

4-26 July 2008

## 62<sup>nd</sup> Festival d'Avignon

### English version of the program

This document contains the English version of the program. The page references refer to the French version where details of the casts and crews are also available.

#### page 2 EDITORIAL

*Midway in the journey of our life  
I came to myself in a dark wood,  
for the straight way was lost.  
Ah, how hard it is to tell  
the nature of that wood, savage,  
dense and harsh –  
the very thought of it renews my fear!*  
*Hell (Canto I), The Divine Comedy, Dante*

Before creating this 62<sup>nd</sup> Festival, we spent a great deal of time talking with the actress **Valérie Dréville** and the Italian artist **Romeo Castellucci**, whom we asked to be associate artists together. They are in very different creation spaces. Valérie Dréville, an actress, built an artist's career with directors such as Antoine Vitez, Claude Régy, Alain Françon and Anatoli Vassiliev. Romeo Castellucci, the creator of his own shows, has invented a sensitive and visual form of theatre that is extraordinarily powerful. Their art forms always offer the spectators an opportunity to have a strong and singular experience and often lead them to unexpected territories, to hear beyond words, to see beyond images.

We chose to publish one of our conversations to accompany the spectators in their journey through the Festival.

This Festival's creations query us on life and death, on our fears and melancholy, our need to love and to believe, to grow and transmit. Based on contemporary writings or revisiting the great works of the European repertory, they will call on our curiosity, our desire for discovery and will sometimes take us into an unknown land to better stimulate our own critical spirit. As it encompasses the mystery of the human being in all his complexity, as it calls on the spectator's intelligence and respects the freedom of his viewpoint on the shows, this Festival is political and resists the temptations to simplify what surround us.

It reminds us that theatre has carried within itself, since its very beginnings, that paradoxical desire for a common image of the world that is shared by the spectators who are present, together, at an

experience but that will strike each of them differently. In this sense, it symbolically goes beyond the venue of the theatre itself and invests the city. That is why public policies, in France as in Europe, need to consider artistic creation as an unalienable public good and that its production and programming must be supported apart from just the laws of the market, in an approach centred on solidarity and sharing.

We await you, artists and spectators, this summer in Avignon, so that theatre comes to pass and, we, together bear witness to its necessity, diversity and vitality.

**Hortense Archambault, Vincent Baudriller** directors  
Avignon, 7 March 2008

#### page 3 CONVERSATION FOR THE FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON 2008

*Extracts from a crossed interview with Valérie Dréville,  
Romeo Castellucci, Hortense Archambault  
and Vincent Baudriller*

**Romeo Castellucci:** There has always been an absolutely essential confrontation in Avignon of theatre work with the public. Right from my first show here, *Giulio Cesare* in 1998, there had been at the same time that total fragility, that absolute exposure, as if the show were naked in front of the public and the protection brought by the fact of being part of a more general intention specific to the Festival, to its choice, its ambitions, the community that it brings together. [...]

**Valérie Dréville:** I think that Avignon is where it all began. In 1987, with *The Satin Slipper* staged by Antoine Vitez in the Cour d'honneur, this resembles a revelation vis-à-vis theatre, vis-à-vis an adventure like that of *The Satin Slipper*, vis-à-vis Antoine Vitez, the encounter with Claudel, with the actors or the public. This fuel is still burning,

20 years later, a living flame with slow combustion. Avignon... It's a certain way of doing theatre that includes a feeling of happiness, an extremely sensual pleasure, a disconcerting jubilation. I've always felt intense happiness here, connected to the freedom left up to the shows, to childhood memories that resurfaced, but also because it's a space of combat and conflict. You can't have one without the other: that's the condition for the pleasure taken and given in Avignon.

**Hortense Archambault:** The "contract" signed between the Festival and the spectators doesn't prevent conflict, or a form of combat, but it gives it a framework in which the shows play by certain rules, which imply respect for others. The stronger the contract, the more relief the encounter can take.

**Vincent Baudriller:** The sensuality and combat Valérie is talking about also go through the spectator's body. [...]

**Romeo Castellucci:** I have the impression that time is divided in two here. The time of the performance, which is often epidermal [...] and then that of the encounter, the discussion, the forum, which for me is a lot more serene... Theatre is a very strong experience of oneself as if it involved a fit of awareness. Knowledge reaches each spectator through his body. So that has something to do with each individual's solitude. But theatre makes it possible to share this solitude with other solitudes during a performance.

That is what the show can seize upon, but it is a fleeting and fragile impression. Theatre, as I conceive it, is a ceremonial that could awaken the spectator's view on things.

We need to share this view, it's a necessity, it isn't simple curiosity, that flat view of communication, the theatre's view that we can share while watching a show, is on the contrary hypnotic, it moves, it is capable of shifting and "shaping" the things it sees. But that is only possible because of the communion with the spectators. [...]

This view is that of the body, it is very physical: it functions like a pore in the skin, through which moods, emotions, sensations and also knowledge pass. Without presupposition, without advance notice, the encounter is the strongest possible, when the spectator is like a child.

**Vincent Baudriller:** Less in recognition than in discovery...

**Valérie Dréville:** It's a form of abandonment too... When viewing a show, you sometimes say to yourself: "I have to let go of part of me..." You have to let go, release yourself, it's difficult. Sometimes you can't find it. It's a very strange exercise. As an

actor, on the stage, you really feel the concentration, the transformation at work in the show. Something starts to vibrate between people, which simultaneously mobilizes seeing, hearing, skin, bodies. The spectator abandons his passivity, comes out of himself to offer himself to the show he is seeing.

**You'll find this complete crossed interview in a work published in collaboration with P.O.L éditions, distributed free of charge on request at the Cloître Saint-Louis, the École d'Art and the Festival's shop. It can also be downloaded from the Internet site.**

## page 4 VALÉRIE DRÉVILLE

Associate artist

It is the desire to learn that seems to be at the heart of **Valérie Dréville's** approach to acting, even more than the desire to act. This is undoubtedly what makes her career atypical, rich in adventures and powerful experiences that transform her and permit her to always be where she is not necessarily expected. Learning and transmitting, of course, because Valérie Dréville does not want to isolate herself in an individual practice whose sterility would be totally foreign to her nature, someone who loves above all to share. Learning at the school of the Théâtre National de Chaillot with Antoine Vitez, her first master, the one who taught her that you must look outside yourself. Under his direction, she acted in some of the most important shows in the 1980s: *Electra* by Sophocles, *The Satin Slipper* by Paul Claudel, *Galileo* by Bertolt Brecht and *La Celestina* by Fernando de Rojas. Learning with Claude Régy, a master met at the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique of Paris which she entered after the Chaillot. With Claude Régy, she explored another dimension of acting that she did not consider opposed to that of Antoine Vitez but, on the contrary, that she used as an extension of what she had already learned. With Claude Régy, she went deeper into herself to leave the possibility of expressing herself to her unconscious, and through it she encountered the universes of Gregory Motton (*The Terrible Voice of Satan*), Jon Fosse (*Someone Is Going to Come*, then *Variations of Dead*), David Harrower (*Knives in Hens*), Henri Meschonnic (who translated the Biblical psalms in *Like a song of David*) and Maurice Maeterlinck (*The Death of Tintagiles*). Joining the Comédie-Française as a resident on the request of Antoine Vitez, who was appointed its administrator in 1988, she met her third master there, the Russian

director Anatoli Vassiliev, who asked her to act in *Masked Ball* by Lermontov. Under his direction, she acted notably in *Medea Material* by Heiner Müller for several successive seasons starting in 2002. She had previously acted in *Amphitryon* by Molière, then took charge, on Vassiliev's request, of the "verbal training" of her fellow actors at the Comédie-Française for a new creation of *Amphitryon* by the Russian master in 2002. Meeting Anatoli Vassiliev was decisive for the actress, not only for the shows in which he offered her to act, but also, and perhaps above all, because this encounter allowed her to return to training. It permitted her to acquire knowledge of the Russian school and the tradition that stemmed from Stanislavski, and to discover the heart of Anatoli Vassiliev's research: a determination to go towards a theatre of ideas that expresses itself through work on words. To undertake this challenge, she learned Russian and spent time on several occasions in his theatre school in Moscow. These intensive learning periods did not prevent her from working as much in cinema (with Jean-Luc Godard, Alain Resnais, Philippe Garrel, Arnaud Desplechin, Nicolas Klotz, Michel Deville) as in the theatre with Alain Françon who directed her in two plays by Edward Bond (*The War Plays* in 1994 and *Chair* in 2006), Luc Bondy for whom she was an unforgettable Phedra, Aurélien Recoing who offered her a role in *Golden Head* by Paul Claudel, but also Bruno Bayen, Jean-Pierre Vincent, Lluis Pasqual, Julie Brochen... For each of these directors, she has always been ready to call herself into question, contributing her energy, availability and commitment to make an "adventurous" theatre that addresses itself to a public curious about these adventures and discoveries come alive. At the Festival d'Avignon, she acted in *The Satin Slipper* by Paul Claudel, directed by Antoine Vitez (1987) in the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace, *La Celestina* de Fernando de Rojas, directed by Antoine Vitez (1989), *The War Plays* by Edward Bond, directed by Alain Françon (1994), *Amphitryon* by Molière, directed by Anatoli Vassiliev (1997), *Medea Material* by Heiner Müller, directed by Anatoli Vassiliev (2002) and *Chair* by Edward Bond, directed by Alain Françon (2006). She worked with Julie Brochen contributing her viewpoint to the staging of *The Exchange* by Paul Claudel, presented at the Festival d'Avignon 2007. She has also given many readings, the most recent ones being poems by Otto Tolnai in 2006 and by Robert Desnos in 2007.

