

The rest is silence

Creation 2020



Credits

Conception, choreography:	Nicole Seiler
Dance, choreography:	Marius Barthaux, Karine Dajouindji, Anne Delahaye, Dominique Godderis-Chouzenoux, Christophe Jaquet, Gilles Viandier, Aure Wachter
Music:	Stéphane Vecchione
Vocal coach:	An Chen
Lights:	Antoine Friderici
Costumes:	Cécile Delanoë
Pyrotechnics:	Joran Hegi
Set design:	Vincent Deblue
Musicologist:	Pierre-Do Bourgknecht, Dieter Ringli
Administration:	Laurence Rochat
Tour Managements:	Michaël Monney
Photos:	© Julie Masson
Duration :	60 minutes
Production :	Cie Nicole Seiler
Coproduction :	Arsenic – Centre d’art scénique contemporain, Lausanne (CH)
Supported by :	Ville de Lausanne, Etat de Vaud, Pro Helvetia – Fondation suisse pour la culture Loterie Romande, SSA – Société Suisse des Auteurs, Sophie und Karl Binding Stiftung, Fondation Thomas Stanley Johnson
Complete recording :	https://vimeo.com/389940196 mot de passe : silence
Teaser :	www.nicoleseiler.com
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Synopsis

Constituting an imaginary community, 7 dancers form a choral group that explores the limits of being together. Movement mixes with vocal experimentation, primal screams with harmonious song.

How does a group that evolves in unison reach a point of separation? What place does individuality hold in the heart of a society? How does a song pass from communion to exclusion? Where does the limit lie between joyful explosions and the detonations of war?

Nicole Seiler experiments with the physicality of sound: that which the body and the body alone may produce outwardly and with its interiority as well.



The rest is silence

With *The rest is silence*, presented at the Arsenic contemporary performing arts centre in Lausanne, the Swiss choreographer Nicole Seiler set the stage ablaze through flamboyant collective compositions that depict an alternate myth of the cave.

Excerpt from a review by Agnès Dopff, Mouvement.net

A spark appears against the totally black background imposed on the retina by the obscurity, exposing a minuscule hearth. The growing flame reveals the animalistic shadows of seven human creatures and traces a living tableau worthy of the wonders of Lascaux. The blaze swells further, stirring up the interest of the bipedal mass. Gathered in a circle, the flame's attraction is reflected in their fixed gazes. And then a breath seems to sweep across the assembly. The air is swallowed up through the mouth and then produces a whistling that travels down into the internal organs. The creature breathes, swells up, sends out the intrusive squall, spits, erupts. The rattling spreads to its congeners and the movement of the mass accords with the trembling of the flames. From the beginning of *The rest is silence* the air as such is forgotten and seems to exist only as respiration.



In the half-light of a stage that's become a cavern, the pyre, lit on the ground itself, favours the perception of amassed substances and surfaces rather than colours or genders. From the first flames that reveal it, to the artifice of the projected light, the tableau will not cease in its play of metamorphosis. The collective entity, in strict adherence to circular movement, seems to trace nothing less than the history of humanity itself. One moment, in collective vociferation, the horde lets out a dissonant cry. At another moment, an initial groan, a marginal gesture, gives rise to other dissidences, up until the impulse that leads the group in a new direction. From static quietude, an individual dares release an initial cry, which in turn renders the entire pack vocally sonorous. Another of the individuals becomes quadruped, triggering the first collective displacement, while another, much later, will succeed in the final mutation, passing from a creature from the cave to a political animal. At the same time, the breath progressively becomes more generalized: the movement of thoracic cages, accentuated by the play of the lights, forces one to recognize the interdependence of the group.

Another myth of the cave

(Further excerpt from Agnès Dopff's review, Mouvement.net)

From the primitive pyre to the bright white light of a warehouse full of online goods, *The rest is silence* proposes a rigorous study of the body common and that which may disturb its unity. Through polyphonic lamentation, frantic circles around the fire and the emergence of the first caresses, the tribal choreography allows one to perceive the connection between the different beings. Their cries, both extreme and visceral, hit the ear and reach the belly, and at the same time denounce by contrast the artificial exaggerations of vocal explosions normally heard at the theatre. As soon as the crude voices give over to the outrageous opulence of words and the clumsy organisation of meaning, the quality of the whole of what is traced out on stage by Nicole Seiler makes the opposition to the on-coming chaos all the more palpable. Quickly, the bodies flounder, the mute harmony fades and the collective intelligence abandons the stage.

Through this radical proposition, which is manifestly invested in confronting the corporeal dimension of the breath, the Swiss choreographer, with *The rest is silence*, signs an exacting creation, in which the lights enshrine the acute attentiveness of the performers. And if the performance resonates with us through its use of hypnotic tribal formations, at times going so far as to create actual physical discomfort, with *The rest is silence* Nicole Seiler also dares the opposite, not hesitating to mix the solemn with the humorous, well beyond the level of a passing or easy joke [...]



