

# ROSSINI OUVERTURES





*Coreography and Direction* Mauro Astolfi  
*Music* Gioachino Rossini  
*Lighting Design* Marco Policastro  
*Set concept* Mauro Astolfi, Marco Policastro  
*Set Construction* Filippo Mancini / CHIEDISCENA Scenografia  
*Costumes making* Verdiana Angelucci  
*Rehearsals Director* Alessandra Chirulli  
*Creation for nine dancers*

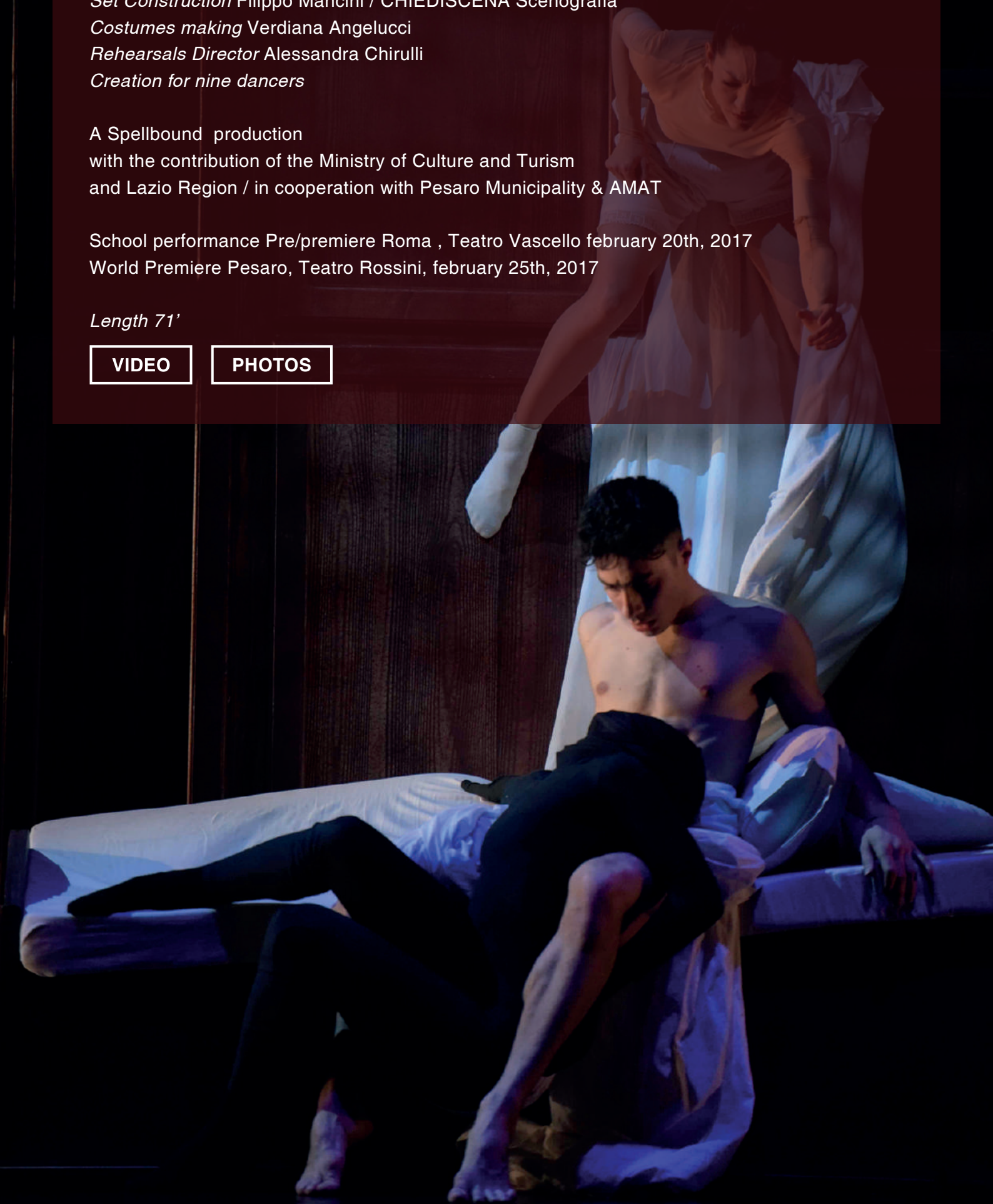
A Spellbound production  
with the contribution of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
and Lazio Region / in cooperation with Pesaro Municipality & AMAT

School performance Pre/premiere Roma , Teatro Vascello february 20th, 2017  
World Premiere Pesaro, Teatro Rossini, february 25th, 2017

*Length 71'*

[VIDEO](#)

[PHOTOS](#)