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**GAËL BARON /  
 NICOLAS BOUCHAUD /  
 CHARLOTTE CLAMENS /  
 VALÉRIE DRÉVILLE /  
 JEAN-FRANÇOIS  
 SIVADIER**

**Gaël Baron** studied at the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique. While acting in works by Pasolini, Koltès, Wyspianski, Lagarce and Schwab under the direction of Stanislas Nordey, he also worked for many directors including Claude Régy, Jean-Pierre Vincent, Stéphanie Loïk, Gildas Milin, Jean-François Sivadier, Gislaïne Drahy, Françoise Coupat, Gérard Watkins, Bruno Meyssat and Daniel Jeanneteau.

**Nicolas Bouchaud** met Didier-Georges Gably (1955-1996) in 1992 with whom he worked until the death of the author-director, who produced several shows that were among the most important of their period. He then continued the same type of adventure with Jean-François Sivadier. He also notably worked with Rodrigo García, Bernard Sobel and the Théâtre Dromesko. At the Festival d'Avignon, he already acted in *Hollows* and *Des cercueils de zinc (Zine Coffins)* by Didier-Georges Gably in 1993, *Henry IV* by Shakespeare directed by Yann-Joël Collin in 1999 and the title roles directed by Jean-François Sivadier - *Galileo* by Brecht in 2002, *Danton's Death* by Büchner in 2005 and *King Lear* by Shakespeare in 2007.

**Charlotte Clamens** met Valérie Dréville at the Chaillot school under the direction of Antoine Vitez, who hired her to act in *Electra* in 1986. She next worked with Laurent Pelly and Alain Françon, Marcel Bozonnet and Tilly, then with Jean-François Sivadier. She acted in *Italienne avec orchestre (Italian with Orchestra)*, *Noli me tangere* and *Danton's Death*. She also teaches in several schools. In *Break of Noon*, she contributes an outside view to its collective staging. At the Festival d'Avignon, Charlotte Clamens acted in *Henry IV* by Shakespeare directed by Yann-Joël Collin in 1999, *Bérénice* by Racine directed by Lambert Wilson in 2001 and *Danton's Death* by Büchner directed by Jean-François Sivadier in 2005.

Trained as an actor by Didier-Georges Gably, then at the school of the Théâtre National de Strasbourg, **Jean-François Sivadier** has notably worked with Jacques Lasalle, Christian Rist, Alain Françon, Dominique Pitoiset, while becoming a

director. He wrote *Italienne avec orchestre (Italian with Orchestra)*, which premiered in 1996 and was revived in 2003, a brilliant satire on the world of opera that he frequented when he put on stage *Madame Butterfly* by Puccini and *Wozzeck* by Alban Berg. Faithful to his training with Didier-Georges Gabily, he considers that theatre can only be a collective work. At the Festival d'Avignon, Jean-François Sivadier acted in *Hollows* by Didier-Georges Gabily in 1993 and in *Henry IV* by Shakespeare directed by Yann-Joël Collin in 1999 and presented *Galileo* by Brecht in 2002, a diptych, *Galileo - Danton's Death* by Büchner in 2005, and *King Lear* by Shakespeare in the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace in 2007.

**Paul Claudel** (1868-1955) was 37 years old when he wrote *Break of Noon*, a work he clearly acknowledged as autobiographical. At the end of a love relationship with a married woman, he experienced the drama of separation. From this passion he lived on Chinese soil, when he was the French consul in Fou Tchou, was born the first version of *Break of Noon*, published in 150 copies secretly sent to a few friends. It was only in 1948 that he agreed that a reworked version be published and staged by Jean-Louis Barrault.

## Partage de midi (Break of Noon)

BY **PAUL CLAUDEL**

4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 14 15 16  
17 18 22 23 24 25 26

CARRIÈRE DE BOULBON • 9.30 p.m. • estimated running time 2 hours 45 mins • 2008 premiere

directed by **Gaël Baron, Nicolas Bouchaud, Charlotte Clamens, Valérie Dréville and Jean-François Sivadier**

food and beverages available at the venue

**A rare** project in the French theatre, *Break of Noon* is acted and directed by four actors: Valérie Dréville, Jean-François Sivadier, Nicolas Bouchaud and Gaël Baron, under the gaze of a fifth person: Charlotte Clamens. Actors with diverse careers whose situation is a mirror image of that of the characters in *Break of Noon*, as is described at the beginning of act 1: "Let us examine our hands as when you play poker, the cards dealt / Here we are involved together in the game like four needles, and who knows the wool / That fate has reserved for us to knit all four of us together?" In Claudel's writing, actors and characters merge and space is first shown as theatre, as the place of an experience that is undertaken between actors and spectators, like an invitation to share the same treasure. *Break of Noon*, presented here in its first version, unfolds around the mystery of passion. Claudel wrote this version "in the heat of the

moment", without any retrospection, when he found himself in the loss and pain of a great love, mad, carnal, erotic. The word "sharing" also refers to amorous sharing, the object of the sharing, this Ysé who successively belongs to the three men in the play, shared between contradictory desires. It is a singular play because it is autobiographical: "Claudel wrote and rewrote *Break of Noon* with the feeling of writing and rewriting his own life as if the biographical text and the dramatic text were the two sides of the same text", Anne Ubersfeld notes. *Break of Noon* is firstly the experience of exile, of China which gradually hems in the characters with its shadows, and that of war as well, at the moment of the Chinese Boxer Rebellion against European occupation. Claudel was confronted on all sides by the colonial problem with its brutality and rapacious conquest. It is in this war situation that the exaltation of carnal and spiritual desire between Ysé and Mesa, emblematic figures of impossible love, is consumed... To tell the truth about these conflicts, the author has invented a unique language, far from academicism, a language of breath that questions the very practice of the actor and that involves a genuine theatricalness of the bodies. We can dream of this theatre ensemble as a collective power, a poetic association, with art as the authentic utopian horizon.

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ON VALÉRIE DRÉVILLE

**Rendez-vous  
with Antoine Vitez**  
"La nostalgie de l'avenir"  
("The nostalgia of the future")

7-22 July

MUSÉE CALVET • 11 a.m. • free admission

detailed program in the spectator's guide, available at the beginning of July

It is inconceivable for Valérie Dréville to be an associate artist of the Festival d'Avignon without mentioning Antoine Vitez. With the Festival d'Avignon, several students, colleagues and friends of Antoine Vitez got together to discuss his still tangible presence in today's theatre, to have his words ring out, those words in movement that continue to be a stimulant. To shed light on the many dimensions this man of the theatre had, and on his remarkable richness – director, pedagogue, poet, translator – they imagined rendez-vous with different forms and contents, mirroring Antoine Vitez himself. These rendez-vous will be opened by a cycle of accounts on the work and the man, in collaboration with France Culture.

Words on Antoine Vitez France Culture

7 July **Alain Crombecque** (tentative)

8 July **Valérie Dréville** • 9 July **Pierre Vial**

10 July (underway) • 11 July **Jack Ralite**

16 July

Vitez en effigie (Vitez in effigy)

proposed by **Éloi Recoing**

Using puppets, a plethora of texts by Antoine Vitez staged to make “something” of the actor’s art, as he conceived it, spring forth.

