

ROBOTIC POP BALLET FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS

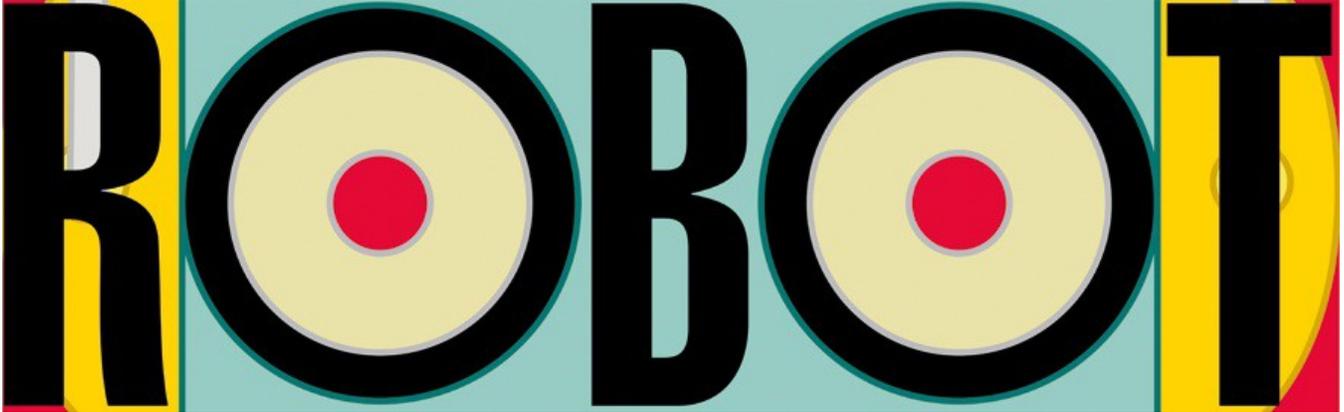
ROBOT

A SHOW BY BLANCA LI

WITH NAO ROBOTS + MAYWA DENKI MECHANICAL ORCHESTRA



[Blanca Li](#) Production presents



in collaboration with
[Maywa Denki](#) and [Aldebaran Robotics](#)

After three years of pioneering research and development, the multi-faceted award-winning choreographer [Blanca Li](#) creates ROBOT - an innovative contemporary show, cleverly exploring the relationship between humans and machines. Highly intelligent and hilarious, ROBOT naturally attracts audiences of all ages while wowing the most discerning of dance and theater enthusiasts.

In collaboration with visual and musical artist [Maywa Denki](#) and [Aldebaran Robotics](#), this multimedia production presents eight dancers sharing the stage with a live mechanical orchestra of self-playing instruments and seven cute, wacky robot humanoids, known as NAO, each equipped with multiple personalities.

"Day and night, at home and in the outside world, on earth and in the air, we live with and among machines of all kinds. Our memory is becoming artificial, our footprints tend to be only electronic and our identity is partly digital.

In ROBOT, I address the relationships between human bodies and artificial ones and questions such as: Where are the borders between 'us' and 'them'? Can the most sophisticated machines stand in for humans and their relationship with Nature? Will the robots be capable of integrating the idea of creation one day? As machines become more and more complex, how will they complement our lives? What kind of society will arise from it?

On stage, I had to defy technology and create an original score to be performed by machines. My biggest challenge, however, was to convey the emotions and feelings of the NAO robots. The fragility and child-like imperfections of these small humanoids are magnified and conveyed to the audience while interacting with human dancers. For the first time, the idea of them becoming lovable and endearing companions in the near future is evident for the public at large."

-Blanca Li

ROBOT premiered at the Montpellier Dance Festival in 2013 and has been performed in 100 theaters worldwide.

