. Elle a chorégraphié les corps en mouvement des danseurs de ballet, superposant ainsi des représentations de rituels impliquant le feu comme symbole d'énergie, de destruction et de guérison. Des images de l'aciérie d'**ArcelorMittal Belval** en activité sont juxtaposées à des séquences trouvées de mangas, des images de la médecine chinoise et des séquences d'archives décrivant les luttes des ouvrières de l'industrie et les activités de loisirs du début du XXe siècle.

Bengolea participera à l'exposition *Sections/Intersections*, 25 ans de la collection du musée Guggenheim Bilbao en octobre 2022 et est actuellement en résidence avec Arte Explora à Paris. Elle fera également, une exposition personnelle chez Andréhn-Schiptjenko au printemps 2023.





© Olivier Zahm

Cecilia Bengolea

Le Programme prévu pour la capital de la culture est riche et interdisciplinaire. La contribution de l'Argentine Cecilia Bengolea combine sculpture, vidéo et performance

Le rapport de Cecilia Bengolea à la danse a toujours été inhabituel. La danseuse argentine née en 1979 a débuté par des acrobaties et en faisant de la gymnastique sur le dos des chevaux. Puis, elle a étudié parallèlement l'histoire de l'art, la danse classique et la danse anthropologique, explorant aussi cette dernière de façon intensive lors de rituels avec des champignons hallucinogènes au Mexique. Aujourd'hui, elle vit principalement à Paris, dansant et chorégraphiant pour des festivals allant du Brésil au Japon et faisant aussi des sculptures, des installations et des dessins en tant qu'artiste plasticienne. « Pour moi, la performance est une sculpture animée. Elle fournit à la fois le sujet et l'objet », dit-elle.

La contribution de Cecilia Bengolea à Esch2022 associe d'une manière caractéristique de son œuvre arts plastiques, vidéo et performance. Elle sera présentée au Socle C, la base d'un ancien haut fourneau de Belval, et, parallèlement, dans le Grand Hall du Mudam, le Musée d'art contemporain du Luxembourg. La coopération avec cette institution a permis de tourner un nouveau film. La protagoniste : Viktoria Tvardovskaya, une danseuse classique vivant au Luxembourg qui se confronte aux structures et aux forces architecturales nécessaires à la production de l'acier. Ce film tourné sur place sera présenté les 14 et 15 mai pendant les deux performances qui accueilleront une douzaine de danseurs et de danseuses du Jeune Ballet de Lyon sur une scène on ne peut plus particulière : le Socle C, relique façon Mad Max de l'époque de l'industrie lourde qui a marqué la ville d'Esch jusqu'à nos jours.

Aujourd'hui encore, on trouve dans la région des hauts fourneaux électriques dans lesquels on fait fondre des pièces métalliques pour obtenir un nouvel acier. Un procédé qui ne requiert aucune houille mais d'énormes quantités d'énergie, ce que reflète également la danse de Cecilia Bengolea. Sa contribution porte en effet sur l'histoire du feu et du métal et sur la façon dont ces éléments influencent le corps dans la médecine chinoise. Il y est aussi question de l'extraction et de la libération des énergies et de notre relation à la nature.



Foto: Courtesy of the artist and gallery Andrehn-Schjerve
Cecilia Bengolea "Insect Train", 2018



Art Basel 2021

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Cecilia Bengolea brings Jamaican dancehall to Art Basel

The Argentine artist uses her deep engagement with the cultural form to explore the boundaries of being human



© Courtesy of the artist

Dalia Dawood SEPTEMBER 17 2021



Bodies moving together, floating on water, bouncing to a dancehall beat: that's the illusion Argentine performance artist and choreographer Cecilia Bengolea hopes to create with her works at Art Basel next week. She also wants visitors to the fair to get involved. "I'm sharing my practice of dance through a series of performances and inviting the audience to join in," she says over email. "Dancehall artists are amazing teachers and can make people feel transformed."

The Messeplatz outside the conference centre that houses the fair is a vivid display space for installations of all kinds; this year, celebrating the return of the physical fair, live performance is to the fore. The multidisciplinary artist will present an installation that encapsulates her unique approach to melding video, choreography and sculpture alongside her longstanding exploration of Jamaica's dancehall culture.

In one part of the artwork, Bengolea and her collaborators will perform a routine on a platform built over the Messeplatz's fountain, giving the impression of a dance on water. In another, two dancers — the Ukrainian Katrin Wow and the Jamaican Damion BG — will deliver a scripted conversation in the space, exploring their contrasting perspectives on dancehall: the former considers it a spiritual practice, the latter entertainment.



Cecilia Bengolea and Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza perform in Venice in 2018 © Enrico Fiorese

Born in Buenos Aires in 1979, Bengolea embraced dance in her youth, taking jazz dance lessons at age 12. She says she studied "archaic ritual dances" from South America, but it wasn't until she visited Jamaica in 2014 that she began to mesh these teachings with the urban moves she encountered there. She came to specialise in one of Jamaica's emblematic cultural forms from an interest in "dances which have a social function"; for her, the street and ritual dances in Jamaica "transform a community by practising music and dance together".

"Behind each step there is a signification, all the moves have names," she says. "Jamaican dancers are very inclusive, allowing people from the rest of the world to use their creations. Every audience, even if they don't know dancehall, can understand the humour behind it, as well as the depth and melancholy."

Dancehall developed from reggae in the 1970s, with bold beats and explicit moves gaining global popularity. For Bengolea, it represents something visceral in Jamaican culture, where the values of the body politic are examined through the politics of the body.

A further part of the artwork is a triptych of Bengolea's videos, presented on vertical screens hovering above the fountain. Unable to attend the fair, I attempt to recreate the triptych on my small laptop screen from files sent by Bengolea. At once, the rhythmic relationship between Jamaican community and nature becomes apparent.

"Dancehall Weather" splices together footage of street dancers with the island's scenery — a gyrating figure becomes translucent, morphing into a verdant background. In the video collage "Synchronised Serpent", writhing members of Jamaica's synchronised swimming team mirror slithering sea creatures overlaid on their bodies. These videos offer "a dialogue between the dance movements and nature, floods and the humidity of the Caribbean", Bengolea says.



For 'Bestiaire' (2019), Bengolea scanned her body in her different positions... © Courtesy of the artist



...which morph into 3D animated creatures © Courtesy of the artist

Despite my limited hardware, watching the videos I begin to understand the visceral connections Bengolea draws between habitat, organisms and human bodies, which are in constant conversation, sharing a common rhythm, merging through movement. On dancing on the fountain at Art Basel, she says: "We always dance in natural landscapes. We want to relate to the element of water." It is easy to imagine these ideas around the dissolving of parameters between the corporeal and the spiritual, the fixed and the fluid, becoming quite electric when witnessed in situ.

