



Creation 2021

The TREE (Fragments of poetics on fire)



Piece for 9 dancers

[Video Teaser](#)

The TREE *(Fragments of poetics on fire)*

Creation 2021 for 9 dancers

Choreography & scenography | Carolyn Carlson

Choreographic assistant | Colette Malye

Performers | Constantine Baecher, Chinatsu Kosakatani, Juha Marsalo, Céline Maufruid, Riccardo Meneghini, Isida Micani, Yutaka Nakata, Sara Orsell, Sara Simeoni

Musics | Aleksy Aubry-Carlson, René Aubry, Maarja Nuut, K. Friedrich Abel

Light design | Rémi Nicolas, assisted by Guillaume Bonneau

Projected artworks | Gao Xingjian

Props | Gilles Nicolas & Jank Dage

Costumes | Elise Dulac & Atelier du Théâtre National de Chaillot. Thanks to Chrystel Zingiro

Production | Carolyn Carlson Company

Coproductions | Théâtre National de Chaillot, Théâtre Toursky Marseille, Ballet du Nord / Centre Chorégraphique National Roubaix Hauts-de-France, Equilibre Nuithonie Fribourg

Residencies at CDCN-Atelier de Paris, salle Allende (Mons-en-Baroeul) and Kiosk (Marquette-lez-Lille)

With the support of Crédit du Nord

Thanks to Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, Studio 28 Roubaix-Compagnie Zahrbat, Domaine of Chaumont-sur-Loire, Michelle Kokosowski and Martine Dionisio

Length | 1h10



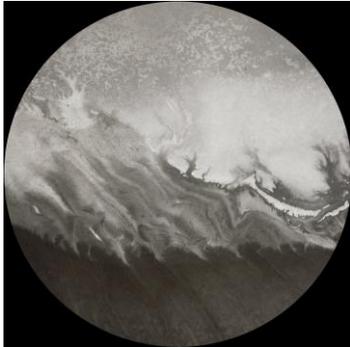
Last great creation of the choreographer for her company, *The Tree* is a poetic reflection on humanity and nature, on the edge of sinking... After *eau*, *Pneuma* and *Now*, it completes the cycle of pieces inspired by French philosopher Gaston Bachelard.

Based on *Fragments of a Poetics of Fire*, Carolyn Carlson chose the poetic and symbolic power of flames and more widely the complexity of the natural elements as inspirations for her new creation. She works with light designer **Rémi Nicolas** once again,

who creates imaginary landscapes inviting to an inner journey and contemplation. Visual artist **Gao Xingjian** also sublimates the scenography with his abstract paintings in Chinese ink projected at the back of the stage in several sequences.

Combined with the dancers' virtuosity and the dreamlike vision of Carolyn Carlson, *The Tree* is a powerful and vital expression of love to a nature on the edge of collapsing, with the hope of a rebirth from its own ashes like a phoenix.

« *We are not outside the Universe; we are seeds in cycles and rhythms as the changing seasons alongside all creation.* »
Carolyn Carlson



« *Fire is the ultra-living element. It is intimate and it is universal. It lives in our heart. It lives in the sky. It rises from the depths of the substance and oilers itself with the warmth of love. Or it can go back down into the substance and hide there, latent and pent-up, like hate and vengeance. Among all phenomena, it is really the only one to which there can be so definitely attributed the opposing values of good and evil. It shines in Paradise. It burns in Hell. It is gentleness and torture (...). It is a tutelary and a terrible divinity, both good and bad. It can contradict itself; thus, it is one of the principles of universal explanation.* »

Gaston Bachelard, excerpt from *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, 1938

“I envision the work on many levels, a painting within a painting within a painting, hidden in several layers, viewed in the realization that we transform as nature.

The sequences of *The Tree* are visions of nature, ephemeral, mysterious and intangible; reveries recalling centuries-old Nordic mythologies, those from the KALEVALA (Finnish saga) in particular. The 9 performers become what we have departed from our sources of primal instincts: the timeless awareness of endless harmony within our breath, the inner flames that feeds and consumes the human soul, the universal flame of love.