17 July

“Je suis Ysé, c’est moi” (“I am Ysé, it is I”)

proposed by **Valérie Dréville**

Madeleine Marion played Ysé in *Break of Noon* opposite Antoine Vitez directed by Roland Monod in 1958. Valérie Dréville, Vitez’s student, plays Ysé today at the Festival 2008. Two actresses will dialogue face to face on their interpretation of the role, their view of the play and Vitez’ relationship to Paul Claudel.

18 July

“L’école est le plus beau théâtre du monde”

(“School is the most beautiful theatre in the world”)

proposed by **Dominique Valadié**

Dominique Valadié, herself trained by Vitez, presents with her first-year students at the Conservatoire National Supérieur d’Art Dramatique a workshop based on *Tartuffe* so that the transmission of these words incarnated in the very bodies of the young actors can be felt.

19 July

“Les hommes sont des arbres”

(“Men are trees”)

proposed by **Georges Aperghis**

At the crossroads of poetry and music, an actor will recite Antoine Vitez’s poems; intruding between these readings, a pianist will interpret *Les Secrets élémentaires* (*The Elementary Secrets*), pieces for piano composed by Georges Aperghis.

20 July

“Jeudi, je traduis du grec”

(“Thursday, I’m translating from the Greek”)

proposed by **Georges Banu** and **Éloi Recoing**

Enlightenment on Antoine Vitez’s relationship with foreign languages, a lover of languages for whom “directing means translating”.

22 July

“On entend dans la nuit le rire des acteurs...” (“We hear actors’ laughter in the night...”)

proposed by **Nathalie Léger** and **Philippe Girard**

Actors will read a group of unpublished texts – letters and notes sent by Antoine Vitez to

his actors – so that we can enter this intimacy between the director, his actors and their art.

**and**

4-26 July • ÉCOLE D’ART

opening hours 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Portraits au miroir (Portraits in the Mirror)

exhibition of photographs by **Antoine Vitez**

In addition to being a director, writer and translator, Antoine Vitez, a photographer’s son, also did a great deal of photographic work including portraits, bringing together images of shows, rehearsals, backstage and actors being made up. This series titled *Portraits in the Mirror*, 19 photos of which can be seen here, is marked by the choice of a form favourable to capturing human beings, a sharp, incisive work.

## Anatoli Vassiliev

Thérèse philosophe (Thérèse the Philosopher)

7 July • MUSÉE CALVET • 7 p.m. • free admission

public broadcast of the radio premiere created for France Culture by **Anatoli Vassiliev** and **Jacques Taroni**  
Published in 1748, *Thérèse the Philosopher* was valued by Marquis de Sade who considered this “charming work” as “the only one that pleasantly connects lust and impiety”. But its real originality is less a matter of its justification of nature and sensual pleasure as the importance it gives to woman’s expression of desire. Anatoli presented the theatre premiere of this text at the Odéon-Théâtre de l’Europe in 2007.

Anatoli Vassiliev workshop

5-11 July • ATELIER ISTS • 7.30 p.m.

Creations of students at the Laboratory of Artistic Research and Training directed by Anatoli Vassiliev at the ENSATT from 2004 to 2008.

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## ON VALÉRIE DRÉVILLE

After studying literature and philosophy, **Célia Houdart** became assistant director for Oskar Gomez Mata, Arthur Nauzyciel and Christian Rist before devoting herself to writing and producing her own works, which redistribute writing, sound image and movement in a global non-narrative poetic form. Since 1999, she has created *Rotozaza soir(é)électrogène pour Jean Tinguely* composed from interviews with the Swiss sculptor, *Did You Ever See Piedmontese Hills?* after Cesare Pavese, *M&W (oratorio-diptych)* in which she queries texts

by Musil, Wittgenstein, *A King without Distraction* after Jean Giono and Franz Schubert and *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, an installation co-produced with Claire Peverelli. Célia Houdart invests theatres, galleries, public venues and streets to question theatre practice and to put it in contact with the most diversified publics.

## Précisions sur les vagues #2

(Precisions on the Waves #2)

4-26 July • ÉCOLE D'ART • opening hours 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

free admission • 2008 premiere

proposed by Célia Houdart

**Upon** reading *Précisions sur les vagues* (*Precisions on the Waves*) by Marie Darrieussecq, Célia Houdart wanted to have this text heard. It is the minutely detailed description of marine phenomena – whether they are scientific or poetic is not clear to us. The spectator is invited to enter an installation where Marie Darrieussecq's words, spoken by Valérie Dréville, are disseminated in a sound and light space. The sound track conceived by Sébastien Roux is made up of randomly arranged and disseminated mini-sequences. Small blocks of texts and sounds unfurl like waves, to infinity. At any time of the day, we can access what is simultaneously pocket theatre, a music kiosk or a radio studio, designed by Oliver Vadrot, to listen to what might be a lecture, a lesson about things or a poem. A journey through time and space, a crossing of continents, from the “roller” of the Atlantic coasts to the “tsunami” of the Indian Ocean, these waves recount a part of the world, between the gentle lapping of water to the fury of a tidal wave.

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## ROMEO CASTELLUCCI / SOCIETAS RAFFAELLO SANZIO

Associate artist

After studying plastic arts at the Beaux-Arts of Bologna, **Romeo Castellucci** founded in 1981 Societas Raffaello Sanzio, with his wife, the playwright Chiara Guidi, and his sister, the writer Claudia Castellucci. They moved to Cesena, into the Teatro Comandini, a former ironworks, a space favourable to stage experiments, in the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna. It is here that Romeo Castellucci developed an original stage art, bringing together all forms of artistic expression (theatre, music, painting, opera as well as mechanics

and the production of images), aiming at reaching the spectator's senses. Stagecraft and its trades, like the new technologies and their most sophisticated manifestations, are mobilized in the minutely detailed conception of different shows, both very frontal and very elaborate. On each occasion, the matter is one of forging a “stage language” whose truth is revealed through an energy of bodies, through the vital and concrete presence of materials, movement, flesh, sound and visual elements, staged to produce meaning in the spectator's view. In his creations, he often works with children and also puts on shows for them like *Hansel and Gretel* or *Buchettino* (*Tom Thumb*). Since the mid-1990s, the Societas' shows have become increasingly well-known, especially *Hamlet* and *The Vehement Exteriority of the Death of a Mollusc, Masoch and Oresteia*, an “organic comedy” based on the original Greek play. His shows sometimes divide the public, but compel recognition as an experience that remains imprinted in each spectator's sensorial memory. Romeo Castellucci accepts this contradictory perception and does not hesitate to meet the public. He engages in dialogue and likes to explain himself and the Festival d'Avignon has given him many occasions to do so. Romeo Castellucci presented his first show, *Giulio Cesare* (*Julius Caesar*) after Shakespeare at the Festival in 1998. He returned in 1999 with *Journey to the End of Night* by Céline, which was one of the premiere events of the Festival in the Cour du lycée Saint-Joseph, then in 2000 with *Genesi*. In 2001, Romeo Castellucci and Societas Raffaello Sanzio launched the enormous cycle of *Tragedia endogonia*, a performance system that, like a living organism, transforms itself in time and space depending on the path it takes from one premiere to another through European cities, leaving from Cesena to return there, by way of Berlin, Brussels, Bergen, Paris, Rome, Strasbourg, London, Marseille and Avignon. The theme common to the 11 episodes, spread out over four years and an entire continent, is a lyricism of suffering, from which a vital energy of bodies emerges that the spectator perceives through a certain violence, but also through the experience of the movements, rhythms, colours and sounds of our contemporary world. In 2002, Castellucci premiered Episode A.#02 *Avignon of Tragedia endogonia* at the Festival, alongside an exhibition of some of his aesthetic and biological machines at the Chapelle Saint-Charles, including a large “ram” that was on the Festival poster, signed by Castellucci. Then he presented B.#03 *Berlin* and BR.#04 *Brussels* in 2005 and premiered *Crescite XII and XIII Avignon*. Last year, he offered *Hey Girl!* at the Église des Célestins. This year, Romeo Castellucci proposes three shows inspired by Dante's *The Divine Comedy*.

