



IMPULSO

a film by Emilio Belmonte

87 min - 2017 - Spanish with English subtitles-Color

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SYNOPSIS

The spectacular avant-garde choreographies of flamenco dancer Rocío Molina have electrified audiences around the world. Her extravagant, mesmerizing and mostly improvised pieces combine traditional Flamenco with modern-dance, avant-garde theatrics, objects, paint, and eclectic music compositions. *Impulso* is an intimate portrait of Molina, one of the dance world's most passionate artists, as she travels the world to perform her improvised "impulsos" at unusual venues ranging from prisons to modern art museums. Now Molina must prepare for one of her most challenging works ever for a new show at Chaillot National Theater in Paris. Despite Molina's unconventional stagings and artful theatrical setups, she remarkably manages to maintain her connection to Flamenco's rich history and traditions.

Rocío Molina



The iconoclastic choreographer Rocío Molina has coined her own artistic language based on a reinvented traditional flamenco style which respects its essence but embraces the avant-garde. Radically free, she combines in her works: technical virtuosity, contemporary research, and conceptual risk. Unafraid to forge alliances with other disciplines and artists, her choreographies are unique scenic events based on ideas and cultural forms ranging from cinema to literature, including philosophy and painting.

Rocío Molina, a restless dancer, was born in Malaga in 1984. She started to dance at the early age of three years old. At seven, she was outlining her first choreographies. At 17, she graduated with honors from the Royal Dance Conservatory in Madrid and became part of the cast of professional companies with international tours.

At 22, she premiered *Entre paredes* (Among the Walls), her first work, which was followed by many more self-creations, all of them with a thing in common, a curious and transgressor look at a flamenco style escaping from the well-trodden paths: *El Eterno Retorno* (The Eternal Return) (2006) *Turquesa como el limón* (Turquoise as a Lemon) (2006), *Almario* (2007), *Por el decir de la gente* (As People Say) (2007), *Oro viejo* (Old Gold) (2008), *Cuando las piedras vuelen* (When Stones Fly) (2009), *Vinática* (2010), *Danzaora y vinática* (2011), *Afectos* (Affections) (2012) and *Bosque Ardora* (Ardora's Forest) (2014).

At 26, the Spanish Ministry of Culture awarded her the National Award for Dance for "her contribution to the renewal of flamenco and for her versatility and strength as a performer capable of handling the most diverse registers with freedom and courage."

At 28, after her outstandingly successful performance of Oro Viejo (Old Gold), Mikhail Baryshnikov knelt before her at the door of her dressing room at New York City Center.

She's been associated with the Chaillot National Theater in Paris since 2015.

Rocío Molina, a versatile dancer, is one of the Spanish artists with greater international repercussion. Her works have been performed not only in theaters and festivals such as: Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, Lincoln Center in New York, The Esplanade in Singapore, Festival de Otoño, Madrid en Danza, Festival de Nîmes, Festival Dance Umbrella, Flamenco Festival Düsseldorf, Mercat de les Flors, Chaillot Theatre in Paris and Bunkamura in Tokio. But also in renowned temples of flamenco such as Seville's Flamenco Biennial or Jerez Festival, just to mention some of them.

Throughout her career, not only has she worked with great national flamenco leading figures such as María Pagés, Miguel Poveda, Chano Lobato, Pastora Galván, Manuel Liñán, Belén López, Manuela Carrasco, Antonio Canales or Israel Galván, but also with leading figures of contemporary performing arts, such as Carlos Marquerie, Mateo Feijóo or Sebastián Ramírez.

Her artistic research has been recognized with awards at a national and at an international level (Spanish National Award for Dance, Best Dancer Award in Seville Biennial, Giralddillo Award for Best Choreography, Flamenco Hoy Critic's Choice Prize for best dancer, Critics Choice Prize awarded by the Chair for Flamenco Studies in Jerez, Gold Medal awarded by the Province of Malaga, 2015 Max Award, nomination to the 2015 Olivier Awards) and with the unanimous praise of the audience and the critics: "A gifted and intelligent dancer" (EL MUNDO), "She's like the nuclear power within an atom" (STANDARD), "An innate talent for the most racial dance" (EL PAÍS), "She is passion personified, urgent, almost red hot, taking over the body and moving it, spasm by spasm, filling it with rage and beauty." (LA VANGUARDIA), "One of the best flamenco dancers I've ever seen" (THE NEW YORK TIMES).

Awards

2016 Andalusia's Day Great Honor for her "contribution to creating a better Málaga"
2016 The UK National Dance Award for her "exceptional artistic ability."
2015 Max Award for the best choreography for Bosque Ardora.
2015 Nomination to the Olivier Awards for Bosque Ardora.
2011 Gold Medal awarded by the Province of Malaga.
2010 Spanish National Award for Dance.
2009 Critics Choice Prize awarded by the Chair for Flamenco Studies in Jerez for Oro viejo.
2008 Best Dancer Award in Seville Biennial.
2008 Giralddillo Award for Best Choreography.
2007 , Flamenco Hoy Critic's Choice Prize for best dancer.