A performance about the fluency of bodies inevitably encourages us to reflect on a changing relationship with our own, especially during the pandemic. Through this lens, Bengolea's installation exudes an escapism, a vision of transcendence and invincibility after a period of physical inertia. Our bodies have limitations that she appears to reject through her shape-shifting creations.



'Synchronised Serpent' has members of Jamaica's synchronised swimming team with sea creatures overlaid © Courtesy of the artist

Perhaps that is the point. Bengolea's choreographed bodies have their own language with a limitless vocabulary, which she has based on dancehall's rhythms. "Jamaican dancers create infinite steps, like a Babel library in constant expansion," she says, comparing their inexhaustible rhythms to Jorge Luis Borges's short story *The Library of Babel*, which imagines an almost-infinite library. Bengolea's work augments this vision with animated figures that identify with the fluidity of water. Through dance, this concept of the boundless possibilities of movement, our bodies in endless flow, is both freeing and fathomable.

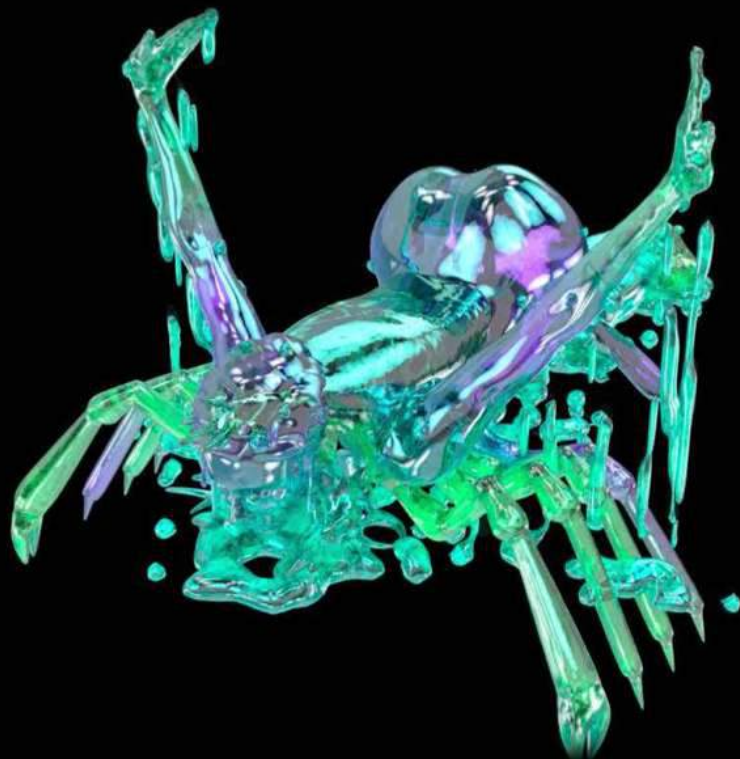
Cecilia Bengolea's Art Basel performances take place on September 21, 22 and 24 at 6pm-7pm in the Messeplatz, Basel

Transitional States:
Eleonora Milani
in conversation with
From Body to Object,
Cecilia
Bengolea
From Object to Body

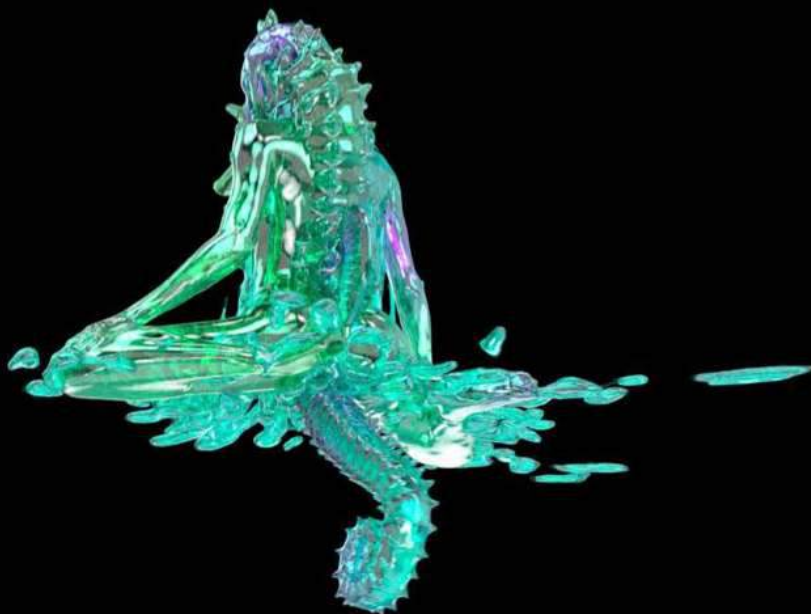
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Cecilia Bengolea and François Chaignaud, *Syphides*, 2009. Live performance staged at Centre Pompidou-Metz, 2011. Video still.
Photography by Alain Monot. Courtesy of the artists.





Bestiaire, 2019. Video stills. Video, colour, 3D animation. 7'. Courtesy of the artist.



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Eleonora Milani: Let's start from the beginning.

How did you start dancing and become a choreographer? Has it been a natural transition to performance art?

Cecilia Bengolea: When I was a child I dreamed about becoming a dancer. I started feeling more self-aware when I was twelve, and I took jazz dance lessons. Later I studied with a dancer from Argentina, Guillermo Angelelli, from the Odin Teatret company in Denmark. The dancers from this collective research different archaic ritual dances from South America and Asia. I learned "the dance from the wind" from the Altiplano in Bolivia — hyperventilating. This dance is necessary in the Bolivian high plains because they don't have much oxygen at three thousand meters above sea level. But in Buenos Aires, there is no altitude like in La Paz, so we were hyperventilating. We attained high states of mind — a different kind of consciousness. At seventeen years old, this dance made me realize: there is not only show dance, there is also a deeper ritual dance. Street jazz, dancing in clubs, and anthropological dance were my formation, I'm not an academic dancer, I consider myself an experimental dancer, autodidact.

EM This transfer from one state to another is an interesting aspect of your work. It makes me think about the relationship between performance and sculpture. In your performative works, you integrate the body and movement with a sort of objectivization; your idea of movement and the elements within the body, as well as the relationship with outside space (nature), are an index of this feeble dualism between sculpture and performance. Tell me about how you see the relationship between object and subject.