It will be performed for the first time in the USA at BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, New York, from June 9th to June 14th 2015. ([Robot in NYC](#))

Blanca Li: Direction /Choreography
Tao Gutiérrez, Maywa Denki and Jean-Pierre Taïeb: Music
Pierre Attrait: Scenic Design
Jacques Chatelet: Lighting Design
Charles Carcopino: Video Design
Thomas Pachoud: Robot programming

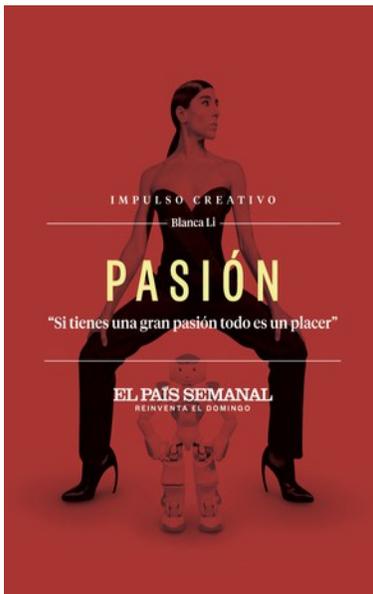
Dancers: Yacnoy Abreu Alfonso, Iris Florentiny, Geraldine Fournier, Yann Herve, Samir M'Kirech, Africa Manso Asensio, Margalida Riera Roig, Gael Rougegrez, Yui Sugano

Poster design : Juan Gatti

Touring and General Management by GAAP Bookings Ltd. www.thegaap.com

Please see more about [about the show's creative team and process](#) at:

<http://blancali.com/en/event/99/Robot>



PRESS

“With ROBOT, Blanca Li brings humans & robots on stage for a futuristic and hilariously exciting performance” **Le Parisien**

“While delivering a multitude of brave experiments, Blanca Li did not forget her tremendous taste for kitsch and imagination” **Telerama**

“ROBOT is a reflexion on our society, now so dependent on computerized and electronic devices. It talks about our addiction to technology, without being a brainy thesis. ... Blanca Li offers a very powerful visual show filled with stage effects, playful choreographies and pungent humour ... What really took the public by surprise, rising to a standing ovation at its premiere at the Montpellier Opera, is her showmanship and how artfully she blends this unbelievable mix of musical sculptures, robots, dancers and props.”

Omar Khan, El País 2013

reaction from Martial Leroux, a musicologist and university professor: It is an understatement to say that I liked, or even that I loved this breathtaking show which weaves poetry, fantasy, magic, and most importantly does not try to make us believe in an illusionary world, cleverly bringing us back to an interrogative wakefulness, a nearly philosophical awareness about the future of our world, bringing up the narrow relationship between man and machine, the impossibility for man to escape his destiny, and the ineffable future which mankind is reaching for.

There are incredible moments throughout this show, leaving you speechless and eyes wide open in front of so much formal beauty and incredible feats (including those of the lovable little robots, which becomes quite unsettling). The music is often written in minor key, with very simple chords, conveying a powerful and extremely refined and haunting energy. Some Japanese sounds, some augmented chords, and a polyphony which invades our brain little by little, draw us to the origin of the world. By the way, is there anything better than dance to tell us the story of mankind?

The dancers mingle with each other, like in an alchemical fusion, men and women coming together with an uncanny dexterity which makes us wonder about our own perceptions in this domain, and who seem to invent an asexual new strain of humanity determined to fight against the fate imposed on us by modern times.

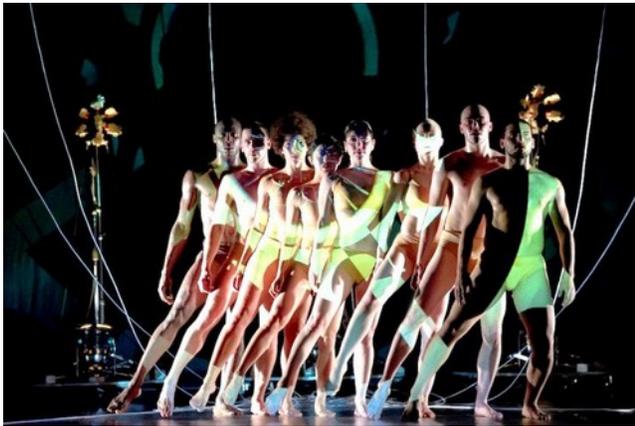
The beginning of the show, heart-wrenching with emotion, is based on dichotomy (since this seems to be the key which Blanca Li chooses to open up her subject with) : robot versus man, shadow versus light, black and white versus color, reality versus dream... A music, in the manner of Steve Reich, made from heartbeats growing to a crescendo, evokes the medical science of the future and its challenging experiments... And what is to say about this magnificent duet between the little robot and the dancer ? Just stunning, mesmerizing ...

