

## AND...

## YOUNG AUDIENCE SHOWS

*Léonie and Noémie*, Karelle Prugnaud, July 16 to 23,  
Chapelle des Pénitents blancs

## THE WORKSHOPS OF THOUGHT

*Childhood and teenage years Odysseys*  
with Inês Barahona and Miguel Fragata,  
Scènes d'enfance - Assitej France, July 14 at 11:00,  
Site Louis Pasteur Supramuros de l'Université d'Avignon

## CINEMATIC TERRITORIES

July 7 to 22, cinéma Utopia-Manutention  
Initiation to animation cinema workshops, July 9 to 13 at 14:00  
and July 17 to 21 at 14:00, conservatoire du Grand Avignon

## VISITS FOR THE FAMILIES

July 7 to 22 at 10:30, departure place du Palais des papes  
informations and booking at [visitejeunesse@festival-avignon.com](mailto:visitejeunesse@festival-avignon.com)

## YOUNG SPECTATOR'S GUIDE

available in all Festival venues

## WEB-TV

A web documentary about the show is produced by the Young Culture Reporters  
and will be available on [festival-avignon.tv](http://festival-avignon.tv)

## TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- September 21 to 23, 2018, Festival Todos, Lisbon (Portugal)
- September 29, Centro cultural municipal, Vila das Aves (Portugal)
- October 3 to 5, Teatro do Campo Alegre, Porto (Portugal)
- October 27, O Espaço do Tempo, Convento da Saudação, Montemor-O-Novo (Portugal)
- February 8 and 9, 2019, Festival de Liège (Belgium)
- March 14 to 23, Théâtre de la Ville, Paris
- April 12 and 13, Teatro Constantino Nery, Matosinhos (Portugal)

## BEYOND THE FOREST, THE WORLD

Two actresses wait for us, sitting on a long carpet in front of a map of the world. They are about to tell us the tale of Farid, a young Afghan boy, taking us on a grimly topical initiatory journey. *Beyond the forest, the world* talks about the migrant crisis in Europe, as seen through the eyes of a child. Suitcases litter the stage, appear with at every step of the journey, every new crossing, and with each stop they open, alternately revealing new worlds and comfortably familiar figures. From fiction to reality, the time of the characters gets closer and closer to that of the audience, and the story stops to let the brutality of the situation sink in. On the stage, the actresses wonder about the situation of women in Afghanistan, the role of theatre and of the individual, and how to re-imagine this children's tale in every European country... It's a brave journey towards the unknown, sometimes disturbing, and with an unpredictable ending, but accompanied by the sweetness of family memories.

## INÊS BARAHONA AND MIGUEL FRAGATA

After studying philosophy, Inês Barahona tried her hand at various things, from writing to dramaturgy to the basics of pedagogy. Miguel Fragata trained in drama, worked with several companies as an actor, and now works as a director. Together, they founded the company Formiga Atómica in 2014, and have developed projects aimed at adults and children alike which explore the close relationship between art and education. They have repeatedly chosen to focus on contemporary topics: death with *La Marche des éléphants* (*The March of the Elephants*), the refugee crisis with *Beyond the forest, the world*, or adolescence with *Montagnes russes* (*Roller Coaster*).

72<sup>th</sup>  
EDITION

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

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## INTERVIEW WITH INÊS BARAHONA ET MIGUEL FRAGATA

**At the heart of this play is the question of who it is addressed to. Through the story of a young Afghan refugee in England, who do you want to talk to?**

**Miguel Fragata:** We like to create shows aimed as much at adults as at children. *Beyond the forest, the world* is for anyone age 8 and up. The central character of Farid is based on stories about child refugees we heard about in the news, on the internet, or on television. We generally begin our creations by spending some time on research, gathering data. We collected true stories and news items before writing a work of fiction directly inspired by them. We didn't meet any young refugees while working on the show, but after some performances, people came up to us to ask us how we were able to write about their stories in such detail. We didn't plan on writing a show about the refugee crisis, but rather on creating a dialogue between traditional stories, such as fairy tales, and topical and extremely modern stories about financial crises, climate change, or migratory flows, but always seen through the eyes of a child. It was during that initial research period that the refugee crisis became an obvious point of reference to tell the story of a child while tackling all those questions with his journey through Europe.

**You talk about oral literature. Did you write this show like a fairy tale?**

**Inês Barahona:** Yes and no. Our shows do have much to do with the oral tradition. They're written in that perspective, but they remain anchored in the theatre, we sometimes interrupt the narrative with moments of pure theatrical convention. It allows us to find a balance between diving into an adventure and letting it guide us, to the point maybe of disappearing inside it, and stepping out of it to look at it critically by coming back to the immediate temporality of the performance. We do that through direct addresses to the audience, but also thanks to concrete allusions to theatre itself: two actresses play with the fact that they are there, onstage, outside of their characters, in front of people. Those moments of metatheatre let us highlight the initial irony of Farid's story, which begins in Afghanistan, a country where women live in very difficult conditions. That's why we chose to have two actresses, rather than a young man who would play Farid. It operates a shift in how we look at things, and allows us to be more critical towards the situations we're depicting. We want the two temporalities to become superimposed: that of the story, of literature in a way, and that of the audience and of the actors together at the theatre.

**Miguel Fragata:** Having two actresses onstage allows us to more easily use detachment and talk about the condition of women. The character of the mother is a central one, and then there's another woman, a social worker who helps Farid when he arrives in England. The story begins and ends with female figures. Since Farid doesn't appear in the flesh, he exists all the more vividly in our heads, and we can make his journey ours. With this slide from reality to fiction, we had to make sure that the story wasn't made up of unbelievable episodes which would make it seem like a fantastic adventure. It was important to stop frequently in order to remind ourselves of the brutality of that reality.

**How did you decide to represent this long journey across Europe on the stage?**

**Miguel Fragata:** Often when we begin writing, we already have an idea about how it's going to look on the stage, which guides us as we write the text. For this show, our research drove us, we wrote the text but it changed a lot later when we started working with the actresses and staging the play. The scenography puts the audience in a situation of proximity and intimacy, we pay close attention to the details, keeping in mind the idea of a zoom or visual focus. The stage isn't too big, so that we can tell the story as it would have been in the old time, by the fireside. We work towards this kind of intimate tension, on the sensory details people experience when they gather together. The question of cultural integration is precisely what we want to shine a light on. The show asks that concrete, relevant question.

**Inês Barahona:** The main prop that symbolises this journey is the suitcase, there's a multitude of them on the stage. They hold the bare necessities needed to survive on a daily basis, but also to remember certain memories, in order not to forget your country and culture. Suitcases open throughout the journey to symbolise important moments: one of them opens to reveal the sea, another a bunch of bananas, to symbolise Farid's trip between Calais and England, hidden in a lorry... Those objects help us tell the story, they're the memories of a crossing but also of what life was before: family members who remained behind, from the sisters to the grandfather. The narrative isn't just textual, but sensorial as well. The suitcases allow us to focus on certain details, and create a strong link with children in the audience, who are always waiting for the next suitcase to open and the story that will follow.

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