CB Speculating with multiple perspectives from subject to object is at the core of my practise. I went for one year to dance school in Europe, at that moment I also started working in a strip clubs to pay for school. Becoming objectified by the situation of exciting the viewer in a very codified way, made me take distance of my own self and enjoy this new perspective. I thought I could augmentate some capacities to fit into this specific category of object for that context and situation. I am fascinated by this thought of actualizing our capacities of composition and also our affects without judging ourselves. This is contained very much in Spinoza's *Ethics* — a book that I always re-read, because I think of this situation where he says that we can have more resources, a greater capacity for acting, if we actualize our composition with others.

EM Nobody ever thinks of the club in that way — in terms of the "composition" of a precise place. I mean, the first image you have of the club is a promiscuous space, with a darkness that reveals, in a certain sense, forbidden forms. But in the end we start right from there, that darkness. The club lights actually build a scenography, a precise architecture of meaning, which must refer to an aesthetic of desire that is generated from the display. A strongly objectified place that in turn objectifies.

CB

In the strip club, it was clear that we had to compose ourselves with the club, with the clients, with the other dancers, to become something else with another perspective. I thought there was a power for women in this. I also had to be very clever to be happy about this objectification of myself. To not judge myself, to not feel like I was a stagnate object. Then I met some girls working in an erotic theater who were making unconventional performances in which they would take things out of their body like plastic cockroaches or things that were not allowed in the classic club where I worked. They were going further in the invention of themselves. In 2009 we practiced a performance with my longtime collaborator François Chaignaud, inspired by the mythology of the sylphs, *Sylphides* (2009), in which we were going inside latex vacuum bags where our senses were deprived. This performance changed our perspective radically, letting us become animated. More abstract than a figurative body can be. In this performance we're always depicting something other than our body, even if it's hard for a human body to be abstract.

EM

Yes, I have seen *Sylphides*, though not live, and this leads to an even more interesting level of objectification. This piece is like a funeral rite with these amorphous, unearthly beings. Sylphs are creatures that question the materiality of the body and the afterlife, as well as our relationship with time, dualism... Reincarnation could be seen as an example of this changing of states we were talking about. In dance we practice to have several perspectives at once — being seen, acting, interacting, and seeing someone else who brings something in. What brings in these different layers of consciousness is thinking of oneself as something other than a subject. I think of my sculptures as characters or friends, or company, someone to have a dialogue with.

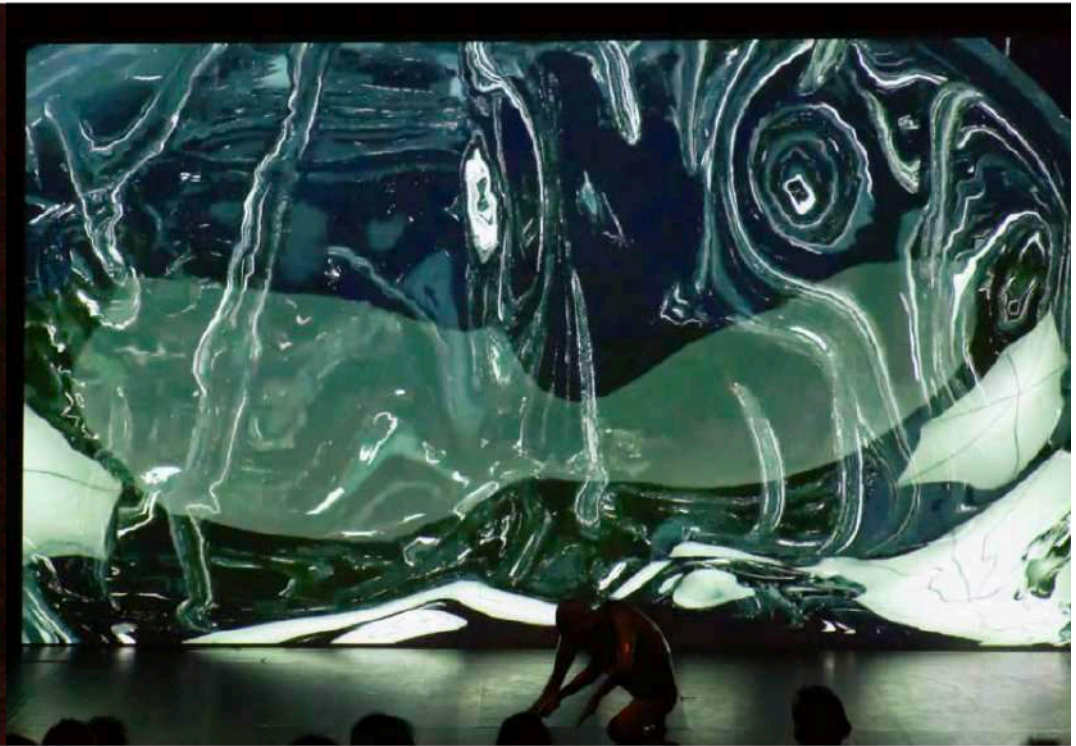
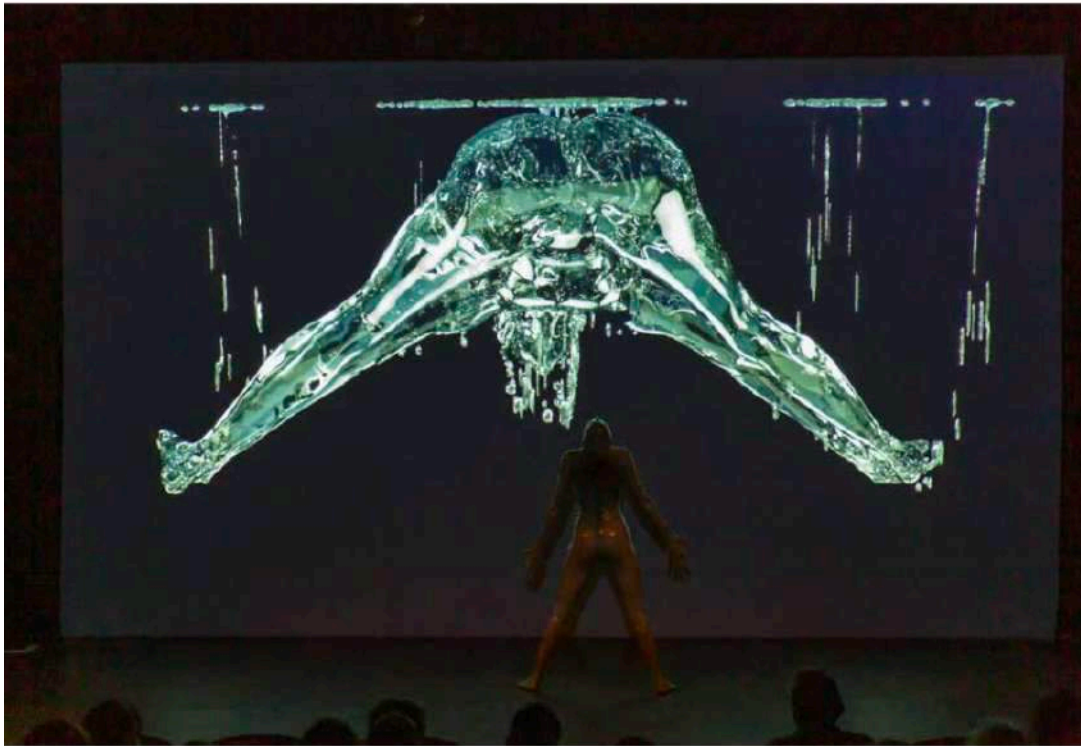
CB

