



*Kingdom of kilts: Wim Vandekeybus (left) plays Oedipus; Willy Thomas, Teresias*



Focus

## Complex Oedipus

Sophocles' ancient drama comes down to us twice removed in a riveting new production by Brussels-based choreographer Wim Vandekeybus

BY SARAH MCFADDEN

This year marks 25 years in business for Wim Vandekeybus, the prodigiously productive Flemish dancer, choreographer and filmmaker known for creating stage productions that bombard the senses with explosive physical energy and high-volume sound. He and his company, Ultima Vez, which he founded in 1986 with a dozen artists and dancers even less experienced than he himself then was, won international plaudits from the very start.

Only a few years earlier, this son of a veterinarian from Herenthout had switched from university studies in psychology to performing with Jan Fabre's experimental theatre and dance troupe. In 1985 and '86 Vandekeybus travelled the world cast in the role of a naked king in Fabre's *The Power of Theatrical Madness*. The next thing you knew, he had founded his own company.

The first choreography that Vandekeybus presented with Ultima Vez earned him New York's Bessie Award, an international certificate of high distinction, in 1988. Critics cited the "dangerous, combative landscape" created by the work's "brutal confrontation" of movement and music (by Thierry De Mey and Peter Vermeersch,