We are not separate from nature, we are trees, the wind, the waters, the earth, the air, the stars, the fires, the ashes...
We are the pattern of the whole. “

Carolyn Carlson

Video note of intent



Tour schedule 2021

16 January | Première Théâtre Toursky Marseille (postponed – Covid)

19 January | Quai 9 Lanester (postponed – Covid)

21 January | Stéréolux Nantes (postponed – Covid)

9 March | Equilibre Nuithonie, Fribourg (CH)

18 March | Opéra d'Avignon

5 to 14 May | Chaillot-Théâtre National de la danse (9 représentations)

19 May | CDN Sartrouville

22 May | Teatro Arriaga, Bilbao (ES)

26 & 27 May | Teatros del Canal, Madrid (ES)



Carolyn Carlson



California-born Carolyn Carlson defines herself first and foremost as a nomad. From San Francisco Bay to the University of Utah, from the Alwin Nikolais company in New York to Anne Béranger's in France, from Paris Opera Ballet to Teatrodanza La Fenice in Venice, from the Théâtre de la Ville de Paris to Helsinki, from Ballet Cullberg to La Cartoucherie in Paris, from the Venice Biennale to Roubaix, Carlson is a tireless traveller, always seeking to develop and share her poetic universe.

She arrived in France in 1971 the beneficiary of Alwin Nikolais' ideas about movement, composition and teaching. The following year, with *Rituel pour un rêve mort*, she wrote a poetic manifesto that defined an approach to her work that she has adhered to ever since: dance that is strongly oriented towards philosophy and spirituality. Carlson prefers the term 'visual poetry' to 'choreography' to describe her work.

For four decades, Carlson has had significant influence and success in many European countries. She played a key role in the birth of French and Italian contemporary dance through the GRTOP (theatre research group) at Paris Opera Ballet and Teatrodanza at La Fenice.

She has created over 100 pieces, a large number of which are landmarks in the history of dance, including *Density 21.5*, *The Year of the Horse*, *Blue Lady*, *Steppe*, *Maa*, *Signes*, *Writings on Water* and *Inanna*. In 2006, her work was rewarded with the first ever Golden Lion given to a choreographer by the Venice Biennale.

Founder of the Atelier de Paris-Carolyn Carlson at the Cartoucherie in 1999, she was associated artist to Théâtre National de Chaillot with the Carolyn Carlson Company from 2014 to 2016. In 2017, besides touring her repertoire, the choreographer explores new forms of creations: an exhibition for museums, a full-length dance movie for cinema... In 2019 she became a French citizen and the following year she was elected at the French Academy of Fine Arts, in the choreography section.

Career highlights

1965-1971	Soloist in the Alwin Nikolais Company
1974-1980	Etoile-Chorégraphe ('Star Choreographer') at Paris Opera Ballet (GRTOP)
1980-1984	Artistic director of Teatrodanza La Fenice, Venice
1985-1991	Residence at the Théâtre de la Ville, Paris
1991-1992	Residence at the Finnish National Ballet and Helsinki City Theatre
1994-1995	Artistic director of Ballet Cullberg, Stockholm
1999-2002	Artistic director of the dance section at the Venice Biennale
Since 1999	Founder and honorary President of the Atelier de Paris-Carolyn Carlson
2004-2013	Director of the National Choreographic Centre Roubaix Nord-Pas de Calais
Since 2014	Director of the Carolyn Carlson Company
	2014-2016: residency at the Théâtre National de Chaillot, Paris

The performers



Constantine Baecher

Constantine Baecher is a dancer and choreographer living in New York, splitting his time between Europe and the US. He is the co-founder and artistic director of Denmark's Copenhagen International Choreography Competition (CICC), and Cross Connection Ballet Company (CCBC) both founded in 2007.

Constantine is an active freelance choreographer having created works for companies such as the Royal Danish Ballet, Cross Connection Ballet, New Chamber Ballet NYC, and KUNST-STOFF San Francisco among others. From 2003-2011, Constantine performed with the Royal Danish Ballet, and in 2012 with Gross Dance, Amsterdam. In the summer of 2013, he and time collaborator Christin Hanna launched the Lake Tahoe Dance Festival and Summer Training Intensive. In 2011 Constantine received the Albert Gaubier Award for his contribution to dance in Denmark, and in 2012 was awarded an artist grant by The Danish Arts Foundation. In 2014 he dances for Carolyn Carlson in *Now*.