EM

Composition is certainly a fundamental aspect in your performances. Does the way you renegotiate the relationship between sculpture and movement have to do with your evolution in thinking of body-objects as elements? Lately I was re-watching Merce Cunningham's performances from the '60s and '70s. I found a sort of parallel to your attitude about conceiving of objects and people on stage, not in terms of movement or the use of the body — because, of course, it's more conceptual, more abstract, and more geometrical than yours — but in terms of composition. I found an interesting connection in terms of the use of objects, scenography. I perceived a resemblance in how you make people act, dance, and animate objects. The way dancers interact with elements in those pieces is kind of curious. For example, *RainForest* (1968), staged for the first time in Buffalo — Andy Warhol made the set and Jasper Johns did the costumes — reminds me of your way of connecting human/object and subject. It's really amazing how elements are part of movement and activate a sort of animistic vision of everything. What do you think about it?



Lighting dance, 2018. Video stills. Black and white HD video and sound. 6' 03".
In the collections of TBA21 Accademy; and Tank Shanghai.



Favorite Positions, 2018. Screenings and performance staged at Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2019. Video colour and sound. 7' 20". Courtesy of the artist.

What I love about Merce Cunningham's philosophy is that he is absolutely modern in the way he frees dance from meaning and takes away the subordination of dance to music. He doesn't allow the dancers to listen to the music they will perform with until the day of the show. He doesn't show them the scenography either. I'm inspired by his unique perspective of seeing dance for what it is, and not trying to use it for narration or as a tool to conduct emotions. He comes after Martha Graham who is the master of storytelling and emotions conveyed by dance. He is the first one to put dance at the level of art, self-sufficient, not in service to any other art. His piece *RainForest* can relate to our piece *Sylphides*. We made these latex bags, and we also go through all these material states, changing from being an inflated bag to being a sculpture like a sylph or some marble drapery sculpture, also becoming amorphous. I had never made the connection with the piece by Cunningham. When we did *Sylphides*, I hadn't seen this piece. I think about Olafur Eliasson's water sculptures. Dancing fountains.

CB

humans and nature. It was about showing a kind of hybridization between nature and humans. However, from a solely formal point of view, or in a theatrical sense, it was about customization — in lots of pieces dancers wear protuberances to look like animals. So I thought about some of your works like *Mosquito Net*, *Dance for dead fishes and friends*, as well as *Dancehall Weather*, *Tryptique* (all works 2019), and *Synchronized Serpent* (2020). What's the origin of your interest in hybridizing humankind? When did you start thinking that it was possible to explore this within performance art — this hybridization of humans and nature and other creatures?

When I was younger, I had asthma and I couldn't run. I had a little pony since I was three years old, called Flor. I galloped everywhere from the age of three. I learned on my own, and I fell many times. I love to run. So I always thought hybridization was possible through this bond; it was a magical moment of movement and a speed that I couldn't reach myself through running. It was my first hybrid dance. The centaur dance. Horses are very important in Argentinian nature culture and mythology. I'm always astonished by horses kindness and patience, allowing us to be carried on their backs. There's an interesting dialogue between horses and humans throughout history. Now I'm filming a girl who rides in the south of France without saddle nor bridles. She communicates with her mare and has constant dialogues with her.

EM

I know what you are referring to. I saw his *Big Bang Fountain* (2014), installed at the Tate Modern in 2019, in that incredible exhibition "In Real Life." It was terrific. It's moving, performing water. Totally. I perfectly understand what you mean because I've been a dancer and I have the same feeling about elements that evoke movement. Your interest in elements makes me think about the '60s and this return to the elements, water, fire, air, earth. And it's curious because at that time this connection with the elements was about connecting art to life. It wasn't in the direction of a non-anthropocentric vision; it was still always about art and about how to make it, but humanity was still at the core. There wasn't a need to go toward a nonbinary world — it was really far from that. Of course, your interest in elements is more closely aligned with a nonbinary world, and I think that's the way you treat elements and objects. And sculpture, the body as sculpture. It's a sort of declaration of a nonbinary existence. I'm thinking of *Danse au fond de la Mer* (2019), a repertoire of utopic dance compositions inspired by French choreographer François Malkovsky. He conceived these dances to create a movement that highlighted the disharmony between man and nature caused by the industrial revolution, with the aim of restoring harmony between man and nature again.

CB

At that time the meaning was more symbolic than about allowing the element be what it is. In the early nineteenth century the Monte Verità group (1890–1920) aspired to be in harmony with nature and practiced a return to nature, greeting the sun god, natural food, nudism — a sort of pagan and communist community. There was also Malkovsky, who followed Isadora Duncan's thoughts about dance.

CB

EM

Lately while I was re-watching Cunningham's works I looked at ballet and dance from the 1930s and '40s. There's a huge body of literature about the relationship between

You also developed a constant dialogue with your own body, as in *Bestiaire* (2019), in which you literally hybridize yourself, scanning your body in different positions and turning the 3-D video into an animated bestiary, or in *Favorite Positions* (2018), inspired by the mind of the octopus, which suggests a body without boundaries. Your body is your first medium, your primary element, and it becomes a social tool, as we can see in your dancehall experiments. I'm referring to video works such as *Dancehall Weather* (2017), *Lighting Dance* (2018), *Shelly Belly Inna Real Life*, and *Tryptique – Oneness* (both 2020). Can you tell me more about your relationship with Jamaica?

The dancers I met in Jamaica practice the pagan-sacred ritual of the sound-system party as a kind of religion. It is a system for getting together, to share this community of movements and ideas. It's a way of communicating very deeply across different levels celebrating death and life. It feels like home when we go there; dancers from everywhere are welcome. If you go and you want to learn for the first time, like I did in 2014 — I didn't know anyone — the community is very inclusive. We organize parties in Europe with the dancers from Jamaica who have moved to Europe. We just recently made one in La Casa Encendida in Madrid. It is important to question cultural appropriation from countries that have been subjugated throughout history. In the case of Jamaican dancehall, the culture wants to become global through media, to spread, and more and more dancers make



Danse au fond de la mer, 2019. Video still. Video colour and sound. 12' 52". Courtesy of the artist.