## La Divina Commedia

If *The Divine Comedy* is a text that has accompanied Romeo Castellucci since his adolescence, he does not show a literal “adaptation” of it. His work is inspired by this text, as he writes in his working notes: “Read, reread, dilate, hammer at and study in depth *The Divine Comedy* so that it can be forgotten. Absorb it through the epidermis. Let it dry on me like a wet shirt”. But he especially aims at “becoming” Dante: “In this sense, being Dante. Taking on his behaviour as the start of a journey to the unknown.” *The Divine Comedy* is a sacred poem by the Florentine poet Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), comprised of three parts, *Inferno* (Hell), *Purgatorio* (Purgatory) and *Paradiso* (Paradise), each composed of 33 canti plus an introductory canto. In all, there are 100 canti, nearly 150,000 verses, written between 1307 and 1319 when, at the end of his life, Dante finished his work, both relieved and melancholic. *The Divine Comedy* was composed at the same time as the installation of the papacy in Avignon and therefore as the construction of the first Popes’ Palace. *The Divine Comedy* is more than a literary monument for Western culture: it is a reference. Even for those who have never read it, this text makes sense and seems like a mythic country in which you visit the underworld dreading its punishments, in which you go through paradise hoping for its joys. Many writers and artists have been fascinated by this text, its images, visions, hallucinations, the breadth of its registers (amorous, mystical, erudite, allegorical, political, poetical...) and many have wanted to translate it to better assimilate its treasures (Dumas, Stendhal, Baudelaire, Nerval, Lautréamont, to mention just a few). Romeo Castellucci attempts to “hurl down *The Divine Comedy* on the earth of a stage”. He offers the spectator, in three stages and at three venues of the Festival, a crossing, the experience of a *Divine Comedy*.

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### Inferno (Hell)

BY **ROMEO CASTELLUCCI**

loosely inspired by **Dante's** *The Divine Comedy*

5 6 7 8 10 11 12

COUR D'HONNEUR OF THE POPES' PALACE • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 30 mins • 2008 premiere

direction, scenography, lighting, costumes

by **Romeo Castellucci**

**Inferno** is a monument of pain. The artist must pay. In a dark wood in which he is immediately plunged, he doubts, he fears, he suffers. But what sin is the artist guilty of? If he is thus lost, it is because he does not know the answer to this

question. Alone on the large stage, or on the contrary, walled in by the crowd and confronted with the world's hubbub, the man that Romeo Castellucci puts on stage fully suffers, bewildered from this experience of loss of self. Everything here aggresses him, the violence of the images, the fall of his own body into matter, the animals and spectres. The visual dynamic of this show possesses the consistency of this stupor, sometimes this dread, that seizes the man when he is reduced to his paltriness, defenceless faced with the elements that overwhelm him. But this fragility is a resource, however, because it is the condition of a paradoxical gentleness. Romeo Castellucci shows each spectator that at the bottom of his own fears there is a secret space, marked by melancholy, in which he hangs on to life, to “the incredible nostalgia of his own life”. This *Inferno* is also the first encounter between Romeo Castellucci and the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace. The artist dreamed of it, the artist who had already written about this site three years ago: “We wanted to imagine a series of events, an occupation of the space, that would be capable of meeting this architecture, not as scenery but as the mythic past claiming to be taken up once again and resuscitated, as the achievement of what remained uncompleted, extravagant, aborted”. And finally, here is Romeo Castellucci faced with the impossible, desired and dreaded. Put to the challenge.

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### Purgatorio (Purgatory)

BY **ROMEO CASTELLUCCI**

loosely inspired by **Dante's** *The Divine Comedy*

9 10 11 12 14 15 16 17 18 19

CHÂTEAUBLANC PARC DES EXPOSITIONS • 6 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 30 mins • 2008 premiere

direction, scenography, lighting, costumes

by **Romeo Castellucci**

**The man** who goes through purgatory – the “song of the earth” – is a curious being, constantly stopped by the concrete nature of the things and objects that surround him, in a depiction of his own life. This material occupies him, blocks his way, attaches him and often torments him. It bears witness to what exactly purgatory is to Romeo Castellucci: human life in its daily repetition, familiarity with everyday tasks, the trap of routine, the experience of the ordinary body, encounters with the finished world, known nature, the substances of life. He knows that he is condemned to wander there, among reality, represented both without distance, abstractly, and hyper-realistically, “a reality without a shadow” says the director, who has engaged himself in a major work on evolving forms. Punishment, here, is just living, experiencing

the world. This *Purgatorio* is therefore more than a show because it is also the occasion, for the spectator, for an experience that Romeo Castellucci considers very valuable: finding oneself, suddenly, on the other side of stagecraft, behind the performance. As if each individual could attend the projected show of his own life, but a primitive one, sent back to the earliest times, those of origins and birth. This suddenly offered lucidity, like an experience of a return to vision within contemporary nature, a return to sensation in the midst of a modern city, isn't it even more terrible? It is an existential anguish that springs up from this show, as if sensations and the body were dissolving in matter.

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## Paradiso (Paradise)

BY **ROMEO CASTELLUCCI**

theatre installation loosely inspired by **Dante's**  
*The Divine Comedy*

11 12 13 14 15 17 18 19  
20 21 22 24 25 26

ÉGLISE DES CÉLESTINS • opening hours 1 - 3.30 p.m.  
and 4.30 - 7 p.m. • tickets sold only at the installation site  
2008 premiere

direction, scenography, lighting, costumes  
by **Romeo Castellucci**

**Romeo** Castellucci has installed his paradise on the grounds of the Église des Célestins, between the old walls. The spectator who freely roams through this space enters his own intimacy, a process shaped by silent contemplation, by light that, from blinding, becomes dim, by a host of reflections, by omnipresent sounds. It is a paradoxical world, without any incarnation: in *Inferno*, man is excluded from the elect, here he is excluded from the world, condemned to wander in an incorporeal, faceless universe without matter, a place of pure light and limitless sounds, totally devoted to the sole glory of God the creator. "I think that it is the most terrible canto," Castellucci points out regarding Dante's *Paradise*, "a form of reversed exclusion and not a welcome!" Everything is focused on the canto of divine glory, to such a degree that the spectators' bodies seem to dissolve in the light, the sounds and the reflections as though they were losing their substance in a clarity so intense that it absorbs everything, that it was now impossible for anyone to distinguish the place's perspectives, the proportions of things, the consistency of the objects. Any psychology and any subjectivity seem to be challenged. It is there, in this path taken through the Église des Célestins that each spectator is proposed a question: what is his political, social place, faced with the malfunctioning of existence?

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reading with *France Culture*

## VALÉRIE DRÉVILLE / ROMEO CASTELLUCCI

### La Divine Comédie

(The Divine Comedy)

BY **DANTE** (extracts)

21 July

COUR D'HONNEUR OF THE POPES' PALACE • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 2 hours

translation by **Jacqueline Risset**

reading directed by **Valérie Dréville**

**Out** of this vast text of *The Divine Comedy*, Valérie Dréville has chosen a few canti that she will present, accompanied by five actors, in the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace, during a single reading combining Jacqueline Risset's French translation and Dante's original Italian poems. Through the three canti from *Hell*, the four canti from *Purgatory* and the two canti from *Paradise* that she has selected, it is Dante's itinerary, his march through this immense dark forest, that Valérie Dréville wanted to stress by also presenting the voices of the poet's travel companions. It is the central figure of Beatrice, the woman the poet adored, whom he met when they were 8 and 9 years old respectively, whom he saw twice without ever speaking to her, who will be on the stage, this beloved woman from whom he was systematically separated and for whom he started this long journey. In collaboration with Romeo Castellucci, Valérie Dréville will make the burning flame that devoured the poet spring out and that at the same time propelled him in this quest for the woman whose image crystallized the absolute nature of love. From Beatrice of *The Divine Comedy* to Ysé of *Break of Noon*, Valérie Dréville sees an obvious connection, a proximity that Paul Claudel himself felt when quoting Dante in his *Odes*.

**and**

### on The Divine Comedy

A Théâtre des Idées on 10 July, meetings and lectures (*detailed program in the spectator's guide, available at the beginning of July*) and three concerts in the Sacred Music Cycle on 11, 18 and 22 July.



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## THOMAS OSTERMEIER / SCHAUBÜHNE BERLIN

**Thomas Ostermeier** made a noteworthy debut in 1996 when he presented shows in a group of prefabricated structures abutting the Deutsches Theater, called the Baracke. Initially devoting himself to contemporary writings, he created an artistic collective around him that surprised and delighted the Berlin, then the European public. Appointed co-director of the Schaubühne in Berlin in 1999, he continued his work but alternated texts from the repertory – Büchner, Brecht, Ibsen... – and contemporary authors – Marius von Mayenburg, Jon Fosse, Biljana Srbljanovic, Sarah Kane, Lars Norén... Classic or modern, these plays are always integrated into the reality of a politically united but socially and culturally divided Germany, a fragmented Europe, confronted to with an attempt at a cultural invasion from across the Atlantic, from a world that cannot erase either conflict or the barbarism of its operating modes. In his artistic approach, Thomas Ostermeier, who was the associate artist of the 58<sup>th</sup> Festival d'Avignon, continues to propose a theatre that is as close to man as possible.