Main venues

Théâtre National Chaillot – Paris – France
Sadler's Wells – London- United Kingdom
City Center – New York – United States of America
Shinjuku Bunka Center – Tokyo – Japan
Teatro Abadía – Madrid – Spain
Baryshnikov Arts Center – New York – United States of America
Barbican Center – London- United Kingdom
Festival Biennale de la danse – Lyon – France
Teatro de Maestranza – Seville – Spain
Mercat de Les Flors – Barcelone – Spain
Teatro Metropolitano de Mexico DF – Mexico

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The dancer and choreographer Rocio Molina has, by the age of 30, become a real living myth in flamenco. She has pushed the art of flamenco into the limits of contemporary dance, captivating the public and critics alike with her maturity and audacity. In 2016 she faced with one of the most significant challenges of her career: the creation of a new show for the Chaillot National Theatre in Paris where she happened to be the headline act for one season. Our film accompanies her between France and Spain into the innermost thoughts of her work in order to understand how she rises to the challenge of creating a performance within the universe of 21st-century flamenco. We get as close as possible to see the complete universe of this artist, who was already a prodigy as a small girl and is now a highly established and recognized artist despite her young age. The film approaches all the stages of creating this new show up until its premiere in November in Paris. This journey is the central theme of this film: the first attempts, Rocio's doubts and her fight to overcome them, her work with the musicians in her vast Andalusian property, unexpected difficulties, her travels, her highly expected performance at the Bienal de Flamenco in Seville (Spain) and directing in the Chaillot theatre, as well as her improvisations in front of the public, which is an essential and extremely innovative part of Rocio Molina's work. Around Rocio, her singers, musicians, artistic director (and many other characters in the flamenco universe) and close members of her family help us to get to know this 'chameleon' artist and to unravel the mystery of her art which seems to be limitless. We privileged to journey into the heart of her dance; a dance that has broken all of the traditional flamenco codes and passionately comes face to face with the main themes of our era and worries that are written into modernity. Rocio's body is central to this film, and her voice is the light that guides us into her unique vision of dance, a vision which is now recognized all over the world.

The first time that I saw Rocio dancing I was seduced by her 'not so flamenco' but incredibly modern gestures. I completely found myself in this identity which mixes tradition and modernity. I was born in Almeria 40 years ago. My father was a lover of flamenco and he gave me the basis of my artistic education. I arrived in France when I was 23 and I had the feeling that flamenco stagnated in a world that already wasn't mine: "I had already seen everything..." Rocio Molina came to turn this certainty upside down. Her dance speaks to me and takes me back to the child that I once was. What I admire the most about Rocio is her audacity. I want to film this audacity and the mystery that surrounds her. Following the creation of her new show at the Chaillot Theatre, this film captures the artist at a crucial moment in her career: free of all constraints and going against codes, we shall share part of the journey with this great choreographer. We are going to observe what I saw in her: the beautiful and the terrible on the lookout for a woman's body.

We filmed three types of sequences:

1) Rocio's dancing (her improvisations, rehearsals and the show presented at Chaillot) captured by multiple camera directions. 2) The clips which form a chronological main theme: her creative process, her travels, her residences, her rapport with the people who surround her. 3) Interviews with Rocio and others. We used fixed lenses, especially 35mm and 50mm in search of a more cinematographic treatment. The live sequences are separated from 'live' cinema with counter shots and fixed frames. In order to film the dancing used two complementary options. 1) Close up shots to observe the movement of Rocio 'in the moment'. 2) Long shots (using a telephoto lens) in order to capture the emotions, feelings and to feel a closeness with her body. In regards to sound work, we collaborated with Rocio's sound engineer, in search of state of the art sound design: microphones were placed on the ground, others captured the atmosphere and even the breathing (of Rocio). The whole music of the film was recorded live.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Emilio Belmonte is a Spanish filmmaker and poetry-writer. After having studied engineering and literature at the University of Valencia, Emilio moved to France in 1999 and started directing documentaries for television. Impulso is his first feature-length documentary and a return to his Andalusian roots.

TECHNICAL FILE

Writer, Director : Emilio Belmonte

Cinematography : Dorian Blanc & Thomas Bremond

Sound : Javier Álvarez

Editing : Matthieu Lambourion

Length: 87'

Format : HD 4K - 16/9 Color

Sound format : 7.1

Language : Spanish

Produced by : Les Films de la Butte (Paris) & Danza Molina (Seville)

Shot in : Paris, Sevilla, Madrid, Barcelona, Jerez

Production year : 2017

US Distributor

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