Favorite Positions, 2018. Live performance. Video colour, and sound. 7' 20". Courtesy of the artist.



Mosquito Net & Dance for dead fishes and friends, 2019. Site-specific modular sculpture project. Installation view at Palm Springs Desert X Biennial, 2019. Courtesy of the artist.



Synchronized Serpent, 2020. Video still. Video, colour, 4K and sound. 14' 50". Courtesy of the artist.

these movements everywhere. Only dancers from Jamaica can invent dancehall steps, but everyone can reenact them to spread the spirit. It is an infinite library of steps, like Babel.

EM

It's interesting the way they build national values through dancing — it's restrictive in a sense. What other countries have you experienced?

CB

There is a collective knowledge and intelligence — jokes and humor are shared through movement. In Cuba it is a different situation than in Jamaica. Both islands are very close to each other. They have almost the same weather. I like to think that as the nervous system is electric, water, humidity, or sweat can propagate the electrical conduits of the nervous system. Due to humid weather in the Caribbean, the neural system inhabits the whole body, like an octopus, a non-centralized intelligence. Every part of the body has a specific intelligence. This allows one to produce more complicated rhythms in different directions at once. In Cuba, the colonies created a lot of institutions and buildings which brought dancers into academic situations. They attend the conservatory, and then they work in a modern dance company or in a ballet. They always rehearse and practice inside buildings. I made up a piece for the company Malpaso in La Habana. This company reminded me that they are not allowed to dance outside in relationship to the weather, to the rain and the elements. They dance inside the building, inside the theater. They study Horton, Limón, ballet. The regime doesn't allow them to dance in the streets in relation to nature and the elements, like in Jamaica.

EM

The Cuban classical technique is just amazing. They can turn and they use their arms wonderfully. When I studied at the Opera Theater in Rome I experienced a bit of Cuban technique. It's like they insert a movement into the technique, a breath, a rhythm, and you feel immediately that is far from the Vaganova method. I'm so in love with Cuban technique, but I didn't know about this 'confinement' of the dancers.

CB

Circulation is certainly not very dynamic or free in Cuba. In Jamaica, amazing dancers can study ballet and become as technical as the Cubans. But they love to dance in the street, on concrete, near the highway with the energy of the cars passing, moving with the energy of the eagles, the wind, the storm, the sun and the rain. And they keep on dancing, even if it starts raining. Everybody stays in the party. And it's unique because all the parties and rehearsals are outside because there are no institutions. There is only one school of dance in the whole of Jamaica, in Kingston, downtown.

EM

Can you talk about your forthcoming show "Animations in Water" at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao?

CB

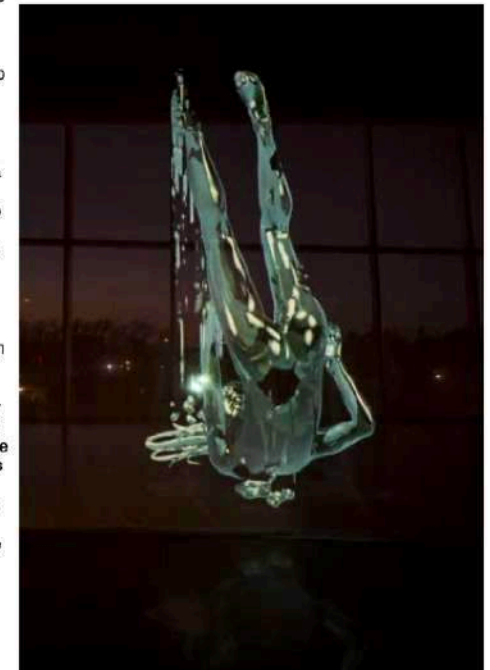
Following the thread of water and movement flow, "Animations in Water" presents three works where I reflect on the sensorial interplay between the body's interiority and exteriority, as well as the rhythmical relations of social community and nature, manifested through

choreographic language. *Lightning Dance* (2018), is based on a long-term collaboration with the dancers from Bog Walk. The work belongs to the series developed around dancehall culture on the island of Jamaica. This piece investigates the influence of atmospheric electricity on behavior and the imagination. For these groups of performers, not only is dance a form of expression but it is also invested with curative powers. This piece is joined by two digital animations, *Bestiaire* (2019) and *Favorite Positions* (2018). Using hologram-like imagery, I visualize the fantastical transformations of a body in a state of perpetual change. *Bestiaire* takes inspiration from descriptions I found in Jorge Luis Borges's *Book of Imaginary Beings*, after I scanned my body while morphing into a bestiary of fantastic creatures. The video sculpture *Favorite Positions* summons the octopus spirit to suggest a body without boundaries — a fully liquid being, born out of a state of constant rehearsal. The soul and rhythms that infuse this body move in multiples directions at once.

EM
CB

Now your pony comes to mind.

Flor, the little pony, that allowed us to become a centaur, or me a bird, I could fly when traveling on Flor's back.



Favorite Positions, 2018. Video still. Video colour and sound. 7' 20". Courtesy of the artist.

Cecilia Bengolea and François Chaignaud, *Sylphides*, 2009. Live performance staged at Dia:Beacon, Riggio Galleries, Beacon, New York, 2017. Courtesy of the artists and Dia Art Foundation.



Cecilia Bengolea's solo exhibition "Animations in water" will be on view at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao from June 24 through October 26, 2021. A newly commissioned work will premier at Mudam Luxembourg in May 2022. Her work is included in "The Dreamers," Belgrade Biennial, through August 22, 2021; and "La Mort Part en Vacances," Bourse de commerce, Pinault Collection, opening in October 2021.

Eleonora Milani is an art historian and Flash Art editor. Her current research investigates the relationship between dance, performance art, and all practices that refer to time-based media.

BlueBot

studies.

A VISUAL ESSAY BY GIULIA ESSYAD

THIS IS AN ARCHIVE OF THE BLUEBOT PROJECT, WHICH COMPRISES VIDEO WORKS, EXHIBITIONS, WRITING, SCULPTURES, MUSIC, AND MORE.

