

# DYLAN ON THE DANCE FLOOR

# LISBETH GRUWEZ

**EN** | We needn't expect too many more onstage dance moves from Bob Dylan, so choreographer Lisbeth Gruwez provides them herself. **MICHAËL BELLON**

**C**horeographer and dancer Lisbeth Gruwez and musician and composer Maarten Van Cauwenberghe of the Brussels dance company Voetvolk don't shy away from the occasional experiment. The compelling group choreography *AH/HA* (2014) not only featured the fantastic score by Van Cauwenberghe, but also a surprising fragment of Lionel Richie. They are now taking to the stage together to highlight the music of Bob Dylan. Van Cauwenberghe plays vinyl records, and Gruwez dances to them.

"We've been working on this project for almost two years," Gruwez says. "We started putting it together piece by piece while we were on tour. Maarten and I listen to a lot of records when we're on tour anyway. In every town we stop at, we go to record shops looking for good and sometimes weird records. But Maarten really has Dylan mania. During set-up and warm-ups, he would always play Dylan. Initially that drove me crazy, but after two years I can say that he really set me on the right track. That is the advantage of having someone who knows Dylan's work really well: they can give you the right approach to start listening to Dylan. That is how I gradually started appreciating it."

"When we finally realised that we were actually making a production, we had to request the rights to use the music, which took another year. They thought we were planning a major production that would earn us a lot of money. So we

had to clarify that this is really only for a niche audience in small venues."

**Is the dance production itself a good introduction to Dylan's work?**

**LISBETH GRUWEZ:** I don't know. We selected songs from different albums, so in a way we have made our own Dylan album. Somebody who came to watch the rehearsal did say that the dance represents the music or the lyrics in one way or another. Dylan's lyrics are great, though you sometimes have to listen very carefully at concerts to understand them.

**On what basis did you select the different songs?**

**GRUWEZ:** That was very difficult, but of course you can't dance to everything. You can't find a good approach to every song, and some songs are ridiculously long. We've listened to an enormous amount of music over the last two years, and we selected all the tracks in which dance naturally and credibly matched the music - the songs where you can see that it works.

In other words, it is not one choreography from A to Z. Each song has its own colour and its own movement language with other images or figures. But I don't leave the stage in between the songs, so there is still an overall cohesion. Maarten and I are on stage together. He plays the records in the same way he does at home and I dance to them. That is all.

📍 **LISBETH GRUWEZ DANCES BOB DYLAN**

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