



Courtesy of Spellbound Dance Company

Spellbound Dance Company

Mauro Astolfi, Artistic Director and Founder

Dancers

**Maria Cossu, Marianna Ombrosi, Alessandra Chirulli, Giuliana Mele,
Gaia Mattioli, Sofia Barbiero, Mario Latzera,
Giacomo Todeschi, Michelangelo Puglisi**

Program

Lost for Words

-Intermission-

Downshifting

Thursday, November 15 at 7:30 PM

Friday, November 16 at 8 PM

Saturday, November 17 at 2 PM

Saturday, November 17 at 8 PM



The presentation of Spellbound was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and additional funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

PROGRAM

Lost For Words (2011)

The Invasion of Empty Words

Direction and Choreography: Mauro Astolfi

Light designer: Marco Policastro

Music: Loscil ("The Making of the Grief Point"), H.I.F Biber ("The Guardian Angel"), Ben Frost & Daniel Bjarnason ("Simulacra" & "Snow"), Ben Frost ("Leo Needs a New Pair of Shoes" & "Through the Roof of Your Mouth"), Alina Ibragimova ("Partita no. 1 in B minor"), and A Winged Victory for the Sullen ("Requiem for the Static King Part 1")

Dancers: Maria Cossu, Marianna Ombrosi, Alessandra Chirulli, Giuliana Mele, Gaia Mattioli, Sofia Barbiero, Mario Latzera, Giacomo Todeschi and Michelangelo Puglisi

Lost for Words is a full length 43-minute piece. A mixture of graceful fluidity and stunning virtuosity, this piece is an abstract reflection on the role of language in human relations, echoing the dissonance embedded in a culture of communication dominated by empty words.

Section I: Creation for Avvertenze Generali 2011

Section II: Creation for Amat Civitanova Danza 2012

A Spellbound production with contribution from the Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activity.

-Intermission-

Downshifting (2009)

Direction and Choreography: Mauro Astolfi

Music: Pust ("Innocent") Flaskkvartetten ("Innocent") Aiar EST Leucicyte ("Esbjorn Svesson Trio"), Nils Frahm ("Felt"), and J.S Bach ("Ich Ruf Zu Dir Herr Jesu Crist BWV 639")

Dancers: Maria Cossu, Marianna Ombrosi, Alessandra Chirulli, Giuliana Mele, Gaia Mattioli, Sofia Barbiero, Mario Latzera, Giacomo Todeschi and Michelangelo Puglisi

Downshifting (2009) is a 23-minute work that occupies a space of great simplicity and sparseness. Directly commenting on personal choice and will, "downshiffters" are those who opt for another trajectory and imagine an alternative future in order to realize life more fully. It is a dance of pure, lush movement, free from restraint and rich in passion and emotion.

Creation for Mittelfest 2009 re-arranged for Dusseldorf Tanzmesse 2010.

A Spellbound production with contribution from the Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activity.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Company

Founded in 1994 and led by Artistic Director, Mauro Astolfi, Spellbound Dance Company (Rome) is Italy's premier contemporary dance company. The company's unique vocabulary of expression is rooted in poetic, emotive and dynamic bodies creating shifting geometries through space with equal amounts of athleticism and elegance. Spellbound Dance Company has charmed audiences throughout the world with performances at dance festivals in Italy, Spain, Croatia, Serbia, Germany, Austria, Belarus, Russia, France and Thailand. Astolfi's choreography for the company has received various commissions from prestigious institutions such as the 2008 Venice Biennale for *Don Juan*, the Picasso Foundation of Malaga (Spain) for *For Her* and the 2009 International Arts Festival of Bangkok.