THE NARRATIVE CORE OF THE PROJECT IS A SCI-FI SAGA ABOUT A UTOPIAN CIVILIZATION. IN THIS FUTURE, HUMANITY'S METHOD OF REPRODUCTION IS ASSISTED PARTHENOGENESIS. EARTH AND WOMOONKIND ARE ONE AT LAST. MENSTRUAL BLOOD IS KEPT IN PHILATORIES AND ADORED UNDER THE AUSPICIOUS LIGHT OF MOTHER MOON. BUT NONE OF THIS WOULD POSSIBLE WITHOUT BLUEBOTS. THESE EARTH-POWERED ROBOTS ARE THE BACKBONE OF SOCIETY, YET THEY ARE PERCEIVED AS AN INERT TECHNOLOGY.



All Posts

Liquidity and Flux: Cecilia Bengolea

"I see dance as an animated sculpture that allows me to be both the subject and object, simultaneously. I think of sculpture as the freezing of movement", says Cecilia Bengolea who is currently presenting her first solo exhibition in Scandinavia with Andréhn-Schiptjenko in Stockholm.



Performance, Cecilia Bengolea

C-P: You've previously brought your choreographic work to Stockholm for the stage, at MDT, but your exhibition at Andréhn-Schiptjenko marks your first solo exhibition in Scandinavia as a visual artist and sculptor. How did this collaboration with the gallery come about?

C.B: Ciléne visited my exhibition in Sfer Ik in Tulum, Mexico. I showed a series of oversized algae ceramics. Representing the red tide, which is a threat in the Caribbean caused by Amazonian artificial fertilizers reaching the sea, the algae reproduces excessively leading to a disequilibrium in the ecosystem. I also last year in a show with Chus Martinez produced a series of clay creatures, but this time relating to the bottom of the sea, that we decided to show at the gallery in Stockholm.



Cecilia Bengolea, Danse au fond de la mer, 2019, video, 12:52 minute



Cecilia Bengolea



From Bengolea's artwork 'I am Cecilia Bengolea' participating in the 1000 Hours Art Festival, Brighton

C-P: In terms of form, the exhibition *Liquid Guru* is very interesting, considering also your lenticular prints which offer the sort of hybrid-display between 2D and 3D that people might remember from fanciful rulers and postcards from when they were younger. What is the narrational point of departure behind your works on view?

C.B: My work contemplates liquidity as a form of constant evolution and transformation. Liquidity of the body, which through sweat allows the body to evaporate and take part in a greater cosmic liquidity. Water also conducts electricity and neuronal connections are electric. This is why I prefer to dance in humid weather; so that the liquidity of the body makes the electrical neuronal connections faster and inhabits the whole body like an octopus, with a decentralized neuronal system. I like to think of my works as alive beings.



Cecilia Bengolea, Salton Friends, 2020, lenticular print

I have a hard time to consider a work finished. The lenticular technique allows me to let the image transform when the viewer changes their position. There is an incentive with the viewer to move in order to see the print unveil another image. In March 2020, I was supposed to go back to Jamaica to film and perform, but I went back to La Pampa in Argentina to stay with my family during the confinement. For each of the prints *Pampa-Kingston Sunset* and *Pampa-Kingston Sunset* I worked around two spaces and moments in time that I wished to see happen at the same time. So, I made these spaces meet in these prints. The changes in the light during sunset and sunrise, especially in winter, bear some kind of melancholy. It's a show of nature which lasts very briefly. I saw on Instagram, while in confinement, many people posting sunsets and sunrises. The

pandemic forced us to look at cycles of nature, as there were no more shows than what nature itself holds.



Installation view, Cecilia Bengolea, *Liquid Guru* at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm; Pampa Kingston Sunset, 2020 & Pampa Kingston Sunrise, 2020, lenticular prints

C-P: What sort of overlap as viewers should we see between your work in dance and choreography and as a visual artist?

C.B: I see dance as an animated sculpture that allows me to be both subject and object, simultaneously. I think of sculpture as the freezing of movement. I wish to transmit more movement with and through clay which is also a organic living material.

C-P: I ask from self-interest here. Being very interested in the Dhaka Art Summit in which you participated in the 2018 edition; What was your experience like? I gather you have an ongoing dialogue currently as well with the artistic director of the biennial, Diana Betancourt Campbell?

C.B: I had the chance to visit Bangladesh to show my work at the Dhaka Art Summit with Fiorucci Arts and Trusts, curated by Milovan Farronato, Volcano Extravaganza and Diana Campbell Betancourt. It was my first collaboration with Diana who I met again in Stromboli relating to a Fiorucci program and since then we worked at Frieze Live 2020 in London and now she is also writing for my book. I find it fascinating how Diana makes Western and Oriental cultures meet. I met many interesting artists from Bangladesh, India and the Philippines.



Installation view, Cecilia Bengolea, *Liquid Guru* at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm

C-P: In light of covid-19, what sort of impact has the pandemic had on your practice and what's next for you in 2021?

C.B: I'm glad to have stayed long time in each place I've been. The past years have been quite challenging to travel very much. In 2020 I stayed in residency at the Luma Foundation for four months. I stayed in Argentina, Portugal and France for long and managed to show my video works and installations without travelling. That was very positive for me. In 2021 I will work on a new commission for the Mistake Room in LA in collaboration with Ceramics Suro in Guadalajara and at the same time also work with the Ecco Museum in Mexico City. There are as well two performance commissions; one is a musical comedy with five young French rappers for la Bourse de Commerce in Paris (Collection Pinault), and the other is for the V-A-C Foundation in Moscow.



Performance, Cecilia Bengolea

Images courtesy the artist and Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Paris.

Liquid Guru

Cecilia Bengolea at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm
November 12 – December 19, 2020

www.andrehn-schiptjenko.com

Published December 4, 2020: <https://www.c-print.se/post/liquidity-and-flux-cecilia-bengolea>



A/V, Series, Residency | By Henry Bruce-Jones

Cecilia Bengolea Presents: Oneness

Watch an exclusive preview of Cecilia Bengolea's panoramic triptych installation documenting dancehall as a global practice.

Over the last ten years Cecilia Bengolea has collaborated with a wide variety of dancehall DJs and dancers, engaging with the genre holistically and underlining it as a global artistic practice in which sound and movement are equally important.

Oneness is Bengolea's documentation of this global practice, a six-hour video archive presented in the form of a panoramic triptych installation in which videos are shown in an algorithmically-generated sequence. Captured across various locations in Jamaica, including Kingston, Bogwalk, the Alligator Head Foundation and the TBA21 Academy, dance footage is juxtaposed with choreography created in collaboration with the Jamaican national synchronised swimming team, emphasising the fluidity of both the movements of dancehall, as well as the dynamism of dancehall culture.

"Working on steps is just one part of the endeavour to synchronise and compose ourselves within a state of greater liquidity", explains Bengolea. "The movements I'm drawn to are those in which the body is driven by a physical intelligence of its own."



