

**2men2mahler**

In **2men2mahler** Granhøj Dance juxtaposes masculine mystique with the pain and longing embodied in Gustav Mahler's universe. Palle Granhøj explores the many faces of pain and longing by using humour as a recurrent confrontational element. Against a sombre background, Granhøj wants the male body to balance on a razor's edge between despair and redemption, solitude and solidarity, between joy and pain.

The music of composer Gustav Mahler represents the primary musical accompaniment of the performance. The sublime and passionate universe of Mahler comes up against the powerful physical stage presence of the dancers. Mahler's music is played live on stage by a small "ensemble" consisting of a viola player and a flamenco singer.

**A performance fluctuating between the extremes of total humor and deepest seriousness**

Is it at all possible for a two-man band to play Mahler?

How can longing and pain be expressed when 2 machos give their all among wooden sticks and slabs, a stapler, a compressor, gaffa tape, molton fabric and 5 work lamps?

Can a pneumatic gun make a man dance?

And what happens when all of these elements are caused to fuse with Mahler's refined musical language? In practical terms – i.e. images, sound and movement - this performance is an attempt to find an answer the above questions.

*"And we should consider every day lost on which we have not danced at least once. And we should call every truth false which was not accompanied by at least one laugh," Nietzsche*

"2men2mahler" represents a revision of the concept which Granhøj Dance first started off by introducing in the 90's. A number of performances were then created under the heading of MEN DANCIN', the intention being to examine the role played by male dancers in dance performances – as well as the far-reaching and distinctive scenic expression achieved by an all-male cast performance. Granhøj Dance's reason for taking up work on this concept again is to discover how much this expression has changed, and how it manifests itself now – twenty years later – when a whole new generation of dancers has emerged.

# G R A N H Ø J D A N S

## Credits.

### **2men2mahler**, a performance by **Palle Granhøj**

Created in close co-operation with the performers: **Jannik Elkær Nielsen, Kristoffer Louis Andrup Pedersen, Robert Karlsson & Thierry Boisdon**

Co-produced by: **Dansescenen of Copenhagen**

Produced with the support of the **Wilhelm Hansen Foundation and the Danish Actors Association**

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## **Granhøj Dans and the Obstruction Technique**

Choreographer Palle Granhøj is well-known for his original working method. Based on his obstruction technique, he uses external influences to redefine the dancer's movements and to expose deeper layers of his/her personality, in this way spotlighting human relations. To Palle Granhøj dance is a lot more and many other things than just choreographed body movements. By way of his exceptional working method he aims to create images and moods arising out of a personal artistic quest. The objective is to create works which appeal to everybody because of their multifaceted character and the powerful human presence of their scenic language. Stylistically he exploits the complex interaction between music, light, scenography and props, movements, etc. - all of these elements being equally important.

## **2men2mahler, a couple of excerpts of critics**

**A Treat of a Dance Experience:** "A thrilling boys- will-be-boys experience of far-reaching dimensions. Well, I do have to admit: In my eyes this performance is fantastic. It's captivating, crude, funny, poetic, beautiful, ugly, and gripping. . . . We are guided from the very raw mood via an almost melancholic feeling of inadequacy through to poetry and final balance. This description may sound abstract. But in fact, what is so nice about this performance, is that it does'nt seem so very abstract. It feels like we're watching – and told – a lot of little stories about men and friendships – however, without the standard dramatic beginning, middle, and finish. I love this kind of dance performance. There are too few and too far between" (Marianne Ilum S., TerpsiChore dk)

**Uplifting masculinity XXX:** "This is dance that never turns shallow or boring. Action, fight, drawing of lines and for ever trying out new ways. . . '2men2mahler' is electrifying dance with no mercy. No spineless compromises and mediocre halfway house solutions here! That would crush the complexity and devalue our experience of it. And so along the way, we laugh with joy and chuckle with delight before the dancers have even flung themselves into the next feat. And at the time when this whole fabulous thing is over one sweaty hour later, you feel how it has made you love the masculine mystique even more. The reason being that masculinity being given a spin in Granhøj's unpredictable dance turbine is presented so effortlessly and so uncompromisingly – a mixture of something powerfully solid and something delicately fragile". (Kirsten Dahl, Århus Stiftstidende)

**Entertaining muscle-work:** " It's a both tragicomic, subtle and artful view of the male species that we are presented with in Palle Granhøj's new and very humorous »2men2mahler« performance... Having only men on stage marks Granhøj's return to his original starting point in the 90's when he was exploring the masculine mystique. This time around, two extremes are wittily pitted against each other - the musicians' sensitively vibrating and melancholic interpretation of Mahler's music and two dancing dare-devils who compete on brute force and vulgarity. Two men who are also very closely connected and deeply dependant on each other as they perform superbly timed the obstructed stunts and impressing acts of balance. Funny and serious all at the same time". (**Torben Kastrup, dansetidningen, sverige**)

**Mahler and Musclemen:** "The contrast between Mahler's sophisticated music and the rough macho workmanlike attitude of the players is smoothed over with humour. 2men2mahler is a humorous work of art showcasing the wide range of roles played by men in society – for better and for worse. Palle Granhøj has created yet another gem of dance. The two proficient and charismatic dancers put their bodies and souls into the performance of their demanding roles". (Vibeke Wern, Berlingske Tidende)