

Les Marées Sèches

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LES MARÉES SÈCHES - 2025

Summary

Les Marées Sèches (*The Dry Tides*) is a **long durational and choreographic performance** for algae and a human in a **horizontal and non-hierarchical relationship**. It attempts to answer a paradoxical question: what would be a **non-anthropocentric choreographic work**, that is to say, not centered on humans? This attempt to give as much attention to a non-human species as to humans implies **modulating and reconfiguring the performer's presence**. The performance's temporality is defined according to the **tidal cycle, 6 hours and 12 minutes**. It is also an **act of resistance against the acceleration** of our lives and a **way to trouble our productivity-driven mindset**, which reduces our capacity of listening to other living beings.

The whole story

1. What's wrong with anthropocentrism?

Deeply concerned by the ecological crisis, what strikes me most in my research and readings is **our inability to think beyond our anthropocentric paradigm** in our daily life; that is, humans, emancipated from and dominating nature, believe themselves **to be at the center of every ecosystem**. Going back and forth between ecology and the artistic medium I have chosen, dance, my research question emerges:

What would a non-anthropocentric choreographic work?

I see here **a friction, a paradox**, as traditionally, a work described as "choreographic" showcases a certain **virtuosity of human bodies in movement, in a rather anthropocentric way**.

My response to this question is an attempt to **establish a non-hierarchical and horizontal relationship between two species**: algae and human. Therefore, it implies modulating the centrality and presence of the performer, to attempt to experience a more **eco-centric paradigm**. This question is the source and driving force of the project, and everything else flows from it.

2. The algae, a living waste?

It was primarily the **green algae scandal** on the shores of Brittany (France) that drew me to algae. They blossom and **proliferate abundantly** due to the **excess nitrates used in intensive farming**, flowing into the rivers and entering the sea. As they dry and decompose, they release a toxic gas (hydrogen sulfide), dangerous to humans and animals. This scandal exposes the **harmful effects of agricultural policies**, our capitalist economic model, the **overexploitation** of the planet, and our **lack of sensitivity** to living things. Moreover, algae are currently attracting industrials, who exploit them as a **new material to replace plastic**; on the other hand, they are considered as **waste**, from which beaches must be cleaned. I choose to work with algae out of sincere **curiosity for this mysterious marine plant species**, which has existed since the dawn of time. Here, **I propose to take a different look at them**, and to **give them the space to exist**, simply as they are.

3. A question of duration?

I initially conceived this creation as an installation; however, I forgot the notion of time! The initial concept of an installation thus becomes a **durational performance, lasting 6 hours and 12 minutes**, the average time of **a transition from low tide to high tide**.

Choosing the temporality of the tides means **adopting the life rhythm of coastal algae and shoreline ecosystems**, and **shifting our perspective away from our conventional temporalities**. Furthermore, the temporality of the tides is a **universal rhythm**, because the rotational movements of the Moon and the Earth, which govern the tides, also influence **the flow of sap in plants and trees**. Creating a durational performance is **not an end goal in itself**, demonstrating human's incredible endurance and tenacity. For me, it's about using it as **a format, a tool to question our relationship to time and deconstruct our chrono-normativity**. This duration, which implies a clear slowing down, is also **an act of resistance against the acceleration of our lives and the productivism that reduces our connection to the living world**. Finally, this duration allows the performer to **access altered states of consciousness**, which are a starting point for my choreographic research.



Photo: Camille Igouez



Photo: Camille Igouez



Photo: Audrey Krug

4. What about the dance?

The choreographic material was **inspired by a hypnosis practice** (transmitted by Catherine Contour), allowing an oscillating movement to emerge, by slowly transferring the body weight from one side to the other. Here, I detach and decontextualize this movement from the hypnotic tool, to study it as a **perpetual movement of oscillation**, of ebb and flow, **de-centering and re-centering** oneself, infinitely adaptable, which can **multiply, fragment, dissociate, bifurcate, branch off...**

This **radical slowness** is therefore the **external visual consequence** of this detailed exploration of movement down to the millimeter. This induces a **"dive,"** a temporal disconnection, but also a state of presence that **reopens the perceptual and sensory fields** and presents the human being in a **decentralized position**.

