

FEU FEU FEU FEU

Co-produced by the **National Arts Center**

**Ensemble
piece for 10
performers**

**Stage
work**

**World premiere
Danse Danse
March 2028**

**SYLVAIN DAN
ÉMARD SE**

From invisible forces to elemental powers is a mere heartbeat away. Echoing Sylvain Émard's recent work *Magnetic Fields*, FEU (Fire) delves further into the very foundations of life, questioning the place of humans in the immensity that surrounds them. Continuing his exploration of shared movements and the energy dynamics that connect beings, his research explores a broader dimension, i.e. the cosmic, ancestral, elemental forces that govern us.

Since ancient times, water, earth, air and fire have been considered the building blocks of all life, forming a system of balance on which we are intimately dependent. They flow through us, shaping us and placing us in a continuous cycle of transformation, at times even elevation. Yet those same forces, essential to our survival, carry within them a destructive power that is beyond our control.

The myth of Prometheus serves as the guiding principle behind creation. By stealing fire from the gods and giving it to humans, he granted them the ability to transform the world. That founding gesture places humanity in a paradoxical position; we are both an integral part of the elements yet also tempted to break free from them. Receiving fire means gaining access to knowledge, technology and conquest — but also the possibility of upsetting the balance.

FEU questions the place of mankind not only within the elements, but also within the ecosystem. Where do we stand in the immensity that surrounds us? Are we anchored in matter or drawn towards other dimensions? In striving for constant ascension, are we cultivating our downfall? The piece oscillates between gravity and transcendence, between earthly limitations and infinite desire. It evokes a cosmic dynamic in which bodies appear as realities moving within a vast expanse, almost on a scale of superimposed worlds.

The stage space is conceived as a field of circulation and movement — airy, ethereal, traversed by flows — where dance deploys its kinesthetic power, seeking not to portray the elements but rather to capture their

resonances. It is not a question of representing water, earth, air or fire, but of allowing the tensions, states and vibrations that arise from them to surface, giving material form to this inexpressible paradox, the intangible duality deep within us.

Much like the disruptions shaking the world today, the elements themselves seem out of balance. The correlation may appear obvious, yet the question remains: which comes first? Returning to the myth of Prometheus, we are reminded that in giving fire to humanity, he also handed them the power to transform the world. The correlation seems to assert itself — and yet, the question of origin resists easy answers. How can we continue our journey into the unknown, the unexplored — whether technological, spatial or symbolic — without losing sight of our fundamental connection to the elements, and without rushing towards our own destruction?

At the beginning of the process, creation is conceived as a space for exploration. It is part of a coherent artistic trajectory, where each work engages with the previous piece, gradually broadening the field of investigation — from the magnetic to the cosmic, from the relational to the tangible.

Partners & contributors

Thomas Payette and the team at **mirari**, long-standing Sylvain Émard Danse collaborators who were behind the immersive installation *Choir*, will be responsible for the visual aspects of this piece for 10 dancers. Mirari also designed the Canada pavilion at World Expo 2025 in Osaka.

The renowned composer **Poirier** will create the musical score. Sylvain Émard will also work with two other longtime collaborators: lighting designer **Etienne Boucher** and set and costume designer **Marilène Bastien**.

FEU, co-produced by the **National Arts Center**, will be presented at **Théâtre Maisonneuve in Place des Arts** as a series of five performances that will be part of the **Danse Danse** program from March 14 to 18, 2028.

Sylvain Émard Danse

A prolific and internationally respected artist, Sylvain Émard created his own dance company Sylvain Émard Danse in 1990. From intimate small-scale works to monumental pieces, from immersive installations to film, he explores the territory of human nature through the power of the body, having created some thirty works presented across four continents.

Sylvain Émard's unique style has led to invitations to work as guest choreographer in theatre, opera and cinema. These collaborations include his joining forces with Robert Lepage to work on the opera *1984* by Lorin Maazel, presented at Royal Opera House in London and La Scala in Milan.

Recipient of numerous prestigious distinctions, including the Jean A. Chalmers Award (1996) for his body of work and the Governor General's Performing Arts Award (2026), Sylvain Émard is also co-founder of Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique.



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**The dancing
body does
not lie,
and truth
is too
rare to
be ignored.**

**S.É
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