

AND...

THE WORKSHOPS OF THOUGHT

Dialogue artists-audience with Fanny de Chaillé, July 22 at 14:00,
Site Louis Pasteur Supramuros de l'Université d'Avignon

CYCLE OF SACRED MUSIC

Poems by Sony Labou Tansi, with Grégoire Monsaingeon, July 20 at 11:30,
Collégiale Saint-Agricol

NAVE OF IMAGES (screenings)

À nous deux (Sujet à vif) by Fanny de Chaillé (2007), July 21 at 14:30,
Église des Célestins

TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- September 20-23, 2017,
Centre Georges Pompidou,
Festival d'Automne à Paris
- November 14-18, La Comédie de
Reims Centre dramatique national
- January 18-19 2018, Centre
chorégraphique national de Caen
en Normandie
- January 23-24, humain Trop
humain Centre dramatique national
Montpellier
- January 26-27, Centre de
développement chorégraphique
national Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées
avec le Théâtre Garonne
- January 30, Le Parvis Scène
nationale Tarbes Pyrénées, Ibos
- April 20-21, Théâtre de Lorient
Centre dramatique national

Parler (*Répète, Coloc, Les Grands*) by Pierre Alferi is published by
Editions P.O.L.

GROWN-UPS

Grown-Ups is the story of a generation: that of adults now turning forty and looking back on their childhood and teenage years. On the stage for this adventure, three adult actors are each accompanied by a child and a teenager, for a total of three trios. Discussions and dance reveal their visions and their worlds, in which plans and relationships of scale can be seen as games, as systems that might allow us to understand equality differently. Three presences in time that react to and complete one another. If for choreographer Fanny de Chaillé *Grown-Ups* is the continuation of a work started with writer Pierre Alferi on individuals and their status, it is also the show where what matters most is the poetry of bodies reconnecting. How to build our identities as adults, without forgetting the children and teenagers we once were? "Everything here is layers and repercussions, and whether it is textual or choreographic, each and every score was written by the adult to be passed on to the child then to the teenager, through a system of resonance." The stage is a mountain whose geological layers reveal those stages of life: failures, confrontations, joys, successes. To grow up is to confront those layers, those superposed slices of emotion and discourse, to understand where our bodies are situated.

FANNY DE CHAILLÉ

Fanny de Chaillé likes to separate the text from movement, to allow the two modes of communication to rediscover each other and work within the context of that separation. After studying aesthetics at the Sorbonne, she worked with Daniel Larrieu at the Centre chorégraphique national in Tours as well as with Matthieu Doze and Rachid Ouramdane, and performed under the direction of Gwenaél Morin. She regularly takes part in projects by visual artists such as Thomas Hirschhorn and Pierre Huyghe. Since 1995, she has created her own installations and performances, including the recent *Mmeellooddy Nneellssoonn*, a musical duet created for the *Albums* series at the Théâtre de la cité internationale in Paris where she was associated artist for three years. Her collaboration with writer Pierre Alferi started with *COLOC* (2012), followed by the duet *Répète* (*Repeat*, 2014). *Grown-Ups*, presented at the 71st edition of the Festival d'Avignon, is a continuation of that collaboration, and questions the status of the adult and the different layers of reality that make up a person. She is currently the artist associated to the Espace Malraux, Scène nationale de Chambéry et de la Savoie.

PIERRE ALFERI

Pierre Alferi studied philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure de la rue d'Ulm. In the 1990s, he published books of poetry and two novels, *Fmn* and *Le Cinéma des familles* (*Family Cinema*). He founded *Revue de littérature générale* with Olivier Cadiot in 1995, hoping to bring back theoretical debates about literature. Since 1999 he has directed films in which the written word travels through time and through the image, which have led to exhibitions and screenings. He has created hybrid performances and sound landscapes (*En Micronésie*, 2005), has drawn his own picture books (*Intime*, 2013), and has published three more novels, *Les Jumelles* (*The Twins*), *Après vous* (*After You*), and *Kiwi* (2012). His collaboration with Fanny de Chaillé has led him to write for the stage and perform his own text for the duet *Répète* in 2014. He teaches literature at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

71st
EDITION

In order to bring you this edition, over 1,750 people, artists, technicians, and organisational staff, have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically for months. More than half of them are state-subsidised freelance workers.