The choreographic score is based on four rules:

- To **'not make an event'**, meaning avoid any action or effort that would disrupt the horizontality, the balance of presences within the algae/human coexistence.
- To **'not make a project'**, meaning refrain from "achieving," not seeking to accomplish a goal (for example, rolling in a certain direction).
- **Defer and branch off**, meaning always be on the move but constantly reconsider one's intentional choices in space and time, so as not to create a project.
- **De-hierarchize/dissociate** the body parts: each oscillation has the same importance.

5. Which spaces?

The performance is primarily intended for a **"white box" setting** (museum, art center, exhibition space), but could also take place on a theater stage. For each performance, the seaweed soak in water before we hang them, according to the architecture of the space. The audience is invited join the performance at any point—beginning, middle, or end. It is **their responsibility to choose how long they would to stay** and spend with us. The **strong smell of seaweed and the hypnotic soundscape makes it an immersive experience**, where the audience is included and immersed in the performance space, opening them to different scales of sensitivity and perception, and inviting them to **experience this slowing down**. They are invited to sit on chairs or cushions, they can also lie down and have a nap. On the wall, we hang texts and pictures which contextualize the creation process.

It is **not a "show" or a "spectacle"**. The audience's gaze is **more contemplative** and fluid than guided by dramatic perspectives or actions. In the long term, I would like this performance to also exist in a site-specific format, on the coastline, with the existing ecosystem and the true temporality of the tides and the seaweed already present.

6. An "ecological" performance... impossible ? Failures and paradoxes

While the project was thought with an **eco-conception approach**, it was important for me **to avoid an "artistic greenwashing"**. The goal here is not simply to create a work that addresses ecology as a topic, but where **ecology is a commitment, considered in every aspects of the project** - its subjects, form, and production.

Despite our attention to the overall coherence of the project, some points remain **contradictory**. Even attempting to answer the question, "What would be a non-anthropocentric choreographic work?" is perhaps already **a failure in itself**. A choreographic work is a creation made by humans for other humans, and in our case, in spaces built by humans. While the artistic proposition itself manages to be non-anthropocentric, the context in which this choreographic work is created remains highly anthropocentric.

Moreover, a **certain ecological "purity" is impossible to achieve**: to do this project, we travelled (by trains), turned on the lights, used electricity for our computers, etc. Talking about "zero environmental impact" would be hypocritical; to achieve it, we would have to not do any artistic projects (or even not exist at all).



Agenda

January 2024: Research residency "Performance and Ecological practices" funded by **Culture Moves Europe** and carried by **Instant Dissidence**, at **Cloughjordan Ecovillage**, Ireland. This residency wasn't specifically dedicated to Les Marées Sèches, but it was an important time for reflecting and preparing the creative process.

March 2024: First seaweed harvest in Brittany (Finistère area)

29th April - 2nd May 2024: Site-specific residency on the beach in Brittany, and second seaweed harvest

13th - 17th May 2024: Residency at the **CN D** in Lyon, as part of "Artiste en expérimentation"

10th October 2024: Talk for the Master 2 students in Performing Arts at Université Lumière, in Lyon

11th - 23rd November 2024: Residency at Les **SUBS**, Lyon

6th - 10th January 2025: Residency at **Honolulu**, Nantes

27th - 31st January 2025: Residency at **Point Éphémère**, Paris

31st January 2025: Workshop for a middle school class in Paris, in partnership with Point Éphémère

22nd March 2025: **Première** at **Galerie Far West**, in Penmarch in Brittany, for the spring equinox and one year after the first seaweed harvest in the same region.

29th March 2025: Talk at **Radio Paradis** (local radio in Paris 10e)

10th December 2025: Talk at la **Fabrique de la Danse**, as part of the course "Eco-concevoir un projet artistique", Paris

6th March 2026: Talk for the research laboratory **Passages XX-XXI**, of Université Lumière, Lyon

9th - 12th March 2026: **Workshops** for amateurs in the context of the SEED project - Social & Ecological Engagement through Dance - with L'Eveilleur, at Théâtre Golovine, Avignon

16th May 2026: **Performance** at **Festival D5**, Saint-Julien-Molin-Molette

16th September 2026: **Talk** for the ALCOTRA program with the Cultures Eco-Actives in Châteauroux-les-Alpes

24th October 2026: **Performance** at **Festival Parcours de l'art**, in partnership with the SEED project, Avignon