Rossini Ouvertures celebrates the artistic and human figure of Gioachino Rossini, who will have died 150 years ago in 2018. To mark the occasion, the illustrious composer “will become a testament to Italian beauty throughout the world”, as stated by the Mayor of Pesaro, Matteo Ricci, who - with the Italian Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism; the Minister of Education, Universities and Research; President Emeritus Giorgio Napolitano; as well as other distinguished members of the Italian cultural world - will be part of the National Committee to promote the programme of festivities. Over the span of four years, from February 2016 to October 2019, there are no less than 14 Rossinian anniversaries, such as 20 February, the date of the first performance of *The Barber of Seville*, which took place in 1816 at Teatro Argentina in Rome, or 29 February, the composer’s birthday in the leap year of 1792. To honour its illustrious citizen, Pesaro, city of music with its conservatory and historic theatre, will dedicate a rich agenda of artistic, musical and literary events to highlighting the life and accomplishments of the genius composer. Among them is a performance by Spellbound Contemporary Ballet, co-produced by the city of Pesaro and Teatro Rossini.



## MAURO ASTOLFI

“Reading the words of Augusto Benemeglio on the life of Rossini, on that ‘organised madness’, was, for me, profoundly and absolutely illuminating. I was sincerely seduced in 24 hours of continuous, repeated listening to the Rossinian world, by such unbridled and intoxicating genius, but one which at the time walked arm in arm with so many black spots, torn apart by a deep melancholy that, through a strong, energetic personality bordering on bipolar, created musical works of eternal, absolute grace. Trying to touch on all points in a life such as that of Gioachino Rossini would be absolutely impossible, in part because as much as dance can be, and movement is, an aspect of sound – a materialisation of music – what Rossini was able to create in just a few years of his life, I don’t believe can ever be represented otherwise in a genuinely sensible manner. But the extremely contemporary nature of this great artist is so present and vibrant in the life that I live, in the life that see around me, that I tried to draw closer to the deep relationship between the foreboding, the awareness, the fear of death and the simultaneous ability to generate emotion which is so brilliant, so full of grace, power and gaiety that the end of each piece was the creation of another. In this performance, I imagined a large wall, the wall of Rossini’s memories behind which he hid, archived his food, his wine, the house where he hosted his great friends and fellow composers, but also the everyday people he loved to joke with, play with and share all aspects of his life with. I envisioned this “wall” as a projection of his mind, full of windows, shelves, hiding places – a wall which separated one world from another. In this space roamed an occupant, an anthropomorphic figure, black, a stain which took on human similitudes, which communicated with him, which crept into his dreams, crawled into his bed and then disappeared, but which was always there as if to mark the short time – but also the lengthy time – spent fighting physical and mental illness of all kinds. This dark figure was the fear of death, his illness, but also perhaps his advisor, paradoxically at times the only constant. In his long nights, with increasing insomnia, Rossini came to live in two worlds which at times drew closer, almost touching, and only his infinite ability to create, his passion for physical, sensory pleasure, for food, for sex, were able to momentarily anaesthetise what was happening in his body and his mind. His music was extreme, the mark of a greater force and energy, and I purposely tried to create extreme choreography, loaded with energy, vitality, encounters, seduction, suggestions. I spent a lot of time thinking about how to translate his compositional genius into movement. I didn’t feel it was a case of working on abstraction; I sought out and “felt” for how to convey the vibration of his music: I literally let myself be carried away, and it was an entirely unique experience. As Alessandro Baricco wrote, Rossini’s music is truly “organised madness”. Intensity, pure chaos, dismay, schizoid escape...but by escaping, he created something that never could be repeated after him.”



***“A magnificently successful work”***

***by Alessandro Paesano***

*From Teatro.gaiaitalia.com*

“Rossini Overtures is a magnificently successful work supported by exceptional, inventive dancing where Astolfi displays not only fantastic choreography but also exceptional mastery in knowing how to structure the choreography to suit his skilful dancers. They make Astolfi’s difficult, very strenuous and demanding choreography seem easy, speaking the grammar of a new language as if they had always spoken it.”



***“The crescendo of Spellbound Contemporary Ballet: a dance for Rossini”***

***by Gaia Clotilde Chernetich***

*From Teatroecritica.net*

“In Rossini Overtures Astolfi uses the bodies of his expert dancers to give the public that concrete idea of the aura which emanates out of this complex expression of Italian musical genius...Like Rossini, the master of crescendo, this new “overture” by Spellbound could make this beautiful Italian dance company really take off.”

***by Monica Ratti***

*From Danceandculture*

“Gioachino Rossini loved to create works that pleased the public; I think he would have particularly loved this work by Mauro Astolfi celebrating him in dance.”