At the Festival d'Avignon, Thomas Ostermeier presented *Man Equals Man* by Bertolt Brecht, *Below the Belt* by Richard Dresser and *Shopping and Fucking* by Mark Ravenhill in 1999, *Dante's Death* by Büchner in 2001, *Woyzeck* by Büchner in the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace, *A Doll's House* by Ibsen, *Disco Pigs* by Enda Walsh, *Request Concert* by Franz Xaver Kroetz in 2004 and *Blasted* by Sarah Kane in 2005.

It was in late 1601 or early 1602 that **William Shakespeare** (1564-1616) wrote his *Tragic History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, inspired by extracts of *Tragic Histories* taken from the Italian works of Bandello de François de Belleforest (1556). It was undoubtedly for the actor that he especially admired, Richard Burbage, that he wrote this tragedy, surely the most mysterious and Freudian, at the same time as he finished his most joyous comedy, *Twelfth Night*.

### Hamlet

BY **WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

16 17 18 19 20

COUR D'HONNEUR OF THE POPES' PALACE • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 2 hours 30 mins • *show in German*

*with French supertitles* • 2008 premiere

translated by **Marius von Mayenburg**

directed by **Thomas Ostermeier**

**Accompanied** by Maurius von Mayenburg, associate author at the Schaubühne of Berlin who translated and adapted Shakespeare's text, Thomas Ostermeier begins a journey through one of the brilliant English playwright's key works. Inexhaustible *Hamlet*, the first of a series of tragedies written at the end of Elizabeth I's reign. Here, on the brink of paranoid madness, in the grip of his visions, anxieties and incapacity to take a decision, to choose, to assume his status as a man and crown prince, Hamlet plays with, hides from and wants to manipulate those around him, concealing behind deliberately chosen madness a murderous plan supposed to save him, free him from the "putrid swamp" that surrounds him. Trapped by the court, trapped by the political world, then becoming truly mad, he turns against himself the weapons that ought to have served his liberation. Seeking honesty and truth in a universe where concealment and lies reign, Hamlet loses himself in his powerlessness to act, in a growing dilemma that overwhelms him and condemns him to death. To refocus Shakespeare's work on its hero interpreted by Lars Eidinger, Thomas Ostermeier has selected a limited number of actors: six to play about 20 roles, favouring the scenes in which Shakespeare depicts, through the Danish court, a political system composed of murders, corruption and passions that serve the desire for power. It is impossible, Shakespeare seems to say, to allow room for the complexity of thought when you must act, and act quickly, politically. It is this inability to choose from the possibilities that makes Hamlet unfit for power and inexorably leads him to his death, itself a herald of the collapse of the Danish kingdom as it functioned at the time. Are we then so far from today's questioning? Thomas Ostermeier asks himself and asks us. After Büchner and Sarah Kane, it is to Shakespeare that he turns to provide us with food for thought in a here and now full of areas of shade, uncertainties and a lack of landmarks.

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## MATHILDE MONNIER / PHILIPPE KATERINE

**Mathilde Monnier** has an adventurous spirit. She likes unexpected encounters and, for over a dozen years, since she was appointed head of the Centre Chorégraphique National of Montpellier, Languedoc-Roussillon in 1994, she has had many of them. She has worked with personalities from diverse artistic fields: the plastic artist Beverly Semmes (Nuit [Night], in 1995), the composer David Moss (L'Atelier en pièces [The Workshop in Pieces], in

1996), the author Christine Angot on two occasions (*Arrêtez, arrêtons, arrête*, [*Stop, Let's Stop, Stop*] in 1997, then the duo *La Place du singe* [*The Monkey's Place*] in 2005), the musician Heiner Goebbels (*Les Lieux de là* [*Places from There*], in 1999), the film-maker Claire Denis (for the film *Vers Mathilde*), and the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy, with whom she directed "danced lectures" (*Allitérations*, in 2002). Armed with these experiences, she could come up to the expectations of Philippe Katerine, whom she met in 2005 and who "asked for and proposed her services". The project was to create a show using demos of songs from an album being produced, *Robots après tout* (*Robot After All*).

At the Festival d'Avignon, Mathilde Monnier presented *Pudique acide/Extasis* in 1986, *Ainsi de suite* (*And so Forth*) in 1992, *L'Atelier en pièces* (*The Workshop in Pieces*) in 1996, *Les lieux de là* in 1999, *La Place du singe* and *frère&sœur* (*Brother& Sister*) in the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace in 2005.

**Philippe Katerine** is famous as an ultra-pop singer, a dandy in tight pink or yellow T-shirts, the author of albums such as *L'Éducation anglaise* (*The English Education*, 1994), *Mes mauvaises fréquentations* (*My Bad Company*, 1996), *Les Créatures* (*The Creatures*), and *8<sup>e</sup> ciel* (*8<sup>th</sup> Heaven*, 2002). He has also worked outside his natural milieu, especially with film-makers, like the Larrieu brothers (*Un homme, un vrai* [*A Man, a Real One*]), Thierry Jousse (*Nom de code* [*Code Name*]: *Sacha*) and the actress Anna Karina (*Une histoire d'amour* [*A Love story*] in 1999) and he has also filmed his self-mocking diary, *Peau de cochon* (*Pigskin*, 2003). He recently published *Doublez votre mémoire* (*Double Your Memory*), a graphic journal (2007).

## 2008 vallée (2008 Valley)

BY **PHILIPPE KATERINE**  
AND **MATHILDE MONNIER**

24 25 26

COUR D'HONNEUR OF THE POPES' PALACE • 10 p.m.

running time 1 hour 5 mins

show by and with **Philippe Katerine** and **Mathilde Monnier**

**Songs** are sung, but it is not simply a concert; there are dances but they don't look like a choreographic number; stories are told but this isn't cinema. *2008 Valley* is first of all a daydream born 30 years ago, in 1978, when Philippe Katerine was a small boy, a form of science fiction near and far that let him imagine sounds, words, extrapolations from concrete events and very real situations of his future life. The valley now exists thanks to his meeting with Mathilde Monnier and takes on the colour of a yellow carpet that gradually thickens,

and becomes a form that is both worrying and maternal. Here, Katerine is surrounded by five interpreters, each with his own stand microphone, who move with him, against him, sing, dance, repeat as a chorus or an echo, create confusion on the stage, sometimes get into a fight before calming down, like good little boys. A shadow, loyal and protective, follows Philippe Katerine in his gestures, his movements, his dancer's flights as well as his hesitations, played by Mathilde Monnier, who becomes the singer's alter ego here. The seven "bodies-and-voices" on the stage tell a story, or rather stories, mixing music with dance, words with a staging as playful as it is panicky. It is sometimes brilliant, with repetitions, revivals, movements, shifts from one body to another, one voice to another, one story to another, one side of the stage to the other. It is sometimes primal, because the anxiety and hypochondria of the central character, who fastens on what comes back to him of his childhood, his life, his feelings of malaise and dispossession, hypnotize all the dancer-singers, as if in a trance. The adventure is collective: clothes are changed (black, yellow, pink, from the leotard to the culottes...) and roles exchanged: the dancers like to sing and the singer starts to dance, each one encroaching on the other's register with joyful appetite, while the show ventures onto a permanent tightrope, constantly threatening to break. This is how Philippe Katerine and Mathilde Monnier recount their adventures, between dances and songs, minor but real events and fantasy scenes.

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**JOËL POMMERAT**

An author and director, **Joël Pommerat** works with the Compagnie Louis Brouillard that he founded in 1990. Along with his team, he creates every aspect of the plays he writes for his actors, persuaded that playwriting does not stop on the first day of rehearsals but, on the contrary, continues through work with the actors, as much as through work on the scenography, lighting and sound. Often described as "theatre of the intimate", Joël Pommerat's theatre is also a "theatre of the real" deeply embedded in our time. It is pure meticulous craftsmanship in which the gesture's precision matches the words' exactness to create and maintain a constant link between the stage and the audience.

Since 1990, through 15 plays - including *Des sueés* (*Sweat*), *Pôles*, *Treize étroites têtes* (*Thirteen Narrow Heads*), *Mon ami* (*My Friend*), *Grâce à mes yeux* (*Thanks to My Eyes*) and *D'une seule main*

(*With a Single Hand*) – Joël Pommerat and his company have been following this path, deepening an original and rigorous approach that, episode after episode, makes up a familiar and mysterious theatre universe, woven of unforgettable images.

He presented *Au Monde (In the World)*, *Les Marchands (The Merchants)* and *Le Petit Chaperon rouge (Little Red Riding Hood)* at the Festival d'Avignon in 2006.