Chinatsu Kosakatani

Of Japanese origin, Chinatsu Kosakatani trains herself first in the Yamamouchi Ballet School of Osaka and then in the Stedelijk Institut voor Ballet in Anvers (Belgium). She works for the Oldenburgisches Staatstheater (Germany), and at the Danza prospettiva di Vittorio Biagi company in Rome. She dances for Maryse Delente, Jean-Claude Gallotta, Itzik Galili, Ohad Naharin, Jean Guizerix, Rui Horta and Michel Kelemenis after having joined the North Ballet in Roubaix in 1998. Under the direction of Carolyn Carlson, she dances in *Inanna*, *Down by the river*, *Full Moon*, *Water Born*, *Li*, *Hidden*, *Eau*, *Present memory*, *Mundus Imaginalis* and *we were horses*. In 2010, she creates her first piece *Ahimsa* and, in 2011, Roubaix Choreographic National Center gives her the creation of a choreography for a territory-based project called *dansewindows jazz*. She is part of the program to support younger talents, Red Brick #B, with a third choreography, *Something like*. In 2013, she dances for Caterina Sagna in *Bal en Chine*, in 2014 she takes over a part in Olivier Dubois's creation *Revolution* and she creates with Clément Dazin (La Main de l'Homme Cy) the duet *R2/E* in Avignon Festival. She dances also with hip-hop choreographer Brahim Bouchelaghem in *Tracks* (since 2014) and *Usure* (2019) and with aKoma névé cy in *Metamorphose* (2018).



Juha Marsalo



Juha Marsalo is a Finnish choreographer living in France. He studied contemporary dance in the CNDC of Angers before been engaged as a dancer for some famous choreographers like Carolyn Carlson and Wim Vandekeybus. He signed the choreography for ten creations of his company and worked as invited choreograph for Sasha Wares at the Royal Court Theater in London, in Belgium for Thierry Poquet at the Manège in Mons, in Germany and in France for Jean Lambert-Wild Comédie de Caen.

He was associated to the Atelier de Paris-Carolyn Carlson from 2009 to 2012. In Aubervilliers, Juha Marsalo created l'Atelier 6, a space for research and creation where his company LaFlux is based. He performs in many pieces by Carolyn Carlson, including *eau*, *Obscure Download*, *Mundus Imaginalis*, *we were horses*, *All that Falls*, *Poetry Events*, *Now...* He has lent his voice for Carolyn Carlson's solo *Dialogue with Rothko* and will be the hero of the first long-length movie by the choreographer, *The Wildflower*.

Céline Maufroid

Born in North of France, Céline Maufroid studied dance at Roubaix's Centre Chorégraphique National school. She joins the company in 1997, dances many pieces by Mayse Delente and works with invited choreographers like Ivan Favier, Jean-Claude Gallotta, Renatus Hoogenraad, Itzik Galili, Ohad Naharin, Guy Weizman and Roni Haver. From 2003 to 2004, she danced in choreographies by Andy De Groat, Christine Bastin, Ivan Favier, Motaz Kabbani, Hervé Diasnas, Thomas Duchatelet, Michel Keimenis and Rui Horta.

Since 2005, she has been dancing for Carolyn Carlson (*Inanna, Down by the River, Les Rêves de Karabine Klaxon, Full Moon, Waterborn, eau, Present Memory, Mundus Imaginalis, we were horses, Synchronicity, All that Falls and Now*), Juha Marsalo (*Scène d'amour, Perle*), Yutaka Nakata (*Salt, pepper or sugar?*) and Sonia Rocha (*Landscapes*). She throws herself into creation with *Lou(p) y es-tu ?*, a piece for young audience in 2011. That same year Carolyn Carlson creates for her the solo *Wind Woman*. Since 2013 she also dances for aKoma névé and Filament and collaborate to different projects and pieces around early childhood with the company Flocontine.



Riccardo Meneghini graduated from I.S.E.F. (University of Verona) Diploma in Physical Education and attended a professional class at "Accademia Isola Danza" in Venice, artistic director Carolyn Carlson.