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#FDA17

INTERVIEW WITH FANNY DE CHAILLÉ

***Grown-Ups* is built according to a ternary architecture, with the representation of three different ages.**

Fanny de Chaillé: To write *Grown-Ups*, author Pierre Alferi and I started with the idea that children are rarely represented in our society, or that this representation of childhood is often stigmatised. How can we then look at childhood in a different way? We wanted to question the language of childhood itself. To see people grow up on a stage means asking children and teenagers to play the same role as the three adult actors. Three ages are represented each by three people, like three stories that echo each other. Each of the three adult actors has his own child and teenager, and their paths cross onstage, figuratively and literally. The dramaturgy is made up of three moments as well, and within that architecture, the children do not speak, but they think (in voice-over). They don't belong to the realm of pure reflection. Their relationship to the world is actually based on empirical experience, like that of the philosopher. As for the teenagers, they speak and think at the same time, often in regard to their desire to belong to a community, because adolescence is first and foremost the time when we define ourselves in relationship to others and to society. It's the age of "cliques," the age where we want to act collectively, where thought and speech are simultaneous. We called that the "word-slogan," because it is as much collective as it is injunctive. The adult then becomes the one who no longer thinks, but who speaks. But the writing of the text and dramaturgy changed over our rehearsals with the actors, who altered our original pessimism. What is it then to be an adult today? How can we build our identities as adults, without forgetting the children and teenagers we once were? We noticed that children have a very serious vision of the world surrounding them, and that indeed the memories we keep of that period are specific and clear, although sporadic. On the other hand, everything about adolescence is floating, teenagers have and are those "chemical bodies" through which intellect and thought are overcome. This alchemy takes up all available space and thoughts contradict each other because the body overflows. The memories we create for ourselves then are modelled on the building of our identity: often collective, sometimes not as clear and less individualised, the kind you can share and recognise easily. It seems obvious that the relationship of teenagers to the world has been changed because of their use of media and social networks; and if perceptions and references have changed due to this permanent access to information, all those "first times" remain, and are as fundamental as they are sacred: first kiss, first love, first rebellion, first cigarette...

How do we picture ourselves in relationship to what we were rather than to what we should or would want to be socially?

It is legitimate to wonder if adulthood can even be pictured otherwise than as what society would want it to be, that is, an age of responsibility, even normalcy. To answer that question, actor Guillaume Bailliart says that we have to play, not to

win but to lose ourselves, and to constantly reinvent ourselves. It was important to me to ask actors why they'd chosen that career, and that question remained one of the throughlines of the play. In the end, doesn't being adult today mean to conceive of yourself from a different point of view than that of your finitude? The play questions temporality because it seems to me that early childhood has become much shorter, that we now celebrate children who mature quickly and early, whereas the time of adolescence now seems to stretch into our forties. I'm particularly surprised by this shift in terms of temporality. And I want to show that there's no superiority of adulthood compared to childhood. If adulthood is a more mature age, it is because of our accomplishments, because of our ability to take a step back and question ourselves, but it isn't an end in and of itself. *Grown-Ups* aims to draw a portrait of adulthood without limiting it to an "eternal adolescence" or a downward spiral towards old age. We don't explore the past out of nostalgia, but as a way to continue to build our characters. The look at childhood is very calm, with some distance. The goal is to remember that we're constantly learning, that it's not just a part of childhood. Bildungsromans were for some of us a great source of inspiration and work: a narrator exposes the position of an adolescent who grows up, in his relationship to nature, to love...

How can characters grow on a theatre stage when growing up is less a voluntary action and more a perceptible modification of who you are?

I wanted to see happen onstage what you can't ever see in life. I used the stage as a place of possibility in the present tense. Casting and costume choices allowed us to playfully comment on the resemblance between the younger and the adult actors. The work we did on those three generations is a perfect tool to bring the reflection to an existential level, while dodging the pitfall of utopia and idealism. All that we discuss onstage is very concrete, very close to the social and personal questions we ask ourselves, and echoes from one generation to the next. At the same time, *Grown-Ups* implicitly asks the question of our job and of creation in general, and questions the audience about their own relationship to the world. The music by Dominique A puts this notion of time passing in perspective, this idea of people who grow up and whose worldview changes: "*from the beginning until the middle of the road, and from the middle of the road until the end.*" That song plays at several points during the show, like a leitmotif in a film, and insists on the echoes between all three ages. The choreographic scores were designed with the adult actors, and then copied by the bodies of the children and teenagers. All the scores work on this idea of splitting something in two: when the adults are heard in voice-over, the bodies of the children move and dance, then those of the teenagers come in. The voices are often separated from the bodies in my work, but here the scores are superimposed like layers to create a choral ensemble.

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Interview conducted by Moïra Dalant and translated by Gaël Schmidt-Cléach