## Je tremble (1 et 2) (1 Tremble [1 and 2])

BY JOËL POMMERAT

19 20 21 • 10 p.m.

23 24 25 26 • 5 p.m.

OPÉRA-THÉÂTRE • estimated running time 2 hours

50 mins including intermission • 2008 premiere

written and directed by Joël Pommerat

**A genuine** “theatre of illusion”, Joël Pommerat’s shows marvellously play on light and shadows, natural voices and playback, to study man in his most immediate, most naked, most troubling reality. After the premiere of *I tremble (1)* in 2007, he is now premiering the second part of this show and undertaking a journey made up of brief moments, brief instants, songs, stories in a world that could be believed devoted to entertainment, that could be that of the cabaret. But in front of and behind the changing red, gold and silver curtain, a ceremonial is built in which sequins and glitter rapidly fade to leave room for the words of those who have come to tell us the truth about their lives. The inventor of theatre anthropology, Joël Pommerat carries us once again into the entrails of humanity with a host of biographical narrations, real or fantasy, about those we come across, sometimes seeing them but never hearing them: “the woman in bad shape”, “the richest man in the world”, “the man who didn’t exist”, “the very pregnant woman”, “the very old woman” and so on. Here, there is no denunciation, no judgement, no morality but contact with the intimate, all the stronger and more disturbing as it is placed in a real-life situation in a world of dreams and illusions. In its fragmentation, this work deeply touches our fascination for the images which have invaded us, beautiful images that conceal a not so beautiful reality, as Joël Pommerat multiplies the sequences like a magician or illusionist. Are we seeing a cabaret show, vaudeville, a new form of tragedy? It is unquestionably all that, combined, without any other certainty than saying to oneself that Joël Pommerat and his remarkable actors allow us to be at the heart of theatre art since we are “in the story without being in the anecdote”.

## page 24 GUY CASSIERS / TONEELHUIS

From his graphic arts studies, **Guy Cassiers** has retained the desire to make images, using all the new media and in particular video. Preferring to work on literary adaptations, he has travelled through the works of Marguerite Duras, Salman Rushdie, Marcel Proust and Jeroen Brouwers. In atypical venues, with actors, plastic artists and scenographers, he has created shows, between the Netherlands and Flemish Belgium, whose centre of gravity is often memory. Director of the RO Theater of Rotterdam from 1998 to 2006, he was appointed director, in 2006, of the Toneelhuis in Antwerp, which he runs with six creators whom he chose, including Benjamin Verdonck and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, also invited to the Festival d'Avignon this year.

Guy Cassiers presented *Sunken Red* by Jeroen Brouwers in 2006 and *Mefisto for ever* by Tom Lanoye in 2007 at the Festival d'Avignon.

**Jeroen Olyslaegers** was a film critic, radio chronicler and actor. He now writes plays.

A playwright at the Toneelhuis, **Erwin Jans** teaches at the university, runs the review *Freespace Nieuwzuid* and publishes in various periodicals.

A novelist, poet, lecturer, columnist and playwright, **Tom Lanoye** fights against the corruption of minds in a region where the extreme right is a genuine danger. He became known through his adaptation of Shakespeare’s tragedies in a single play. He has recently written *Mamma Medea*, *Fort Europa* and *Mefisto for ever*.

## Wolfskers (Belladonna)

BY JEROEN OLYSLAEGERS

5 6 7 8

OPÉRA-THÉÂTRE • 5 p.m. • running time 2 hours 30 mins

show in Dutch with French supertitles • premiere in France

directed by Guy Cassiers

**In** *Wolfskers*, the second part of his “Triptych of Power”, Guy Cassiers, after the first part, *Mefisto for ever*, takes his inspiration from three scripts by the Russian film-maker Alexander Sokurov: *Taurus*, *Moloch* and *The Sun*. A particular day in the life of three particular men, three symbols of absolute power that crushes individuals: Lenin, Hitler and Hirohito. The first, weakened, awaits Stalin to attempt one last time to deprive him of his succession; the second, waiting for his favourite artist, the architect Albert Speer, at the

moment of his first defeats in Russia; Hirohito, the emperor-god of Japan, awaiting the American general MacArthur, the day after Hiroshima... Three men who wanted to incarnate a people, three living myths who succeeded in dramatizing their life to become heroes supposed to attain immortality. It is at the moment when power is crumbling, at the moment when powerlessness emerges that they are presented to us, surrounded by those close to them. They hold forth on the future of "their" world without realizing that they have become prisoners of their fantasies. Everything begins to split apart, lethargy creeps over them, power acting as a slow-release poison, this "belladonna" (wolfskers in Flemish) leads them to destruction. Guy Cassiers is a master at creating this atmosphere of dereliction, loss of self, by putting his talented actors at the centre of a fascinating set and videographic construction that is extraordinarily effective as it allows us to be both in the present of the actions and in the mental universe of the protagonists.

## Atropa La Vengeance de la paix

(Atropa The Vengeance of Peace)

BY **TOM LANOYE**

11 12 13 14

OPÉRA-THÉÂTRE • 5 p.m. • estimated running time 2 hours  
show in Dutch with French supertitles • 2008 premiere  
directed by **Guy Cassiers**

**How** can you not question Greek tragedy when you are interested in the relationship between art and power? *Atropa*, the part that closes the triptych, returns to the mother of all wars, the unfortunately famous Trojan War. Tom Lanoye and Guy Cassiers have adapted the Greek tragedies, focusing on Agamemnon, the commander of the Greeks, and the women whom he has made victims. His sister-in-law Helen, who provides him with the excuse to start a war. His daughter Iphigenia, whom he sacrifices to guarantee favourable winds for his fleet. His wife Clytemnestra whose pleas he refuses to listen to. And lastly, three Trojan women (Hecuba, Cassandra and Andromache) whose husbands, brothers and sons he kills. In a new, powerful and unexpected ending, all these women defy Agamemnon and show him the ultimate failure of his power. Although copied almost word for word from George W. Bush and Donald Rumsfeld's speeches, Agamemnon's arguments are timeless: the logic of war prevails whatever the era. The fall of Troy, known in antiquity as the "city of towers" represents the attack on Manhattan as much as the bombings of Baghdad and Bassora. But here, this logic is shaken by fragments of the electronic diary of Riverbend, a young Iraqi woman who has kept a Web blog since President

Bush declared that the war in Iraq was "officially over". The alexandrines in which Tom Lanoye's version of the Trojan War flows alternate with the sober prose of a diary that describes daily life in a devastated city. In this way, *Atropa* allows the victims of conflictual violence to speak, but beyond any facile emotion, it dissects the age-old reasoning of war itself.

## page 26 IVO VAN HOVE / TONEELGROEP AMSTERDAM

Born in Belgium in 1958, **Ivo van Hove** staged his own texts starting in 1981 before becoming the artistic director of different theatre troupes (AKT, AKT-Vertikaal, De Tijd). In 1990, he became director of the Zuidelijk Toneel which he left in 2001 to become the director of the Toneelgroep Amsterdam. His stagings were presented at the Edinburgh Festival, the Venice Biennial, the Holland Festival (whose artistic director he was from 1997 to 2004) but also in Hamburg, Lisbon, Verona, Hanover, Porto, Rome, Créteil, Stuttgart and New York. He has staged over 60 plays travelling through the universe of Shakespeare (*Othello*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*...), Marguerite Duras, Bernard-Marie Koltès, Maxime Gorki, Frank Wedekind, Eugene O'Neill, Sophocles, Euripides, Albert Camus, Tennessee Williams, Tony Kushner, John Cassavetes,... looking in classic works as well as contemporary ones that talk about our period, that can answer our immediate as well as our timeless questions. He has been a professor at the Antwerp Conservatory since 1984 and also became interested in opera, presenting *Lulu* by Alban Berg in 1999, then *The Makropoulos Affair* by Leoš Janáček, *Iolanta* by Tchaikovsky and Wagner's *Ring* cycle in 2006-2008.

Very much in fashion during the Elizabethan period, the heroes of antique Rome also inspired **William Shakespeare** (1564-1616) who had his historical drama *Julius Caesar* staged in London in 1599, inspired by Plutarch's work *Parallel Lives on the Greeks and Romans*. Two Roman tragedies followed, *Anthony and Cleopatra* in 1606 and *Coriolanus* in 1607, also inspired by Plutarch. At the same period, Shakespeare staged *Macbeth* and *King Lear*.

