

# NORTH KOREA DANCE

BY EUN-ME AHN

**Premiere : June 01-03, 2018**

Arko Arts Theater

Séoul



# NORTH KOREA DANCE

**Choreography and artistic direction :** Eun-Me Ahn

**Music :** Young-Gyu Jang

**Lighting design :** Jinyoung Jang

**Video :** Jinwon Lee

**Video recording :** Jiwoong Nam

**Set, Costume and set design :** Eun-Me Ahn

**Dancers :**

Eun-Me Ahn, Jihye Ha, Hyekyoung Kim, Jeeyeun Kim, Eisul Lee, Donghun Go, Youngmin Jung, Seunghae Kim, Hyunwoo Nam , Sihan Park, Juyoung Shim.

**Production :** Eun-Me Ahn Company

**Coproduction :** Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Korean Traditional Performing Arts Foundation, Théâtre de la Ville-Paris

**Sponsorship :** Arts Council Korea, Dancers' Career Development Center

**Running time:** 75' without intermission

*Eun-Me Ahn is associated artist to the 2018-19 season of Théâtre de la Ville-Paris*



**Diffusion**



**gadja**  
PRODUCTIONS

Jean-Marie Chabot  
E-mail : [jm@gadjaprod.com](mailto:jm@gadjaprod.com)  
Tel. : +33 (0)6 01 32 04 98



## NORTH KOREA DANCE

Recently, both Koreas made a historical step that could put a end to a conflict that has lasted for over 65 years.

About North Korea, one most of all knows its capricious leader and his race to atomic weapon. But what about arts and dance in the «hermit country»?

If it is very difficult, if not impossible, for a South Korean artist to cross the border without the government permission, Internet is full of videos coming from the North : images of gigantic ballet praising the regime performed in stadium where « pixel children » turn the stands into screens reproducing a outdated iconography, images of traditional songs and dance common to both countries, cheerleaders at the Olympics, but also music videos inspired by the famous K-pop that has become a trademark of South Korea.

This material is Eun-Me Ahn's starting point to give a glimpse on North Korean dance, making these extremely codified forms in her own way, and to explore the differences and similarities with South Korean Dance :

*« For a long time, relationships between North and South Korea have been extremely tensed, but things have recently improved. Then I realized I almost knew nothing about North Korea and the dance they do there.*

*Yet, with North Koreans, we share the same roots, the same traditions, but because of History and the partition of Korea, dance has evolved very differently on each side of the border. As a choreographer, I have a pure urge to know how movement has developed for over 60 years within a completely different ideology. Of course, there are some obvious differences, but probably also some common things to North and South dance.*

*All citizens are hoping for peace between the two countries. Maybe now is time to try to know each other a little better.»*





# EUN-ME AHN



*« Laugh and grow fat.  
Dance and grow fat. »*

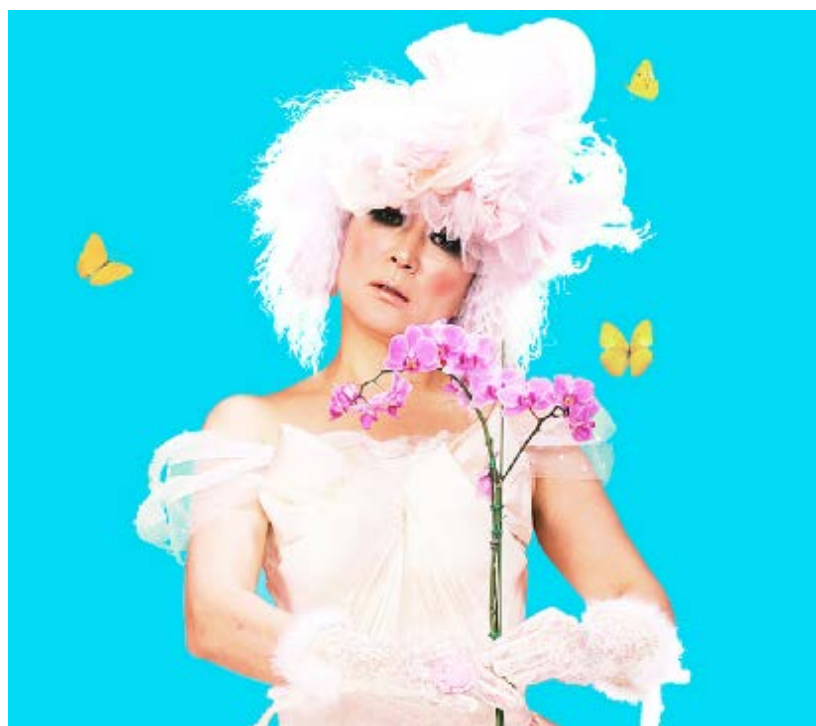
Ah, the famous custard pie that is the confrontation “between tradition and modernity”...