In the academic year 2001/2002 he joined "Transitions" at Laban Centre London achieving diploma in performance with special mention. He moved his base from London to Scotland to end up in living in Leeds. He is regularly involved in projects in UK, France and Italy. He has worked with such choreographers as Russell Maliphant, Janet Smith, Malou Airaud, Rui Horta, Didi Veldman, Kim Brandstrup, Arthur Rosenfeld and companies including Scottish Dance Theatre, DV8 Physical Theatre, CCN Roubaix and Balletto Teatro Torino, while developing his own choreography and working as a freelance performer, teacher and choreographer. For Carolyn Carlson he dances in *eau, Present Memory, we were horses, Synchronicity et Now*. In 2019, the choreographer creates a solo for him, *The Seventh man*.

Isida Micani

Born in Albania in 1978, Isida Micani began dancing at the National Academy of Arts in Tirana. Having danced the classical repertoire at Tirana Opera, she was taken on as a trainee at the Grand Théâtre in Geneva. She discovered contemporary dance when she joined the Ecole Nationale de Musique et de Danse in La Rochelle where she participated in the work of the Ballet Atlantique Régine Chopinot.

Taken on by the National Choreographic Centre in 1999, she developed her own personal work with the pieces *Pi, Identitas* and the video-dance *Ni hier, Ni demain*. In 2003, she founded the company aKoma névé with video artist and composer Spike to produce their artistic projects. Their work *Hana* programmed by the CCN, won the audience award at the contemporary dance competition [Re]connaissance in Meylan.

Under the direction of Carolyn Carlson, she performs in *Inanna, Down by the River, Full Moon, Water born, Hidden, Eau, Present Memory, Mundus Imaginalis* and *Synchronicity*. In 2015, Carolyn Carlson transmits her mythical solo *Density 21.5* to her.



Yutaka Nakata



Native from Japan, Yutaka Nakata learns classical dance at the Nakata Ballet Theater School of Himeji. At 17, he joins the National Theater Ballet School in Australia and learns different dance forms. Following this formation, he gets into the Scala theatre school in Milan and graduates in 2001 in modern dance. From 2002 to 2007, he joins the Ballet Theater München managed by Philip Taylor. He dances choreographies by Philip Taylor, Jirí Kylián or Carolyn Carlson. From his experience in the Ajan Lao school, Yutaka Nakata incorporated martial art techniques like Tai-Chi and Muay-Thai. Dancer of Carolyn Carlson's Company since 2007, he performed in *Li*, *Hidden, eau*, *Present memory*, *Mundus Imaginalis*, *we were horses*, *Crossroads to Synchronicity* and *Now...*. He is also choreographic assistant of Carolyn Carlson on the piece *Burning* and rehearsal assistant for the piece *If to leave is to remember* that has been transmitted to prestigious ballets or pre-professional dancers (ArtEZ school of Arts in Arnhem (NL), Teatro Massimo de Palermo (IT), CNSMD Lyon). In parallel, he develops his own work with his company, DIEM Dance ImagE Motion.

Sara Orselli

Sara Orselli starts her dance studies at Dance Gallery under the direction of Valentina Romito and Rita Petrone, then from 1999 to 2002 she studies at Isola Danza, the academy of Biennale de Venise then directed by Carolyn Carlson. She dances in *Parabola* (1999), *Light Bringers* (2000), *J. Beuys Song* (2001).

In 2003, she moves to Paris and becomes part of Juha Marsalo's company in *Prologue d'une Scène d'amour*, *Perle* and *Parfum*. In parallel, she has been assisting Carolyn Carlson for years: *Wash the Flowers* in Luzern (2005), *Les Rêves de Karabine Klaxon* (2006), *Woman in a room*, solo for étoile dancer Diana Vishneva (2013), *Pneuma* (2014) for the Bordeaux Opera and more recently *Seeds* (2016). She dances in: *Inanna*, *Water born, eau*, *Present Memory*, *Mundus Imaginalis*, *we were horses*, *Synchronicity* and *Now*, and in 2010 Carolyn Carlson creates the solo *Mandala* for her. She regularly transmits pieces of the choreographer's repertoire to prestigious ballets or pre-professional dancers and assists her for Masterclasses all around the world. She also performs for Simona Bucci's company *Entre Lady Macbeth* and *Still There* and for Johanna Levy in *Convives*.

