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## Aline Alone

Reviews:

The worldpremiere was May 21 2006, at the prestigious opening of the new building DanceCity in Newcastle Upon Tyne.

”a spell-binding authentic meeting with an exceptional woman and dancer”-  
**Monna Dithmer, Politiken, Denmark 9.9.06**

“AlineAlone” is a beautiful, intense performance that takes us close to Aline Sanchez Rodriguez, the person and the dancer, and there is no option but to surrender to her touching sweetness. This is pure Cuban sugar ...”  
**Jette Skjoldborg, Århus Stiftstidende, Denmark 30.08.06**

“On the subject of AlineAlone, it is easy to succumb to exaggeration, but the fact is that this performance is extraordinarily touching and unique. My heart felt lighter from my having witnessed this remarkable piece”  
**Anna Venejärvi, Savon Sanomat, Finland, 27.07.06**

“It is no surprise that choreographer Palle Granhøj was enchanted by Aline Sánchez Rodríguez. It is impossible to do otherwise when you meet her. The audience at the Pyhäjärvi Festival also surrendered unconditionally (...) Because she is quite simply wonderful.”  
**Anni Valtonen, Helsingin Sanomat, Finland, 29.07.06**

“Palle Granhøj has done it again! Two years ago, the Danish choreographer took the Full moon dance festival by storm and instantly made his name in the Finnish world of dance. This year’s performance, AlineAlone, fully lives up to the high expectations that were generated two years ago..”  
**Petri Kauppinen, Kaleva, Finland, 29.07.06**

## Introduction

# The soul of Miss Sanchéz Rodriguez

The music is Cuban. The dancer is from Cuba. She speaks and sings about Cuba as well. But the new work of Danish choreographer Palle Granhøj, *AlineAlone*, is not about Cuba. It is about the dancer, the artist, and the woman Aline Sanchéz Rodriguez.

- A long time ago I wrote down: "This piece should tell a story. It should be narrative". Well, it didn't end up being narrative but it is as close as I will ever get to being a storyteller. *AlineAlone* is a story. It is Aline's story.

These are the words of choreographer and artistic director of Granhøj Dans, Palle Granhøj about *AlineAlone*.

Palle Granhøj met Aline Sanchéz Rodriguez for the first time in November 2003. She was a dancer, but had quit dancing nearly three years earlier and now worked for a NGO arts foundation – The Ludwig Foundation - as a teacher and project manager.

Palle Granhøj was in Cuba with an official Danish delegation to visit the Ludwig Foundation. He immediately spotted the glowing charisma of Aline when following a tight program she had arranged about Cuban contemporary dance. He decided to make her go back to being a dancer again.

Aline was fascinated about the thought and went with his idea. After breaking a lot of unofficial rules and social standards of the bureaucratic system of both countries – they succeed in their project of getting Aline to Denmark.

The charismatic Cuban dancer has been participating in the three most recent performances of Granhøj Dans and is now performing in her first solo piece by Palle Granhøj.

- Everybody knows Cuban music but the dance of Cuba is just as strong. When being to Cuba I experienced so much soul in the Cuban dance. That is what we would like to show In *AlineAlone*. The audience will meet the soul I talk about. They will meet it in Miss Sanchéz Rodriguez.

## Artistic concept

In *Aline Alone*, Palle Granhøj sets himself a challenge as a choreographer by allowing Aline Sánchez Rodríguez, the Cuban singer and dancer, to become the artistic nucleus of the piece. Using obstruction technique as the catalyst, the personal history of Aline Sánchez Rodríguez will take centre stage, pushing the performance close to pure narrative. The fundamental “obstruction” in this performance is thus the obligation of the dancer to use her personal history as the basic material for the opus.

Palle Granhøj was inspired to create this performance about and featuring Aline Sánchez Rodríguez by the artist’s particular Cuban profile as a dancer and the story of the revolutions in her life. Aline Sánchez Rodríguez trained as a classical ballet dancer at the National School of Ballet in Cuba, but then continued her training in Mexico, where she embraced the styles of hip hop, street dance and campoera. In addition, strong currents from African folklore and Latin salsa can be traced in her style as a dancer – currents that also distinguish Cuban body culture in general. As a rebellious young dancer fighting for expression within the confines of a communist regime, Aline’s history is a story of intense sentiments and unadulterated dedication to her art.

The design of the performance will avoid common genres as it mixes elements of modern dance with talk show clips, documentaries and concert interludes. The scenography itself comprises both strictly realistic scenes – of Aline being interviewed by Palle Granhøj – and elements of surrealistic imagery.

