

ALONE • WAR • LIBERATE

FREE

I dedicate the freedom ballet in general to the 55 million victims of World War Two and in particular to:
- The brothers and sisters Marianna, Salomon and Frieda van Loon who died on 30-09-1942(my birthday 29 earlier) in Auschwitz far to young;

- Peter van Pels, the "boyfriend" of Anne Frank who survived the Auschwitz death march, but in the end died on May 5th, 1945 in concentration camp Mauthausen;

- The ballet dancer and military Kyle G. Thomas (23 years old) who died in Tikrit, Iraq in September 2003. His last dance was the ballet 'The Nutcracker' for the Metropolitan ballet or Topeka;

- The Dutch queen of peace, queen Juliana, who fought all her life for peace.

Erik van Loon



Erik van Loon, /.\|
Artist and choreographer
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THREE PARTS

= Alone, War, Liberation =

chapter

I

ALONE

'Alone' will open with the Jiddish lament 'Es Brent'. This song, which has been composed by Moderchaj Gebirtig in 1937 in the ghetto of Przytyk, is about a ghetto on fire and refers among others to the synagogues and shops that burned during the Reichskristallnacht. It could also refer to the big fire of Rotterdam after the Nazi-bombardement of 1940. During this song, hundreds of autumn leaves will whirl down from heaven.

After this song, a female soloist enters the stage. The soloist wears men's clothes. She resembles one of the men from the painting 'Pillars of the society' from George Grosz as she wears clothes from these notabilities. This painting is based on the theatre piece 'Samfundets stutler' (1867) from Norwegian Henrik Ibsen. The classic ballet dancer dances (tells), without music, the public, the melody, motif, harmony, metrum and rhythm with her moves in six different directions. As result the audience will be able to enjoy their own Musik-erlebnis (Music-experience) when they see the dance, so that ballet can exist on itself and become 'Art Suprême' again.

Remark: *Music and dance have not often been separated, after Novalis denominated dance as the other half of music, at the beginning of the 19th century. Together with Schlegel, Tieck and Schelling he led the foundation of Wagner's gesamtkunstwerk "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft". As result that ballet dance lost its position of 'Art Suprême'. However, I am convinced with others that we can enjoy dance without music. The same as we can enjoy an isolated painting or sculpture.*



Pillars of society
George Grosz

The soloist dances on a stage full of autumn leaves. In contrast to many classical ballets she will only dance diagonal lines. With each step she forms a swastika, the symbol for rising National Socialism. When she realize this, she jumps frightened from the field of brown leaves onto a clean part of the stage where she has to dance in front of an huge mirror.

In this mirror she encounters a Gegner, an opponent. She instinctively attacks the opponent (reflection), who counter attacks at the same. She is her own reflection, but she also reflects the image of her sister, brother, father, neighbour, countryman and finally Hitler who was

Reichskristallnacht



schizophrenic.

After a period of continuous fighting, the fight escalates when the soloist on the stage finds an army helmet. She almost puts the helmet on her head, but at the last moment she changes her mind and throws the helmet into the mirror. The Reichskristallnacht in the night of November 9th – 10th 1938 is a fact.

WAR

'War' will open with four dancers who dance modern on the 7th (Leningrad) symphony of Dimitri Shostakovich. Each dancer carries a mask as they each represent an anonymous soldier, since a Chief of State would never send his own son or daughter to the battlefield. Furthermore, the dancers wear masks to defocus the public from the face towards the body and to see the soul of the dying dancers leaving the body after they die. Instead of the mirror, black and white photos and slides are projected about the Second World War.

Berlin 1943



The first four dancers wear besides masks also black uniforms to represent the Nazi-regime. After a while four new dancers, with green uniforms and again masks, enter the stage. These allied soldiers (dancers) come from the public. Through this way the public will participate in the war of liberation.