25th October 2026: Workshop around Les Marées Sèches at L'Eveilleur, Avignon

10th December 2025: Talk at la Fabrique de la Danse, as part of the course "Eco-concevoir un projet artistique", Paris

Teaser

<https://youtu.be/fhbAK8Dzmk8>

Press

Le Télégramme : *Les « Marées Sèches » : Clara Grosjean en mouvement à la galerie Far West de Penmarch'h.* [Link](#)

Ouest France : *Penmarch. Une performance de six heures parmi les algues.* [Link](#)

The humans behind this projects

Concept & choreography: Clara Grosjean

Performance and assistant: Emma Pocq

Sound: Louen Poppé

Costumes: Héloïse Larue

Logistics support: Shane van Neerden, Audrey Grosjean

Outside eyes: Julie Sermon, Emma Merabet, Nawelle Aînèche

This project was supported by the CN D - Centre National de la Danse in Lyon.

Partners:

ADAMI - Bourse Première Fois Danse

Spedidam - Aide à l'enregistrement d'une bande originale d'un spectacle chorégraphique

Centre National de la Danse, as part of the "Artiste en expérimentation" program in Lyon

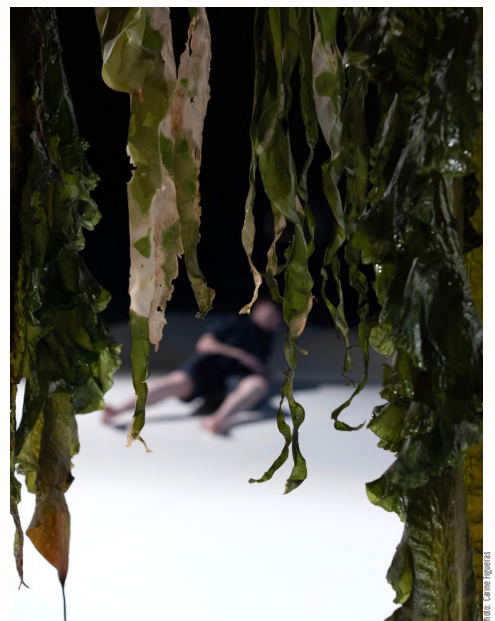
Supports and residencies

Les SUBS, Lyon

Point Éphémère x cheville, Paris

Honolulu, Nantes

Le Far West, Penmarch



CN D



**POINT
ÉPHÉMÈRE**

Adami

subs

HONOLULU

SPEDIDAM
LES DROITS DES ARTISTES-INTERPRÈTES

The audience's experiences

Since the beginning of the creation process, we collect at each performance and presentation the feedbacks, impressions, thoughts, sensations of the audience. Here are some extracts. The feedbacks are in French, the English translation follows below.

C'est la 1^{ère} fois que je regarde chaque algue aussi attentivement dans leur diversité et leur beauté.

Ce qui me frappe en 1^{er} lieu → la tension dans l'espace. Tu n'opposes pas Algues & Humain, tu suggères. Les 2 principaux acteurs sont déposés là avec ce qu'ils sous-tendent.

J'ai évidemment pensée à la BD "Les algues vertes" en entrant : Exposé la nature qui se défend / d'équilibre avec cette ambiance sonore vient contraster la poésie et rappeler la triste réalité. Et cet être humain (rêve d'un filé en plastique?) responsable de ce qui l'entoure...

Les réflexions sont riches, merci. Le processus affiché aide à enrichir la réflexion.

Comment se sentir
interdépendant.e.s?
Beau coup de question...
Merci pour cette lenteur.

HYPNOTISANT
QUESTIONNANT
DESTABILISANT
MERCI

Et ici il s'agit de placer l'humain à l'horizontal de l'algue. Le non-événement me parle et agresse ma capacité de l'écouter.

Des algues et la performeuse comme en tout les va et vient des vagues, le flux et reflux de sa respiration.

Prendre le temps, observer l'immobilité des algues, les tâches de soleil, la présence humaine qui est très forte. Et finalement, sentir que les algues viennent accompagner, que la performeuse vient accompagner, peut-être.