How many creators have struggled to find the way to describe what is finally the lot of every artist : on the one hand to know, understand, integrate what the ancients did ; on the other to forget them, overcome them and hope to find something new. Quite a vast program...

On this level, Eun-Me Ahn that France discovered in 2013 and 2014 thanks to Festival Paris Quartier d’Été, has found new, unexpected and

exciting ways. This comes first from her own itinerary, marked as much by the learning and exploration of shamanic traditions as by the many years spent in New York or a profound friendship with the missed Pina Bausch (who invited her many times in Wuppertal). Korean and cosmopolitan, figure of the avant-garde but also choreographer of the very official opening ceremony of the FIFA World Cup in Daegu in 2002 and presented in the most important international festivals, she knows how to improve the beauties of contrast, mix polka dots, stripes and flowers, how to play with the most pop colors before switching to the most solemn austerity, how to play with the most subtle shades of androgyny, or use slowness to make trance rhythm burst...

Educated at the school of rigor, precise, demanding and of a all Korean discipline, Eun-Me Ahn is also a daredevill performer, ready for all kind of piracies. One have seen her jump from the top of a crane, then attack a piano with axe and scissors, rip off herself her fairy dress made of white ties to distribute the pieces to the audiences while performing a teddybear dance, bury herself with a clown costume under a rain of balloons, locked up behind bars in a duet with a chicken, or dressed up as a mushroom... But one would be wrong thinking it is provocation. It is rather the affirmation of a curiosity and a freedom held by work and style pushed to their most unexpected limits.



# EUN-ME AHN

## IN A FEW DATES

**1963** - Birth in Republic of Korea

**1974** - Begins to dance, initiates herself to Korean shamanic practices, discovers the work of Isadora Duncan and western countries contemporary dance

**1986-1992** - Dances with Korean Modern Dance Company and Korean Contemporary Dance Company in Séoul

**1989** - Graduated from Seoul E-Wha University

**1994** - Departure for New York City. Graduated from Tisch School of the Arts

**1999-2000** - Receives Manhattan Foundation for the Arts Award and New York Foundation for the Arts Award

**2001** - After several visits to the Pina Bausch Festival à Wuppertal, she presents three solos from the *Tomb* there.

**2001-2004** - Returns to live in South Korea where she is appointed Artistic Director of Daegu Metropolitan City Dance Company for which she creates, amongst others *The Little Match Girl* and *Sky Pepper*

**2002** - Choreography of the Fifa World Cup opening ceremony in Daegu in South Korea

**2007** - Creation of *Symphoca Princess Bari*, a choreographic adaptation of a Korean legend, that will be presented at Seoul ARCO Art Center in Korea, Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch Festival in Germany, BOZAR in Belgium, Edimburgh Autumn Festival in Scotland...

**2011** - Creation of *Dancing Grandmothers*, a work inspired by the gestures of Korean old ladies.

**2018** - Creation of *Norht Korea Dance*

Eun-Me Ahn becomes associated artist to Théâtre de la Ville-Paris