Cries and whispers

Excerpt from a review by Marie Sorbier, [Io Gazette](#)

From primordial blackness, the horde calls forth the fire

The vacillating flame progressively gains confidence and becomes at the same time the focal point and point of vergence of the performance. The pictorial formation of the apparitions created by choreographer Nicole Seiler is best appreciated in intimate correlation with the incredibly precise work with the sound (arranged masterfully by Stéphane Vecchione), which by its presence alone transforms this proposition into an Orphic pilgrimage. The seven dancers attempt to master the space, a circular arena, void of any markings, as if it had never been explored before – without demonstrating a desire for conquest. It seems more pertinent to imagine the interactions between the coloured bodies as an inclination toward the collective. Together, on account of the investment of each individual and the joining of their forces, it should be possible to build a civilisation or an idea. It is indeed the birth of a new civilisation that we witness: clumsy, wobbly, muddled yet animated by an aspiration. The scenic score takes shape through the breath and cries, which unceasingly seek to blend together. When the words are lacking, groans or moans culminate in song and a new mode of communication is created.

[...]



Pagan ceremony

Excerpt from a review by Natacha Rossel, [24 heures](#)

Having just emerged from the shadows, seven dancers begin a pagan ceremony around a sacred fire. Slowly their bodies begin to move. Sounds emerge, first obscure then more and more strident. Their modulations eventually evoke the dissonant sonorities of Swiss folklore. A yodel, melancholic and powerful, rings out on the stage of the Arsenic. *The rest is silence* is spellbinding. The choreographer (originally from Zurich) probes folkloric song in order to experiment with what she calls the "physicality of sound". [...]




The score evolves through variations both profound and playful. Each gesture, each bodily impulse gives rise to sounds that in turn generate movements themselves. The outbursts of voices become cries; the dancers literally bite into each other before forming an abstract sculpture, an image that is striking for its intensity. The sculpture deconstructs before recomposing itself again in perpetual movement. The dancers experiment, collaborate, listen and suggest positions in inaudible murmurs. The ensemble creates an humorous effect. [...]

Radios (in French)

RTS, Vertigo – 17 January 2020

Critique by Thierry Sartoretti, and interview with Nicole Seiler

[Listen to it here \(in French\)](#)



Vertigo, vendredi, 16h38

Danse: The Rest is Silence

Sept danseurs (re)trouvent leur voix. La chorégraphe Nicole Seiler marie mouvement et... yodel, dans une ode au chœur et au corps. "The Rest is Silence" est à découvrir à l'Arsenic de Lausanne jusqu'au 19 janvier 2020.

Une chronique de Thierry Sartoretti.

Image: Julie Masson - arsenic.ch

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RTS, Espace2, Magnétique – 9 January 2020

[Listen to it here \(in French\)](#)



Magnétique, 09.01.2020, 17h06

Le chant des origines dans "The rest is silence"

Un grand cercle, sept danseuses et danseurs, le silence et, au milieu, un feu. Puis, un son primal. Ainsi s'ouvre "The rest is silence", création de la chorégraphe suisse Nicole Seiler à voir du 14 au 19 janvier 2020 au Théâtre de l'Arsenic, à Lausanne. A travers les corps, la voix humaine et le prisme de la physicalité du son, la pièce évoque les limites de l'individualité au sein du groupe. Nicole Seiler raconte son projet au micro de Monica Schütz.

Image: arsenic.ch

Afficher moins ^

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More articles in French at nicoleseiler.com

The Company



Born in 1970 in Zurich, Nicole Seiler trained as a performer at the Dimitri Theatre School in Verscio (CH), the Vlaamse Dansacademie in Bruges (BE) and Bégart's Rudra School in Lausanne (CH). She has collaborated on many different productions in Switzerland and abroad with companies such as Compagnie Bussionnière (Philippe Lizon), the Teatro Malandro (Omar Porrás), Alias Compagnie (Guilherme Botelho), Compagnie Philippe Saire and Massimo Furlan.

Nicole Seiler has created her company in 2002 in Lausanne (CH). The choreographer's artistic approach led her to experiment with many diverse forms: choreographic works for the stage, video work, site specific works, performative interventions and installations.

Since 2010 Nicole Seiler has most notably explored the complex connections woven between two essential elements of performance: image and sound. This formal research resulted in several projects related to the description of dance and movement. *Amauros*, a stage work created in 2011, immerses the audience in darkness, stimulating their imagination by the precise description of movement and evocative sound effects created live. It was also adapted into a video installation in 2014. *Un acte sérieux* (2012) is an interactive and playful performance that reveals the infinite layers of the language of dance. *Small explosion with glass and repeat echo* was the first of the company's performances to be entirely described for visually impaired audiences. Finally, *Sekunden später...* (2017) is a project for the stage that employs audio description to generate a surrealistic effect.

The company's diverse repertory also includes site-specific projects: *K Two*, performance for public spaces (2007); *Living-room dancers*, a series of performances and films that take place in apartments, (2008); *Willis*, a choreographic installation in the forest (2014), created during the *°far* festival in Nyon (CH) and presented in 2015 at the festival des Fabriques in the Jean-Jacques Rousseau park (F).

The company produces its own creations in collaboration with theatres and festivals in Switzerland and abroad. It is regularly supported by public funding sources (the City of Lausanne, the Canton of Vaud, Pro Helvetia) as well as private foundations (the Loterie Romand, etc.)

The ensemble of the company's repertory as well as full video recordings of all the productions mentioned is available for viewing at www.nicoleseiler.com.