With regard to the inception of the performance, Palle Granhøj explains. “A long time ago, I wrote: ‘this performance should be a narrative’. Although it has not become a narrative *per se*, it is as close as I can come to narration as a choreographer. It is a story, a performance about Aline.” As such, this performance is markedly different from all previous performances by Granhøj Dans, as none of them has ever worked with biographical material and narration.

The score for the performance will consist of a newly composed montage of Cuban songs, created and played live by Niels Kilele (percussion) and Thierry Boisdon (guitar). While Niels Kilele’s background encompasses the drumming style of African folklore, Thierry Boisdon has specialised in Spanish guitar and Flamenco song. Therefore, they precisely manifest the two musical foundation pillars of Cuban culture. The two musicians will participate in the performance both as actors in Aline Sánchez Rodríguez’s story and as accompanists.

# CVs for the artistic team

## Palle Granhøj

Palle Granhøj (born in 1959) is an autodidact choreographer and dancer who uses his own version of obstruction technique as a consistent theme in his method. In every new production, Palle Granhøj experiments with new objects for the further development of his obstruction technique.

Founder of Granhøj Dans and artistic director since 1989.

Founder of *GRAN – teater for dans* and artistic director since 2001.

### Choreographies

- 2007: W [double:you]  
coproduction with Festival de Les Brigittines, Belgium
- 2006: AlineAlone
- 2005: Obstrucsong
- 2004: Larger than life – live  
Fra Aros med Eros (opening performance for Århus Festival)
- 2002: 8IQ – no woman no cry  
La Creation – my joy is in a box  
2Facial  
KJp + SVp + XYp
- 2001: FootFace
- 2000: Headbreak  
KJp (for Nomadi Productions, Finland)
- 1999: Cru Bourgeois  
... don't kill your darlings
- 1998: 2. vin  
Exklusif
- 1997: La Ca-La-Sh La Latin  
Banall TTT
- 1996: Obstruction Ultimatique
- 1995: Mette (for The Royal Danish Ballet)
- 1994: Bodyfluid
- 1993: TKO
- 1992: Time
- 1990: Torzo

Unless otherwise stated, all choreographies created for Granhøj Dans. The performances tour internationally and have visited more than 30 countries to date.

### Dance videos

- 2003: I'm optimist about nothing
- 2000: Puzzle Pix
- 1997: Bodyfluid

### Honours, awards and prizes

- 2005: Member of the jury at the Nordic Grand Prix 05, Kuopio Dance Festival, Finland.
- 2004: Member of the jury at International Exposure, Suzanne Dellal, Israel.
- 2002: Ballet master, Albert Gaubier's scholarship
- 2001: Winner of the Danish Reumert prize for the best dance performance, for Headbreak.
- 2000: Fr. Edith Aller's memorial scholarship
- 1997: Obstruction Ultimatique receives award from the Danish Arts Foundation.
- 1994: Danish Minister for Culture Jytte Hilden's scholarship.
- 1992: Prize-winner at the Nordic Choreographers' Competition of Contemporary Dance

## Other cast and crew

### **Per Victor**

Graduated as an architect from the Aarhus School of Architecture. House scenographer and visual designer at Granhøj Dans since its foundation in 1989, and, since then, at *GRAN – teater for dans*, where he has created the consistent graphical style. In addition to having created the scenography for all Granhøj Dans performances (see the list above), Per Victor has worked for a number of other Danish theatres including Odense Teater, Svalegangen, Opgang 2 and Vintapperteatret.

### **Aline Sanchez Rodriguez (born in 1972)**

Trained as a dancer at the National School of Ballet (Cuba). Has worked with companies including the Cuban National Ballet Company, La joven guardia of Cuba, Monterrey Ballet, Amento and Los unos y los otros. For Granhøj Dans: “8IQ – no woman no cry”, “Larger than life – live” and “Fra Aros med Eros”. Her first period at Granhøj Dans was supported by the Danish Center for Culture and Development (DCCD).

### **Niels Kilele (born in 1962)**

Musician, percussionist and composer. Has played in bands such as Sorten Muld, Shirtsville and Sticks’n’fire and has appeared on a number of CDs recorded by artists including Poul Krebs, Sorten Muld and Harvest Moon. Works as a composer at Livsteatret Opgang 2, and gives classes in singing, dancing and acting. Niels Kilele was also the percussionist in Marie Brolin Tani’s and Sorten Muld’s dance concert entitled “Og hvem har du favnet i natten?” For Granhøj Dans: “8IQ – no woman no cry” and “Larger than life – live”.