## Tragédies romaines

Coriolan / Jules César / Antoine et Cléopâtre

(Roman tragedies, Coriolanus / Julius Caesar /

Anthony and Cleopatra)

BY **WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

12 13 14

GYMNASÉ GÉRARD PHILIPPE • 4 p.m.

running time 6 hours including breaks • *show in Dutch*

*with French supertitles* • *food and beverages at the*

*venue during the show* • *premiere in France*

directed by **Ivo van Hove**

**Ivo** van Hove's ambitious and coherent project presents three Roman tragedies by Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar* and *Anthony and Cleopatra*, to question politics through three adventures that present the story and the tragic fates of men and women confronted with power. In the same way as Shakespeare read Plutarch and his lives of illustrious men to analyze, scrutinize and examine as closely as possible the functioning of political power, Ivo van Hove borrows from Shakespeare to revive our reflection on what may seem immutable in this power's practices. Ambition, rivalry, the certainty of being the providential man or the supreme saviour, the demagoguery inherent in democracy, the necessity of reductive communication, the rejection of the evolution of forms of power, the chronic impotence hidden in lyrical speeches, the repression of the intimate are themes that appear in these Shakespearean tragedies that Ivo van Hove puts in the centre of our contemporary world, in places of power as we know them, international conference rooms or television studios. Extremely close to the original text, he communicates these questions so close to those that we can formulate on our democratic systems. The idea here is not to judge but to analyze mechanisms while remaining on a human scale. Coriolanus, the character who rejects democracy by denying the weight of the common people, Brutus who wants to save democracy by killing the demagogue Caesar, Anthony who can no longer get out of the imbroglia mixing his political future with his love life, are these heroes out of Roman history so far from us today? Ivo van Hove, recounting these moments in history today, refuses to accept the idea that politics is only manipulation out of reach of citizens' free choice. In a Europe prey to doubt, political correctness, pseudo-democratic populism, communication that often replaces action, he brilliantly uses the theatre and modern technology means to make it an agora, that very core of democracy. Putting the spectator in the theatre or on the stage, he invites us to look in another way at this epic, living, exalting theatre that has us hear the voices of the past to enlighten the present and, perhaps, the future.

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**STANISLAS NORDEY**

It was at Véronique Nordey's drama course that **Stanislas Nordey** began his training as an actor, which he continued at the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique of Paris. He had already directed actors in these two structures before presenting his first work as a professional director with *The Dispute* by Marivaux in 1988. An ardent supporter of collective work in a troupe, he was, with his company, associate artist at the Théâtre Gérard-Philipe in Saint-Denis from 1991 to 1995, before joining, still with his troupe of 12 actors, the Théâtre des Amandiers in Nanterre, at the request of Jean-Pierre Vincent, who brought him into artistic direction. In 1998, he was appointed director of the Théâtre Gérard-Philipe in Saint-Denis, which he left in 2001 to join the Théâtre National de Bretagne as pedagogic director of the school, then starting in 2002, as associate artist. Considering himself someone who directed actors rather than a stage director, he worked successively on contemporary and classic authors such as Pasolini, Marivaux, Bernard-Marie Koltès, Manfred Karge, Hervé Guibert, Jean Genet, Heiner Müller, Shakespeare, Didier-Georges Gabily, Jean-Luc Lagarce, Feydeau, Martin Crimp, August Stramm, Wajdi Mouawad, Fausto Paravidino and Falk Richter. He staged *Seven Seconds (In God We Trust)* and *Nothing Hurts* by Richter before proposing a montage based on *Das System* for the Festival d'Avignon. He has also continued his work as an actor, notably with Christine Le Tailleux in *Philosophy in the Bedroom* by Marquis de Sade and acts with Valérie Dréville in the staging of *Thérèse the Philosopher* by Anatoli Vassiliev. At the Festival d'Avignon, Stanislas Nordey presented *Vole mon dragon (Fly my Dragon)* by Hervé Guibert in 1994, *Contention - La Dispute et autres bestioles (Contention - The Dispute and Other Tiny Beasties)* by Didier-Georges Gabily in 1997 and was scheduled to present *Attempts on Her Life* by Martin Crimp in 2003.

Born in 1969 in Hamburg, **Falk Richter** studied directing there and began working at the Schauspielhaus as an author, translator and director. He then joined the Schaubühne in Berlin, where since 2006 he has been associate director. He staged plays in different theatres by contemporary authors such as Harold Pinter, Marc Ravenhill, Sarah Kane, Caryl Churchill, Martin Crimp and Jon Fosse, but also more classic authors like Chekhov and Shakespeare, and his own texts, including *Section* in 1996 and *Nothing Hurts* in 1999. His most recent plays, brought together under the

term *Das System*, are part of a global project including *Electronic City*, *Seven Seconds (In God We Trust)* and *Under Ice*. For Falk Richter, each play is written with an artistic team composed of professional or amateur actors during a period of four to six months. It is performed one to five times in the place where the rehearsals themselves are held. These presentations can integrate films, video, music, lectures, debates, documentary theatre...

## Das System (The system)

BY **FALK RICHTER**

13 14 15 16 18 19 20

SALLE BENOÎT-XII • 3 p.m. • running time to come

2008 premiere

translated by **Anne Monfort**

direction and scenography by **Stanislas Nordey**

**By** working on Falk Richter's plays, Stanislas Nordey continues his research on contemporary political theatre, a theatre that must be the place for truth, confronted with the lies widely unloaded by the media, manipulators sometimes manipulated, as when the second Iraq War spread out. Through fragments of plays, monologues or dialogues, extracts from the author's journal, Stanislas Nordey composes "his" Falk Richter as Falk Richter composes "his" system. Faced with the state of the world as it is shown to us, the images, ruses and myths must be put in perspective to make reality appear. With *Das System*, the idea is, through relatively short, sometimes tragic, often humorous and whimsical texts, to raise critical questions on our incredible facility for accepting the society of the spectacle as it is spread across our small luminous screens and penetrates the most intimate part of our daily lives. Documentary theatre to make us think, theatre of the mastery of style and writing, theatre of the urgency of the jolt, theatre of the satire of an increasingly minimalist coded language, theatre of the pamphlet - with Falk Richter's texts we are shaken, disturbed, amused, never indifferent. It is not just spectators that Stanislas Nordey summons to follow in Falk Richter's footsteps but citizens of the world to whom he offers this work, intended as a means of tearing away the thicker and thicker veil of the accumulated counter-truths that prevent us from really seeing the history that we are in the process of living. By putting his actors in a real-life situation, more than putting them on stage, he seeks the exactitude of the words that are addressed and the strength of the physical engagement on the stage to have this powerful voice heard, the voice of an author who considers himself extremely close to the world around us.

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## ARTHUR NAUZycIEL

After studying plastic arts and cinema, **Arthur Nauzyciel** was, from 1986 to 1989, a student at the school of the Théâtre National de Chaillot run by Antoine Vitez. He then acted under the directors Éric Vigner, Alain Françon, Jacques Nichet, Philippe Clévenot and Tsai Ming Liang. An associate artist at the CDDB - Théâtre de Lorient, the first play that he directed, in 1999, *The Imaginary Invalid or Molière's Silence* after Molière and Giovanni Macchia, premiered there and has been revived regularly in France and abroad. In 2003, he premiered *Happy Days* with Marilù Marini, presented in France and Buenos Aires. In 2004, he brought Thomas Bernhard into the repertoire of the Comédie-Française staging *Heroes Square*. He regularly works in the United States where he premiered, in Atlanta, *Black Battles with Dogs* (2001) and *Roberto Zucco* (2004) by Bernard-Marie Koltès and, in Boston, *Abigail's Party* by Mike Leigh (2007) and *Julius Caesar* by Shakespeare (2008). Invited to Iceland in 2007, he presented *The Image* by Samuel Beckett with the dancer Damien Jalet and will premiere *Le Musée de la mer (The Sea Museum)* by Marie Darrieussecq there in 2009. His theatre bears witness to his determination to have the texts heard as close as possible to their meaning, as close as possible to the actor's intimacy. Since June 2007, he has been the director of the Centre dramatique national Orléans-Loiret-Centre. At the Festival d'Avignon, Arthur Nauzyciel played in *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream* directed by Jérôme Savary in 1990, with Valérie Dréville in *War Plays* directed by Alain Françon in 1994, in *Brançusi contre États-Unis, un procès historique 1928 (Brancusi against The United States, a Historic Trial 1928)* directed by Éric Vigner in 1996 and *Life and Death of King Jean* directed by Laurent Pelly in 1998. He presented *Black Battles with Dogs* at the Festival in 2006.