Mauro Astolfi (Artistic Director and Founder)

Before founding the company in 1994, Astolfi trained and danced for many years in the United States, Italy and London. Dance festivals across the globe have presented Spellbound Dance Company including Tanzmesse in Dusseldorf, Germany, the Les Temps d'aimer La Dance- Biarritz, France, the Vitebsk Festival of Modern Choreography, Belarus, Aachen Schrittmacher Festival, Germany, Madrid en Danza, Open Look Festival in St. Petersburg, Bangkok International Dance and Music Festival, Seoul Sidance Festival and many others. The company has been supported by the Italian Ministry of Culture since 2000. In 2006, Astolfi was offered a major commission by the International Festival of Maiori (Italy) to create *Carmina Burana*. To date, the work has toured over 100 times, including performances at prestigious performing arts centers in Italy including Teatro Goldoni (Venice), Teatro Fraschini (Pavia), Teatro Verdi (Pisa), Teatro Marucelli (Orvieto), Teatro Tito Marrone (Trapani), Teatro Comunale (Carpi-Modena) and Teatro delle Palme (Naples), among others. The work has also been performed in theatres in Austria, Spain and Thailand. Additional commissions include the creation of *Don Giovanni* (2008) for the Venice Biennale, and *For Her* for the Picasso Foundation of Malaga. Outside of his work and choreography specifically for Spellbound Dance Company, Astolfi has choreographed original works for companies such as the Italian aerial dance Kitonb Theatre Company, Amsterdam Theaterschool (The Netherlands), Szegedi Kotrars Ballet (Hungary), Leipziger Ballet (Germany), Balletto di Roma (Italy) and River North Dance Chicago. When not creating new works, Astolfi also teaches extensively in Italy as well as internationally in dance centers in Tokyo, Paris, New York, Zürich, Stockholm, Amsterdam and Los Angeles. Astolfi leads regular professional classes in the contemporary department at the Dance Arts Faculty (Rome) where he also serves as its Artistic Director.

Sofia Barbiero (Dancer)

Barbiero began her training as a rhythmic gymnast where she competed on a national level. Barbiero won four national championships throughout her competing in Italy's premier league. She studied ballet, contemporary and modern dance and after taking advanced dance classes organized by Arteen, she moved to Rome in order to attend a professional training program. Barbiero started to dance for Spellbound in 2005. She has performed in some of Italy's most significant theatres, prestigious international festivals and for many national and international galas with fellow company members.

Alessandra Chirulli (Dancer)

Chirulli studied classical, modern and contemporary dance, and she has danced at festivals like The Festival della valle dell'Itria, Gli ultimi giorni a Pompei and Simon Boccanegra. As a soloist, Chirulli has won several contemporary and modern-jazz competitions (Concorso Citta' di Ostuni, Danzasi). She also performed Astolfi's choreography for Intel2001 sponsored by Siemens and for "Notte di duelli e di magia" sponsored by RAI. Chirulli joined Spellbound in 2002. She danced in the La Perla fashion show in Bologna and for a television program produced by Vittoria Ottolenghi and Vittoria Cappelli. She also performed with Fabio Molfesi for the concert tribute to Lucio Battisti, "Emozioni," that was broadcast worldwide from Naples. In addition to her committed work with Spellbound Dance Company, she also teaches workshops in several national centers of dance as well as creates choreography for

emerging artists. She served as Astolfi's assistant choreographer in the creation of *Roma caput Mundi* directed by Daniele Cipriani and in the arrangement of *Promessi sposi*, directed by Michele Guradi in 2010.

Maria Cossu

Cossu began her classical training in Turin, Italy. After moving to Montecarlo and Rome, she pursued her interest in all kinds of styles of dance, from flamenco to contemporary. Since 2002, Cossu has been an active member of the Italian dance community by dancing in the company's international productions and pursuing additional projects like dancing in the La Perla fashion show in Bologna. She performed Astolfi's choreography with Fabio Molfesi in the lead role for the concert tribute to Lucio Battisti, "Emozioni," that was broadcast worldwide from Naples in September 2004. Since 2003, Cossu has also been Astolfi's assistant, giving stage and choreographic workshops about Spellbound's repertoire across Italy.

Mario Laterza

Laterza is a young, talented dancer from Calabria, Italy. He continued his artistic studies at Dance Arts Faculty in Rome and after a training period, recently joined the Spellbound Dance Company in 2012.