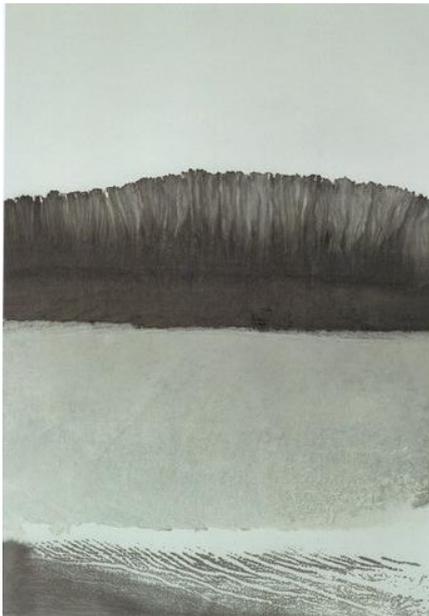


Sara was born in Turin in 1971. She graduated from the National Academy of Dance in Rome and she attended the Accademia Isola Danza in Venice under the direction of Carolyn Carlson. She studied with choreographers Susanne Linke, Carolyn Carlson, Wim Vandekeybus, David Zambrano, Giorgio Rossi, Monica Francia, Jeremy Nelson, Ivan Wolf, Mina-Yo, Ted Stoffer, Rehinild Hoffman, Nigel Charnook, Sebastian Prantl, Martin Kylvady. From 2005 to 2013, she worked as a dancer and performer in several projects at Centre Chorégraphique National Roubaix Nord-Pas de Calais under the direction of Carolyn Carlson: *Inanna*, *Poetry Events*, *Synchronicity*, *we were horses* in collaboration with Bartabas and *Now*. Sara has been collaborating with various companies: Roberto Castello, Sosta Palmizi, Atacama, Fabio Cicalà, Giuseppina Von Bingen, Irene K., Tanz Atelier Wien, Art Muov, Alessandra Palma, Tery Weikel and is now based in Berlin, developing her own work of video and dance.

Sara Simeoni

Gao Xingjian

Gao Xingjian was born in Ganzhou, China, on 4 January 1940. His childhood was marked by the conflicts with Japan, which invaded Manchuria in 1931 and finally capitulated in 1945. From 1951 to 1957, he was a pupil at Nanking's secondary school in China, where the painter Yun Zongyin taught him the techniques of watercolour and oil painting. In 1962, he obtained a certificate in the French language from Beijing's foreign language institute and started working as a translator. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), he was sent to the country to work the land between 1970 and 1975, when he returned to Beijing and resumed his work as a translator.



After Mao's death in 1976, he was finally able to travel, visiting France and Italy in 1979. Between 1980 and 1987, he published numerous short stories, essays and plays which displeased the regime of the day. He presented his literary theories in his First Essay on the Art of the Modern Novel (1981), generating wide debate on modernism and realism. His productions at Beijing's People's Theatre found favour with the public: his play Juedui xinhao (Alarm Signal – 1982) marked the beginning of experimental theatre in China. The government, which did its utmost to counter “spiritual pollution”, condemned his satirical play Che Zhan (Bus Stop – 1983) on the foibles of Beijing society. In 1985, his play Yeren (Wild Man) was the subject of fresh polemics. He mounted a first unofficial exhibition in Beijing alongside the sculptor Yin Guanzong.

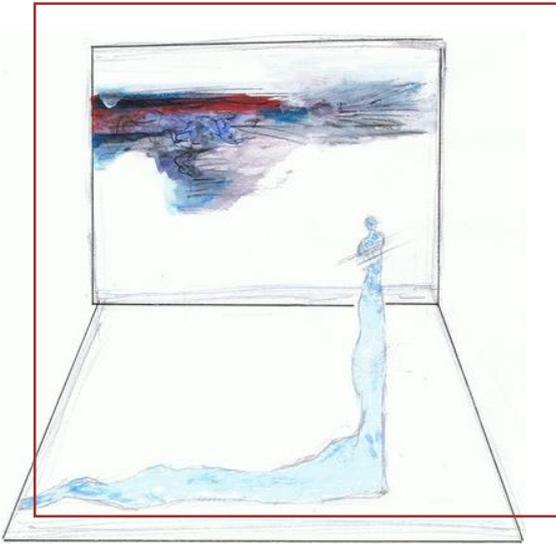
The international community lent him their support. Invited by the Berliner Künstlerprogramm in Germany and by France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he spent several months in Europe. His first solo exhibition, held at the Berliner Kunsterhaus Bethanien, was a success. In 1986, his play Bi'an (The Other Shore) was banned. In order to avoid harassment, he left the city for a year, making his way to Sichuan province and then to the East China Sea along Asia's longest river, the Yang Tse Kiang. He left China in 1987 and settled in Paris. France granted him political asylum the following year.