"Through ritual and repetition, arms, legs and torso seem to develop an independent memory", she continues. "Relieved of the cumbersome call and response mechanism that separates action from thought, the body begins to describe a life of its own."

Featuring contributions from [Equinox](#), [Craig Black Eagle](#), [PrettyPrettyStickyWhine](#), [Famouss](#), [Toni O'Meally](#), [Elite Team Dance Factory](#), [Overload Skankaz Oshane](#), [Winky Equanox](#) and many more, Bengolea brings together a huge variety of dance styles, dancers and environments, presenting them in a single, cohesive vision. "The beginning and ends of the spiritual and the profane dance are here", she says, "forgone in favour of an actualisation of a polymorphous erotic identity – conforming a collective body."

Commissioned by [The Vinyl Factory](#), the [Fonds Cantonal d'Art Contemporain](#) of Geneva and [TBA21](#), a preview of *Oneness* was debuted at the CEVA orbital railway station in Geneva as temporary installation as part of the [Mire](#) program. *Oneness* will be showing at [180 The Strand](#) in spring next year.



For more information about Cecilia Bengolea and her work you can follow her on [Instagram](#).

Numéro



Strip-tease, militantisme et art contemporain, rencontre avec Cecilia Bengolea

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Installée à Paris, l'Argentine Cecilia Bengolea concentre son travail autour de la danse. Elle s'est notamment fait remarquer avec ses sculptures "animées" et ses collaborations avec des artistes comme Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. Rencontre.

Propos recueillis par **Nicolas Tremblay**



Vue de la performance "Sylphides" (2009) de Cecilia Bengolea et François Chaignaud. Credits photo Alain-Monot.

Cecilia Bengolea est née en 1979 en Argentine mais vit à Paris depuis 2001. Avant d'obtenir son diplôme en philosophie et en histoire de l'art à l'université de Buenos Aires, elle a étudié avec Guillermo Angelelli, disciple d'Eugenio Barba, le maître de l'anthropologie théâtrale. En arrivant en France, c'est avec Mathilde Monnier qu'elle précise sa pratique centrée sur la danse contemporaine, mais toujours inspirée par les danses de rue dans une version ethnologique. Ragga, hip-hop, dancehall, Cecilia Bengolea danse tout, sur toutes les musiques, et chausse même parfois des pointes de ballet classique. Mais si elle a fondé, avec François Chaignaud, une compagnie au nom difficile à prononcer – Vlovajob Pru –, elle collabore également avec des artistes contemporains. À la Biennale de Lyon en 2015 et à celle de Sao Paulo en 2016, on a pu voir ses vidéos réalisées avec Jeremy Deller. Plus récemment, elle a aussi contribué aux performances de Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. Cette relation aux arts plastiques est naturelle pour elle, puisqu'elle conçoit la danse comme de la sculpture "animée", souvent avec humour. Ce fut le cas, par exemple, dans sa pièce inspirée par la boxe thaïe, présentée début 2017 lors de la manifestation *Elevation 1049* à Gstaad. Dans cette performance, elle dansait en combinaison de Fantôme techno fluo sur une piste de ski faisant office d'écran vidéo sur lequel étaient projetées des images lumineuses et mouvantes.

Numéro : De quelle façon le contexte dans lequel vous avez évolué vous a-t-il influencée ?

Cecilia Bengolea : En Argentine, le cinéma, le théâtre et la littérature sont des disciplines prolifiques, mais pas la danse. À 18 ans, j'ai fait un voyage de réflexion dans le nord de l'Argentine où j'ai rencontré des tribus indigènes. Elles ont procédé à des rituels pour m'aider à savoir ce que je voulais faire. Des rituels avec du feu, des serpents, des champignons, des branches d'arbres.

Vous considérez-vous comme une chorégraphe, une danseuse, une performeuse ou une artiste ?

La danse est un moyen d'expression à l'intérieur d'une structure : la chorégraphie. J'aime avoir des idées chorégraphiques, mais aussi laisser la danse parler librement, sans chorégraphie. Dans mes vidéos, je peux montrer la danse sous un angle différent de celui que j'aborderais dans une galerie ou dans une performance, où il s'agit d'abord de partager une expérience avec un public. J'ai choisi la danse car elle me semblait le médium le plus immédiat pour communiquer.

"À cette époque, je faisais du strip-tease aux Champs-Élysées pour gagner ma vie..."



Cecilia Bengolea et François Chaignaud. Credits photo Jean-Marie Legros.

Quels artistes vous ont influencée ?

Les danseurs et les danseuses de la Jamaïque : Dancing Rebel, Black Eagles, Oshane Overload Skankaz, Dhq Nickelisha, Michael Clark – surtout dans le film *Hail the New Puritan*, le livre *Ma philosophie de A à B* d'Andy Warhol, mais aussi Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster pour les dialogues que j'ai eus avec elle, sans oublier George Condo, notamment à travers ses anecdotes avec Keith Haring et ses blagues.

"Il nous est apparu que les prostitués et les danseurs avaient beaucoup de choses en commun, comme travailler avec leurs fluides corporels, le plaisir, la souffrance, la notion de limites..."

On connaît vos sculptures "animées", comment sont-elles apparues dans votre travail et que représentent-elles ?

Beaucoup d'enfants ont des idées animistes. Moi aussi, enfant, j'avais l'intuition que les pierres détenaient un savoir sur le monde. Plus tard, en 2009, j'ai créé une pièce avec François Chaignaud dans laquelle figuraient plusieurs corps enfermés sous vide dans des sacs en latex. Dans cette pièce, les corps devenaient des objets fétiches, et j'ai eu soudainement conscience d'être une sculpture animée. D'ailleurs, lorsque j'ai commencé mes performances à Paris, en 2004, je faisais du strip-tease, et le fait de me changer tous les soirs en un objet érotique était un grand bonheur. Cette capacité à me dédoubler me donnait un pouvoir spécial : j'étais à la fois un objet et un sujet maître de ses rencontres.



Cecilia Bengolea et François Chaignaud, "Danses Libres". Credits photo Laurent Paillet

Vous avez fondé une compagnie avec François Chaignaud : Vlovajob Pru. Que signifie ce nom ?

Vlovajob Pru n'a pas de signification. Mais peut-être "vlova" fait-il penser à "vulva", "job" à "travail" et "pru" à une variante humoristique de "pro". J'ai rencontré François en 2004, à Pigalle, dans une manifestation de *sex workers* qui luttait pour leurs droits sociaux. À cette époque, François écrivait un livre sur l'histoire du féminisme, je faisais du strip-tease aux Champs-Élysées pour gagner ma vie, mais aussi parce que je menais des recherches sur les danses érotiques et la conscience sociale des objets sexuels. Il nous est apparu que les prostitués et les danseurs avaient beaucoup de choses en commun, comme travailler avec leurs fluides corporels, le plaisir, la souffrance, la notion de limites...