The eight dancers fight until the bitter end and they all die. Like in each war, there are also no winners in part 'War'. If a dancer dies a beam of light with a hook in it comes down from heaven. The dying dancer hangs his mask and uniform on the hook, whereupon the hook raises the dancer upon his knees. Afterwards the beam of light and the soul (the uniform and the mask) leave the body. The dancer without a mask is like your brother, father, sister, uncle, etc and rests in peace with spread forearms, like a cross. The killed allied and Nazi-soldiers wear white underclothes with their name on it. Among the dancers are the twin brothers C. Gronert and T. Gronert who both died on the 19th of September 1944 during the air landings around Arnhem (Operation Marketgarden).

A few minutes before the end of 'War', a group of extras will interrupt the ballet by marching from right to left (East to West). They will march for one minute at the rear of the stage. In the meantime the public will hear an eyewitness report from the Auschwitz-death march. In the next minute there is just one-minute silence.

Remark: *The extras represent 58,000 prisoners who had to march to other concentration camps, ten days before the liberation of Auschwitz at January 27th 1945. During the death march, which lasted from January 17th to 21st 1945, about 20,000 prisoners died through malnutrition, exhaustion, cold (-200C) and execution. The extras walk in their own clothes. As I can and will not visualise the horrors of the death march, which I walked myself on January 18th and 19th 2004. By the way, the liberation of Auschwitz is annually commemorated -as the end of the holocaust- at the mirror monument 'Nooit Meer Auschwitz' (Never More Auschwitz) in Amsterdam and in many other cities throughout the world.*

After the interruption of two minutes the dance continues. 'War' is not yet finished. The last two dancers fight in a thrilling life-and-death duet. The dancers are well-matched and after an exhausting fight they finally kill each other. When the souls leave the dead bodies we see that they were brothers.

Finally, the eight killed dancers (white crosses) form a military cemetery, which one can find throughout Europe.

Military Cemetery



LIBERATION

Liberation of Amsterdam



'Liberation' will open with nine dancers who dance a mix of Modern and Ethnic ballet. The dancers will dance on world music while at the background colour films about liberations between 1945 and now, will be shown.

Remark: *The dance triptych 'FREE' has initially been based on warrior, battle and victory dance of Indians.*

A DJ will mix the films and the music on stage. The films will be shown in a flash: liberation of Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, capitulation Nazi-regime, independence of 39 African countries (1949-1979), collapse of Berlin wall (1989), release of Mandela and abolition apartheid (1990-1991), peace agreement Camp David (1993), dancing Iraqis at statue Saddam Hoessein (2003), quiet revolution in Georgia (2003), etc.

The dancers will dance on the words/meanings of among others the song 'Zing-vecht-huil-bid-lach-werk-en-bewonder' (Sing-fight-cry-pray-laugh-work-and-admire) from Ramses Shaffy. After the festivities

around the liberation, the classic dancing soloist from part 'Alone' and the eight modern dancers from part 'War' start fighting against each other. Eventually they expel the soloist as a collaborator, betrayer or Nazi.

Whereupon the eight dancers start to build a wall between them and the soloist. They build the wall from the remainders (ruines) from the 'War'. However, the expelled and now entirely isolated soloist knows how to transform herself from a classic dancer into a modern dancer.

Finally, one of the eight dancers will look over the wall to see what happens on the other side. Amazed he sees on the other side of the wall a modern dancer, after which they decide to open the door and to forgive the soloist. Finally, they break down the wall together and they celebrate freedom.

Fall Berlin Wall



Summary:

The synopsis of the freedom ballet 'FREE' is very important, as it is the framework for the final choreography. Within this framework the dancers will improvise and dance together with the choreographer Erik van Loon. The choreographer will mould (the dance is created three-dimensionally as the choreographer will not use flat patterns) the ballet.

You can find extra information at www.vrijheidsballet.nl where you can find extra information in English. Moreover you can download here FREE.pdf for more information.

Table: The part summarized

Part	Alone	War	Liberate
Genre	Classic ballet	Modern ballet	Modern / Etnic ballet
Music	Lament	Classic	Pop / World
Dancers	1 and singer	8 and 20 extras	9
Décor	Mirror, lantern and autumn leaves.	BW-photos / slides, ruins and lantern.	Colour films, ruins /wall and lantern.
Clothes	Three-piece suite	Mask, uniforms and white underwear. The extras wear their own clothes	Contemporary clothes and three-piece suit.
Length	15 min	27 min	25 min