***by Sarah Curati***

*From Paperstreet*

“What strikes you is the playful intention of the dance and its seductive energy, but, perhaps most of all, its strong theatricality which subtly accentuates the already dizzying expressivity of the dancers



whose technical ability is irreproachable. Everyone, therefore, will be Rossini, or “Rossinian” men imposed on moving images: Rossini who gulps down his beloved food, surrounded by women or friends or, at the end, on a bed besieged by the spectres of depression, in a space that is always shimmering under the remarkable lighting design by Marco Policastro which interacts with the theatrical dancing, moving from dreamlike to more realistic scenes.”

Spellbound Contemporary Ballet was founded in 1994 by Artistic Director Mauro Astolfi and later joined by General Manager Valentina Marini. Together with Astolfi's unique artistic vision and Marini's expert drive of internationalization, the company is thriving as a maverick cornerstone of the global art community. With an unmistakable style, Spellbound is defined by a distinctly original language underpinned by an ensemble of technically and artistically excellent dancers. Spellbound Contemporary Ballet is the leading pillar of Italian Contemporary dance and has quickly become an international force touring intensively in Europe, Asia and America. Spellbound Contemporary Ballet forges the truss between audience, pre-professional and artist with a spine of 25 years of seminars, workshops and a creative legacy that has united thousands of dancers and spectators. It's multigenerational presence has grown a harmonious team of professionals capable of hosting large scale productions and project management with a strong vocation for internationalization. Spellbound's legacy, along with Astolfi's creations who play as resident choreographer, has given birth to a series of networked projects with today's leading international artists and institutions including: "Pa|Ethos" the cross cultural co-production by Tibetan choreographer Sang Jijia and Fabbrica Europa, Scuole Civiche Paolo Grassi, Marche Teatro, Beijing Dance Festival, "La Mode", installation by Tomoko Mukayama and Tojo Ito who inaugurated the National Taichung Theater in Taiwan in October 2016, the performance installation "Re-Mark" by choreographer Sang Jijia in a production network with Fondazione Fabbrica Europa, City Contemporary Dance Company Hong Kong, Versilia Danza, "Collapse" by Francesco Sgrò, the co-production in partnership with Grand Theater de Luxembourg in 2019 in collaboration with Jean Guillaume Weis, former artist at Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Baush, Spellbound 25 by Astolfi, Marcos Morau, Marco Goecke on the occasion of its 25th anniversary in 2020 and the recent "We, us and other games" by Dunja Jovic in collaboration with Bolzano Danza. Spellbound's activities have been supported by the Ministry of Culture for more than 25 years yet since 2022 it is proudly featured amongst the few accredited in the role of National Dance Production Centre with the larger project ORBITA|Spellbound co-directed by the two Astolfi and Marini. The vision towards becoming a Production Centre comes from the desire of Spellbound, which has been engaged in the production, training and seasoning of dance for over 25 years, to make this heritage available to a wider community: a production house that acts as a hinge between the creative resources existing in the Roman territory and the production chain on both national and international level. Conceived on the scale of a metropolitan city, Orbita finds its heart at the Palladium Theatre and branches out to other satellite spaces in the city, different in function and identity, such as the Teatro Biblioteca Quatticciolo and the Teatro Rossellini. The different functions of the Centre converge in the commitment to promote performance languages and dance that find in the dimension of the body, of the political, cultural and health subjectivities embodied in it, a field of exchange of practices, knowledge and skills with a social and political impact.

*"An artfully evening of extraordinary dancing"*

by Susan Fulks, Palm Beach Daily News U.S.A.

*"If Spellbound were a car, it would be a Ferrari"*

The Annenberg center of Performing Arts-Philadelphia U.S.A.

*"...spellbinding."*

By Donald Rosenberg, The Plain Dealer, Cleveland U.S.A.

*"60 minutes of breath taking art of dance ..."*

Sabine Rother, Letzte Aktualisierung, Germany

*"Astolfi exhilarating choreography is a model of invention"*

Janet Soares, Ballet Review U.S.A

*"The troupe has an alien beauty to its movement that has become the touchstone of reputable contemporary dance. The performers are magnificent in appearance, and their technique is remarkable."*

Susan Fulks, Palm Beach Daily News

*"Dancers of such chameleon-like suppleness, they were not only spellbinding, but breathtaking."*

Merilyn Jackson, The Philadelphia Inquirer

# ORBITA SPELLBOUND

Centro di Produzione Nazionale della Danza

# SPELLBOUND

CONTEMPORARY BALLET 

[www.spellboundance.com](http://www.spellboundance.com)

**Pictures**

Cristiano Castaldi,

Micro & Mega fotografie (fifth page, lower left)



MINISTERO  
DELLA  
CULTURA