BLANCA LI



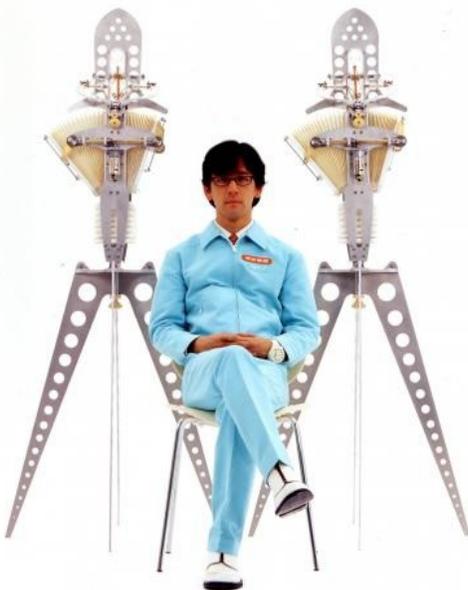
Blanca Li is a choreographer, dancer, filmmaker and director of the Blanca Li Dance Company, one of the most successful independent dance companies in France. Born in Granada, Spain, Blanca studied for five years in New York with Martha Graham before founding her own contemporary dance company in Paris. ROBOT is the 14th choreographic creation of the Company, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2013.

She has choreographed performances for the Paris Opera Ballet, The Berlin Ballet, and the Metropolitan Opera; for filmmakers like Pedro Almodovar and Michel Gondry; for musical artists like Beyoncé, Daft Punk, Paul McCartney, Kanye West and Cold Play, among others. Whether a performance, musical, opera, museum installation, event, music video or feature film, she initiates and realizes a great number of projects. Never restricted to one style, she gets her inspiration from a broad spectrum of physical forms of expression, from flamenco to classical ballet to hip-hop.



BLANCA LI DANCE COMPANY

Founded in 1993 by Blanca Li in Paris, the company has produced 14 full size shows and toured across Europe, Africa, Asia in the most prestigious venues and Festivals. It is usually composed of eight dancers and seven technicians, and gathered a popular following going much further than the dance public: 20,000 audience members came to the last series of the show Robot at the Theatre des Champs Elysées in Paris.



MAYWA DENKI (Musical Instruments, costumes)

Influenced by kinetic art and techno-pop, Maywa Denki, a contemporary group of artists and performers led by Japanese artist Tosa Nobumichi, creates low-tech prototypes made of resin and aluminum, elements in a nonsensical world filled with humor, in which men and machines interact naturally.

Arranged like traditional musical instruments, the musical devices of the Tsukuba series are complex electrical devices which play music when activated by humans through electromagnets or motors. There are no electronics here. The functional beauty of this machinery is made explicit in musical performances. These concerts challenge our contemporary world in which music becomes information, data flow, zeros and ones, as everything else. Maywa Denki musical instruments bring us back to substantial music and help us experience the sound in another way.

Instead of smart-phone speakers bits, the real beat of the music is generated on stage. Instead of playlist choices, the audience experiences the living art of improvisation. Instead of the digital sound produced by synthesizers or samplings, one hears the raw sound of material objects.



ALDEBARAN ROBOTICS (NAO robots)

Developed by ALDEBARAN Robotics, NAO is a fully programmable humanoid robot, autonomous, and highly interactive. NAO talks, sees, walks, feels, dances, bends his knees, sways his shoulders, stands up again after falling; he can grasp objects and can communicate with his NAO fellows, with humans, with the Internet. These features make him the most widely used humanoid robot for academic purposes worldwide, including computer sciences, engineering and psychology. Standing at 58-cm tall, NAO is highly skilled in vocal and visual recognition and can communicate in 8 languages, using a vocal synthesizer, LED lights, 2 HD cameras, 4 microphones and 2 high-fidelity speakers. Featuring capture and pressure sensors and twenty-five joints, fluid movement, sensory perception and obstacle avoidance are some of the key-features which may make NAO the ideal artificial companion of humans in need, as well as the perfect play pal in the near future.

Videos : <https://vimeo.com/album/3215342>

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