### **Thierry Boisdon (born in 1963)**

Guitarist and singer (France). Discovered flamenco at the age of 19. Completely captivated by the singing style, he started to study with the assistance of a flamenco singer from Paris and a pile of records. In 1990, love brought him to Copenhagen and since then he has been a leading singer and personal sponsor of the Danish and Nordic flamenco scene, where he has performed in various constellations. For Granhøj Dans: “Obstruction Ultimative” and “Exklusif”.

## About Granhøj Dans

*“Obstruction technique is a path to the very core of the dance. Obstructing is the same as destroying and reconstructing the movement at one and the same time. Dissolving and rebuilding at once, so it can rightly be called deconstructive dance. The dance is the beginning. The dance does not stop. The dance is ultimate continuation.”*

Palle Granhøj

With obstruction technique as its consistent method, Granhøj Dans has achieved the status of one of the leading dance companies in Denmark. Since its foundation in 1989, Granhøj Dans has consistently explored and renewed obstruction technique through 25 critically acclaimed dance performances and dance videos – always backed by the scenographies of Per Victor.

The principle of obstruction technique is to limit a choreographed movement so as to create a new and alternative expression. As a result of this consistent work, Granhøj Dans has created its very own method and aesthetic, for which the company has won international recognition.

A significant feature of Granhøj Dans performances is the staging of the dancer's personality. The performances present men and women as they are: alive! The dancers sing, move and recount stories. The audience may well recognise a snatch of a song, tics and other peculiarities from everyday life. Granhøj Dans is top quality dance with a twist that makes performances popular and easily accessible.

Granhøj Dans is one of the most touring Danish dance companies. *Obstrucsong*, the most recent work, was co-produced by the Royal Danish Theatre and will be presented at more than 60 performances in the 2005–2006 season, both at small venues in Denmark and at major festivals abroad.

### Finances and organisation

Granhøj Dans is based at *GRAN – teater for dans* in Århus, Denmark, although this theatre primarily functions as a guest performance venue. The dance company and the theatre are internally dependent, both financially and organisationally, but are financed separately. Whereas GRAN is firmly established as a minor metropolitan venue, Granhøj Dans is completely dependent on project support from the Danish Committee for the Performing Arts as well as donations from private foundations and sponsors.

# Touring

Latest touring schedule look at [www.granhoj.dk](http://www.granhoj.dk)

## Future tours 2006

May 21	World premiere at the Dancing the Worldfestival (Newcastle, England)
May 27	Reykjavik Arts Festival, Reykjavik, Iceland
July 7	Malta Festival, Poznan, Poland
July 27	Full moon festival (Pyhäjärvi, Finland)
August 29	Danish premiere at GRAN – teater for dans, as part of Århus Festival Week.

## Recent international tours

2007

Dansstationen, Malmö, Sweden / Pusterviks Teatern, Gothenburg, Sweden / Dansescenen, Stockholm, Sweden / Tanec Praha Festival, Prague, Czech Republic / LookOut festival, Skt.Petersborg, Russia / Theaterlabor im Tor 6, Bielefeld, Germany / Les Brigittines, Bruxelles, Belgium / Atheneum, Helsinki, Finland.

2006:

Elektrana Theatre, Ljubljana, Slovenia  
Teatro Garcia de Resende, Evora, Portugal  
Les Hivernales, Avignon, France

2005:

Tanec Praha, Prague, Czech Republic  
Berner Tanztage, Bern, Switzerland  
Kuopio Dance Festival, Kuopio, Finland  
Les Brigittines, Brussels, Belgium

2004:

Les Hivernales, Avignon, France  
Festival Tanz Transit, Kaliningrad, Russia  
International Baltic Ballet Festival, Riga, Latvia  
New Baltic Dance, Vilnius, Lithuania  
Festival NCL/EUROPE, Newcastle, England  
Grand Theatre, Groningen, The Netherlands  
Tanec Praha Festival, Prague, Czech Republic  
Festival Cour des Capucine, Luxembourg, Luxembourg  
Full Moon Festival, Pyhäjärvi, Finland  
Biennale de la Danse de Lyon, Lyon, France  
Mâcon Scene Nationale, Mâcon, France  
Internationale Tanzmesse NRW, Düsseldorf, Germany  
Pusterviks Teatern, Gothenburg, Sweden  
Suzanne Dellal Centre for Dance and Theatre, Tel Aviv, Israel