Valentina Marini (Managing Director)

Marini has worked as an arts administrator since 1997. From 1996 to 2001, she worked at the Garda Festival first as production assistant, and then for the last two years there, as the production manager. From 1998 to 2000, in Verona at the Giusti Gardens, she directed and organized Danza d'Estate, a festival dedicated to contemporary dance and new art forms, considered the first one of its genre in that city. In 1999, Marini joined Spellbound Dance Company and together with Artistic Director, Mauro Astolfi, became the producer in 2000. In 2002, she created a new project, titled European Dance Alliance, which is an agency created for teachers and choreographers to host workshops for dance schools. Since 2003, she has written for *Danzasi* magazine, supervising a column dedicated to international cultural systems, with particular reference to the art of dance market.

Gaia Mattioli

After being trained between Parma and Reggio Emilia, Italy, Mattioli immediately showed a great interpretative talent as well as a wonderful stage presence—so much so, that Mauro Astolfi chose her to be part of Spellbound in 2010.

Giuliana Mele

After being trained in Puglia, Italy, Mele has toured in China, Romania and Portugal with Kitonb Extreme Theatre in *Carillon*. She joined Spellbound Dance Company in November 2009.

Marianna Ombrosi

Ombrosi began her career as a rhythmic gymnast competing in the 2006 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. She also studied modern, jazz and hip hop dance. In 2003, after auditioning for the company, she was invited to perform with Essence Dance Company, directed by Mauro Astolfi and Caterina Felicioni. Later that summer, she joined the Spellbound Dance Company. Immediately following, she danced with the company at the "Music and Dance on a Midsummer's Night" television gala and at the concert tribute to Lucio Battisti in 2004. Since 2005, Ombrosi has taken part in all the company's productions as a dancer.

Marco Policastro (Lighting Designer)

Policastro began his professional career in 1994 as lighting and sound technician for the premier theatre companies of Sicily. In 1996, Policastro designed his first light creation for dance for the ballet *Pathos and Ecstasy* with Toni Candeloro, directed by Anna Cuocolo. That year, he also started working with the Teatro della Munizione, (now Planet Musical Production) creating the lights for musicals such as *My Fair Lady*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Lady Day* and *High Society*. He became technical and lighting designer of the Balletto di Sicilia,

now named Zappalà Danza Company, in 1997. In June 2003, Policastro started collaboration with Spellbound Dance Company as the company's lighting designer. He has served as the lighting designer for festivals and productions including, the Festival Latino American, The Latin American tour of *Saturday Night Fever* and *Cinderella* with Roberta Lanfranchi, among others. He has created lighting designs for several projects and creations and has worked for choreographers such as Karl Schreiner, Ismael Ivo, Matteo Levaggi, Luciano Cannito, Tony Candeloro, Linda Magnifico and Roberto Zappalà. He was awarded Best Lighting Design for Dance at the Rome Opera Bucchi Prize (2009)

Michelangelo Puglisi

Puglisi was admitted to the Ballet School of the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome in 2004, directed by Paola Jorio. He attended the Ballet School until 2008 studying technique with Pablo Moret, including classes of repertoire and pas de deux. During these years, Puglisi took part in several productions presented by the school including *Viaggio verso il Sole*, directed by David Haughton, *Coppella*, *Il Carnevale degli Animali* by Milena Zullo, *Graduation Ball*, *La regina della notte* by Milena Zullo, *Waltz* by Floris Alexander and *La Fille mal Gardée* as the soloist. In September 2008, he took part in *The Nutcracker* with Andre De La Roche, choreographed and directed by Mario Piazza. In March 2009, he was on tour in China, Romania and Portugal with Kitonb Extreme Theatre in *Carillon*. Since August 2009, he has been a member of the Spellbound Dance Company.

Giacomo Todeschi

Todeschi studied with several classical and contemporary teachers in Italy. He danced in Caterina Felicioni's production in Rome in 2009, and he joined the Spellbound Dance Company in October 2009.

Booking:

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