On pense souvent aux dispositifs installatifs comme à des cadres de non-temps. Ici au contraire je respire le temps qui passe, le temps limité, le temps qui aura une fin : la durée déclarée de la séance ; la fragilité de notre vie sur cette planète ; la toxicité des algues ; notre propre décision de rester ici un certain temps...

A partir de quand est-ce qu'on s'habitue à l'odeur des algues?
Et les algues, elles sont immobiles?

On se sent bien ici.
Je pourrais rester des heures.
Je n'ai pas ma le temps passer.

Attendre que les gouttes tombent.
Le même effet d'accélération quand la goutte tombe que lorsque le muscle se contracte, une percée dans le temps.

Où je place mon regard?
Comment moi j'essaie de
de jouer mon regard pour
surt ce qui bouge?

Le va et vient
ça fait regarder de plus
près

comme que les algues bougent
aussi. légèrement, avec celles qui
bougent? qui se tendent?

ou avec le vent? si il y a du
vent ça pousse

L'odeur
des algues!

Frappant
Fonctionne
Questionne dans un espace autre
Fait sens que la mer

1^{ère} pensée avant d'entrer : "ça pue" puis finalement, l'odeur a été agréable et berçante, comme un écho des moments où je me sens bien à la mer.

Je suis totalement bercée, je me sentais bien dans cet espace. Le temps a défilé sans que j'y prête attention (≈ 45 min). J'ai commencé par la lecture des intentions, ce qui a été bénéfique à mon entrée dans l'espace des algues, des bancs et de la performance. Cela a bien orienté ma réception, dans quelque chose de tranquille.

Je suis passée plusieurs fois dans la journée...

comme si à chaque fois je ressentais d'abord une envie physiologique de me disalter... comme un réflexe d'envie un robinet et sentir l'eau arriver une soif, un gîte élémentaire de suite, synchronisé, bête.

Eau fondamentale ; constitutive / amplifiée de notre corps

Et finalement c'est ce que cette performance se me serait pas le miroir d'un immobile face au désastre écologique, l'expression d'une sidération, le désespoir face au constat Alarming.

Merci... parfums d'infinis...
résonance des profondeurs du FUTUR...

Une première installation qui a pour moi déjà beaucoup de force. L'odeur qui m'a emmené dès en entrant en bord de mer, les algues humides qui gouttent, leurs nuances de verts à la lumière... mais immobiles sans marées... le corps qui vient retraduire leur danse... la peine est là.

Je savais qu'il y avait avoir des algues mais je n'avais pas pensé à leur odeur.

Ça les rend encore plus présentes et mon regard, via l'odeur, est attiré par elles!

Touchant, Vibrant, Vivant!
la lenteur vient boussuler, le mouvement perpétuel imprègne le sens; la vie palpite au milieu de cette représentation de la pollution.

Merci pour cette performance!

L'immersion est vraiment réussie. Moi qui ait peu d'habitude des performances longues, j'ai directement été prise par votre proposition. On a envie de rester, c'est super agréable. Le son aussi est très adapté et contribue à cette belle ambiance. On a envie de regarder les algues autour-pour le danse... Voilà bravo à vous c'est super!!!!

Je vois un temps pour s'arrêter
Pour de vrai.

Je n'ai pas vu pour le temps,
je n'ai pas vu Emma Sacorup.

J'ai vu son regard qui scille, ses pupilles qui se ferment.

Je ne vois pas de règles ni de marche à suivre

Je n'ai pas beaucoup pensé.

J'ai respiré l'odeur iodée.

J'ai été émue.

Je n'aimais pas les bruits des autres humains.

Le bruit de ce crayon sur le papier c'est déjà beaucoup.

du bout de trente minutes, j'osais,
je ressens le ressac, la pulsation marine.
Merci pour le voyage, et le ralentissement.

c'est magique de réussir à faire des mouvements imperceptibles aussi longtemps. le silence de la vie.

Bravo.

L'installation est étonnante - Nous attiré par son "hors-contexte", nous ramène à des endroits hors du temps. Avec une odeur étonnante mais familière.

Le corps

nous semble rentrer en hypnose avec les plantes.

Je serai prête à le regarder pendant les heures même si il faudrait mourir, peut-être, dans ce cas, accepter et donner accès à nos corps de pouvoir rester là.

Cela donne envie (mais on n'est qu'une envie) d'être dans le sable, sur des coquilles pour rester.