In 1989, following the events in Tiananmen Square, he wrote Taowang (Escape), a play that led to a complete ban on all his works in China. He became a French citizen in 1997. Even before then some of his writings were in French.

Gao Xingjian was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2000, “for an oeuvre of universal validity, bitter insights and linguistic ingenuity, which has opened new paths for the Chinese novel and drama.”

A prolific, multifaceted artist from the very start of his career, he is a writer, playwright, poet, painter and stage and film director. He worked with oil paints up until 1978, since which year he has painted exclusively in Chinese ink.





Rémi Nicolas

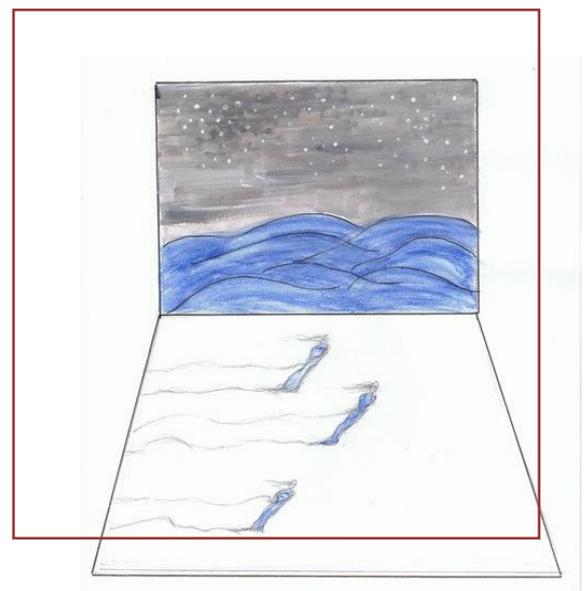


Light and stage designer, he collaborates with the company « Grand Magasin », Pierre Debauche, Philippe Adrien, Catherine Hiégel, Philippe Madral, Claude Malric, Roland Dubillard... For dance, he works for choreographers: Dominique Bagouet, François Verret, Régine Chopinot, Bernard Montet, Joëlle Bouvier... He works with Josef Nadj since 1990. One of their collaboration, «Paso Doble» (2006) with plastician Miquel Barcelo, was presented in Festival d'Avignon then restaged in Paris in 2007 at Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord and performed in London, New York, Madrid, Barcelona... He also collaborates to museographic, scenographic, private and public architecture and factual projects.

He signed several scenographies and light creations for Carolyn Carlson: *Inanna*, *Hidden*, *Dialogue with Rothko*, *Pneuma* and *Crossroads to Synchronicity*.

He enriches his creations with paintings, photos, cinema and works from kinetic artists like Nicolas Schöffer, Agam, or Francois Morellet, as well as American experimentations around Lumia art. He combines space, matter and light with sobriety; his lights are mobile and rhythmic.

"His textured lights are movable and rythmical; they do not light the dancers but plunge them into fantastic spaces". (Dance Dictionary).



Carolyn Carlson Company

The Carolyn Carlson Company is a hive of activity, a space of creativity and freedom in which intertwine gesture and poetic thought...

After nine years as director of the National Choreographic Center in Roubaix, Carolyn Carlson returns to Paris and founds her company, the Carolyn Carlson Company in residency at the Théâtre National de Chaillot from 2014 to 2016.

With a unique repertory and accompanied by dancers true to her universe, Carlson pursues her creative process: each year, the Carolyn Carlson Company carries out at least two large scale projects, a creation and the transmission of repertoire pieces to the most prestigious international ballets, while at the same time touring the choreographer's shows throughout the world and transmitting the work of the Etoile-choreographer through film productions, books and exhibitions...

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Photo credits: Jean-Louis Fernandez, Frédéric Iovino, Patrick Berger, Rosellina Garbo, Laurent Paillier

Paintings: Gao Xingjian | Drawings: Carolyn Carlson