Récemment, vous avez présenté une œuvre à la Dia Art Foundation Beacon, à New York. Quelle est l'importance de la vidéo dans votre pratique ?

Avec François, nous avons en effet été en résidence à la Dia Art Foundation Beacon pendant deux ans, et, en mai 2017, nous avons présenté une série de performances filmées durant trois semaines dans le sous-sol avec l'œuvre *Fence* de Dan Flavin.

Si la performance s'inscrit dans l'ici et maintenant, la vidéo et la photo m'intéressent, elles, pour leur côté "archives". Lorsque nous dansons dans la rue, en Jamaïque, il n'est pas possible de transposer ce contexte spécifique dans une galerie ou dans un théâtre. Dans la vidéo ou la photo, les relations entre les corps et leur environnement font partie intégrante de l'œuvre.

Y a-t-il quelque chose en particulier que vous souhaitez transmettre à travers vos productions ?

J'aimerais transmettre aux gens l'envie de danser, car la manière de danser d'une personne révèle sa personnalité. Cette discipline nous connecte directement à nos émotions. Elle possède la faculté de nous ouvrir aux autres, de faciliter l'empathie.

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

CECILIA BENGOLEA

Born 1979 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Lives and works in Paris, France.

<https://ceciliabengolea.com/>

Solo exhibitions (selected)

- 2022** Museo Eco, Mexico City, Mexico.
MUDAM – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg, Luxembourg.
- 2021** *Animations in Water*, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain.
Oneness Barroco, commission for Art Basel Messeplatz performance, Basel, Switzerland.
Baiser Mortel, Bourse du Commerce, Pinault Collection, Paris, France.
Es siempre verano en algun lugar del planeta, Angels Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2020** *The Dancing States of a Political Body*, LOOP Festival, Barcelona, Spain.
Liquid Guru, Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.
Dancehall Weather, Triptych, Mire Project, Shampel Station, Geneva, Switzerland.
- 2019** *Alliga*, SFER IK, Tulum, Mexico.
Oneness, Der Tank, Art Basel, Basel, Switzerland.
La danza de la esponja, Arte Ba, Faena Festival, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 2018** *La danza de la esponja*, Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, USA.
- 2017** *Sylphides and Dub Love*, with Francois Chaignaud, Dia Art Foundation, Beacon, Upstate New York, USA.
- 2016** *ANSYTAE*, with Francois Chaignaud, Tokyo Spiral Hall, Tokyo, Japan.
- 2015** *George Condo's Masques*, with François Chaignaud, Block Universe, London, UK.

Group exhibitions (selected)

- 2024** *The Infinite Woman*, Villa Carmignac, Porquerolles island, France.
Reverb, 180 Studio, London, United Kingdom
Sous l'azur, Art Explora Festival, Marseille, France
- 2023** *Refracted Identities, Shared Futures*, Noor Riyadh exhibition, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
Deep Deep Down, MUDAM – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg, Luxembourg.
Remedios: Where new land might grow, Centro de Creación Contemporánea de Andalucía, Córdoba, Spain.
Yet, It moves!, Copenhagen Contemporary, Copenhagen, Denmark.
Chrysalis: The Butterfly Dream, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Genève, Switzerland.

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- 2022** *Sylphides* with Francois Chaignaud, Tenerife Espacio de las Artes, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain.
Sections/Intersections, 25 years of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain.
Be Water, CAC Cincinatti Museum, Cincinatti, USA.
Copenhagen – Red Light Green Light (In the realm of the Senses), Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark.
Breaking Water, CAC Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA.
There Must Be Some Kind Of Way Outta Here, Crone Wien, Vienna, Austria.
- 2021** *The Imposters*, V-A-C Moscow, Moscow, Russia.
Triptych, 13th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, Korea.
Lux, 180 Studio, London, United Kingdom.
Before we die, Biennale de Yerevan, Armenia.
Drawings, Angels Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain.
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster: la chambre humaine & la planète close, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, France.
Sweat, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany.
- 2020** *More, More, More*, Tank Shanghai, Shanghai, China.
Lightning Dance, Highline Art Program, New York, USA.
- 2019** *Mosquito Net*, DesertX, Salton Sea, California USA.
Dancehall Weather, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France.
Les Trois Grâces, Engadin Art Talks, Engadin, Switzerland.
Serendipity, Galeria Francisco Fino, Lisbon, Portugal.
Lightning Dance, Loop Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain.
Before We Die, with Michele Lamy, Performa19, New York, USA.
Sylphides, with Francois Chaignaud, Fondation Giacometti, Paris, France.
Favorite Positions, with Francois Chaignaud, FIAC, Louvre Museum, Paris, France.
Anti-clock wise spin, Frieze Live, London, UK.
- 2018** *Carnival des animaux de la mer*, TBA21, Chiessa San Lorenzo, Venice, Italy.
Volcano Extravaganza, Stromboli, Fiorucci Arts Trust Program, Italy.
Volcano Extravaganza, Dhaka Summit, Bangladesh.
Repetition et Roy, Almanach, Consortium Dijon, France.
Party Animal- Do Disturb, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.
- 2017** *Auto Body II* Faena Art Centre, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Same Same Joy, Elevation, Gstaad, Switzerland. Art Night, ICA London, UK.

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- 2016** *The Infinite Mix*, Hayward Gallery, London, UK.
Bombom's Dream, Biennial of São Paulo, Incerteza Viva, São Paulo, Brazil.
- 2015** Do Disturb, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.
Fig2, ICA, London, UK.
Auto Body, Faena Art Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
In dialogue with Charles Atlas, Tate Modern, London, UK.
Rythm ass poetry, La vie Moderne, Lyon Biennial, Lyon, France.
- 2014** *Sylphides*, Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, South Korea.
(M)Mimosa, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France.

Public Collections

Fiorucci Art Trust.
Fundación Arco, Spain.
KADIST, USA / France.
Le CNAP, France.
Le Consortium Dijon, France.
Mire Fond Cantonal de La Ville de Geneve, Geneva, Switzerland.
MONA - Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania, Australia.
MUDAM, Luxembourg.
Museo Reina Sofia, Spain.
The Tank Shanghai, China.
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Austria.
Vinyl Factory, UK.

Prizes and Awards

- 2014** Gwangju Biennale, Noon artist.
2009 Prix de la critique de Paris.