Born on January 13, 1898 in Denmark, orphaned at the age of 5, **Kaj Munk** was adopted in 1916 by distant relatives. He became a pastor in 1924 in a rural parish of western Jutland. A complex personality, he was a defender of fascist ideas in the 1930s before becoming, after the first anti-Semitic persecutions that followed Denmark's invasion in 1940, a ferocious opponent of Nazism. On the Gestapo's orders, he was arrested and executed on January 4, 1944. At the age of 19, he began his literary work, which made him one of the greatest Danish poets, and he was the author of about 30 plays that were performed in all the major Scandinavian theatres. *Ordet*, written in 1925, was

adapted for the cinema by Carl Theodor Dreyer in 1955.

The translation of *Ordet* is Marie Darrieussecq's first work for the theatre. An author, notably of *Truismes (Truisms)*, *Naissance des fantômes (Birth of Ghosts)*, *Précisions sur les vagues (Precisions on the Waves)* and *White*, published by P.O.L éditions, her novel *Tom est mort (Tom Is Dead)* was the subject of a reading directed by Arthur Nauzyciel at the Festival d'Avignon 2007. She wrote her first play, *Le Musée de la mer (The Sea Museum)* for him. She is associate author at the Centre Dramatique National Orléans-Loiret-Centre.

## Ordet (The Word)

BY KAJ MUNK

5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 15

CLOÎTRE DES CARMES • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 2 hours • 2008 premiere

directed by Arthur Nauzyciel

translated and adapted by Marie Darrieussecq

and Arthur Nauzyciel

**Effaced**, concealed behind Carl Theodor Dreyer's mythic film, Kaj Munk's most renowned play, *Ordet* ("the word" in Danish) seems today like a play at the limits of mysticism and as a tremendous reflection on the forces of life which, in each human existence, are set against the forces of death. We must continue to live, fight, love... to not be inconsolable faced with the inexorable outcome. The pastor Munk does not limit his words as an author to those of the Gospels. He also makes purely human words, of love, doubt, anxiety and hope come out of the mouths of his Danish peasants. He contrasts them in a theatre construction that brings suspense to the forefront, that ravel and unravels the conflicts permitting all the characters to express their contrasting convictions. There is no right word but strong words, the words of those who believe and the words of those who can no longer do so, the words of those who hope and the words of those who have lost all hope... In this new translation by Marie Darrieussecq and Arthur Nauzyciel, we are spellbound by the original view that Kaj Munk had on the family, on belief and, more than anything, on women. We hear the doubt that crosses minds, we are troubled and moved by the expression of an amorous desire so frankly expressed. Arthur Nauzyciel returns to the Festival d'Avignon still convinced that the stage is the place where what shatters man, what raises him up, what makes him "alive" and combative may be spoken, provided that there is a strong, unique, lively language that the actors must appropriate to the point of being physically inhabited by it. All of this constitutes

the play by Kaj Munk, who considers the stage as the perfect place for dreams and miracles.

## and Précisions sur les vagues #2

(Precisions on the Waves #2)

4-26 July • ÉCOLE D'ART

opening hours 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. • free admission

proposed by Célia Houdart on a text by Marie Darrieussecq

with the ccas, in the framework of the Counter-current

## Le Moindre des mondes DE SJÓN

18 July • ROND-POINT DE LA BARTHELASSE • 7 p.m.

free admission

reading directed by Arthur Nauzyciel

## L'Incarnation du Verbe

(The Incarnation of the Word)

14 July • COLLÉGIALE SAINT-PIERRE D'AVIGNON • 6 p.m.

Roman polyphonies of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries

Ensemble Organum directed by Marcel Pérès

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## CLAIRE LASNE DARCUEIL

First studying at the Ensatt - École de la Rue Blanche - then at the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique, where her teachers were Philippe Adrien, Bernard Dort, Mario González, Jean-Christian Grinevald, Jack Garfein and Stuart Seide, **Claire Lasne Darcueil** worked as an actress with Lucien Melki, Marcel Bozonnet, Isabelle Janier, Marc Zammit, Anne Torrès, Jean-Paul Wenzel and Gilberte Tsai... She then became a director and premiered five plays by the author Mohamed Rouabhi with whom she founded the company Les Acharnés. In 1992, it was *Les Acharnés (The Relentless)* then *Les Fragments de Kaposi (1994)*, *Ma petite vie de rien du tout (My Little Nothing Life, 1996)*, *Jérémie Fischer* (show for a young public, 1997) and *Les Nouveaux Bâtisseurs (The New Builders, 1997)*. In 1996, she began to take an interest in the works of Anton Chekhov all of whose plays she decided to stage in order. She presented *The Worthless Fellow Platonov*, then in 1999 *Ivanov 1942-1999* (associating François Truffaut with Anton Chekhov), *The Wood Demon* in 2002 and now *The Seagull*. Appointed co-director with the late Laurent Darcueil, of the Centre dramatique Poitou-Charentes in 1998, she refused to stage her works in a stationary venue; the Centre purchased a big-top. She organized with Vincent Gatel, as an interval between seasons, a Printemps chapiteau which had its eighth edition in 2007. Stopping in the smallest villages,

sometimes including amateur actors, using small formats invented by the Centre's actors, this Printemps chapiteau fertilizes the entire region where Claire Lasne Darcueil does theatre.

Claire Lasne Darcueil presented, at the Festival d'Avignon, *Dom Juan* by Molière and *The Wood Demon* by Chekhov in 2002, and the big-top was set up in Rasteau with *Princes et Princesses* (*Princes and Princesses*) by Michel Ocelot and *Joyeux anniversaire* (*Happy Birthday*) in 2004. In 2006, she directed a cycle of readings of French texts there with Richard Sammut.

## La Mouette (The Seagull)

BY **ANTON CHEKHOV**

19 20 22 23 24 25

CLOÎTRE DES CARMES • 9 p.m.

running time 2 hours 20 mins

translated by **André Markowicz** and **Françoise Morvan**

directed by **Claire Lasne Darcueil**

**Claire** Lasne Darcueil has taken a kind of parallel journey with the works of Anton Chekhov (1860-1904). Chronologically following the plays written by this absolute master of the Russian theatre (*Platonov*, *Ivanov*, *The Wood Demon*), she is now tackling *The Seagull*, the triumphal success of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1898, two years after its premiere in Saint Petersburg. An inexhaustible work that is fascinating because of the depth of the analyses, the many entangled themes, the tenderness with which each character is portrayed... Claire Lasne Darcueil has taken Chekhov's initial version, the one that takes the time to go to the very depth of the behaviours, introspection, pain, hopes and despair of the characters who are never judged by an author who seems to be present in each of them, and not only in the couple formed by the diametrically opposed writers, Trigorin and Treplev. Nina, an amorous innocent betrayed by the man she loves, a mother bearing the death of her child, an actress accepting the failure of her ambitions, becomes, in Claire Lasne Darcueil's staging, a being of astonishing modernity as she goes "alone" on the pursuit of a laborious existence, rejecting the powerlessness to live and the desperate irony that seem the common denominators of those who surround her. Staying extraordinarily close to Chekhov's words and rhythms, his silences, his repetitions, emotion that skims the surface, laughter that dies in the throat, the gentleness and lightness that conceal the anguish and despair that lurk about must be discovered. It is a contained approach, all subtlety and sincerity, that appears in this work characterized by extreme faithfulness and dazzling inventiveness, enveloped in original music composed by Alexandros Markeas.

**and**

with the CCAS, in the framework of the Counter-current

## L'Ours & Des méfaits du tabac

(The Boor & On the Harmful Effects of Tobacco)

BY **ANTON CHEKHOV**

14 July • ROND-POINT DE LA BARTHELASSE • 11.15 p.m.

free admission

directed by **Arlette Bonnard** with **Alain Enjary**,

**Claire Lasne Darcueil** and **Richard Sammut**

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## DANIEL JEANNETEAU & MARIE-CHRISTINE SOMA

A student at the École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs of Strasbourg, then the Théâtre National de Strasbourg school, **Daniel Jeanneteau** became, in 1989, the scenographer for the director Claude Régy for whom he did, for over 15 years, most of his scenographies. At the same time, he conceived scenographies for the theatre and dance for Catherine Diverrière, Gérard Desarthe, Éric Lacascade, Charles Tordjman, Jean-Claude Gallotta, Alain Ollivier, Marcel Bozonnet, Jean-Baptiste Sartre, Trisha Brown... After having co-produced two shows on the work of Fernando Pessoa along with Clotilde Mollet and Hervé Pierre, he decided to direct his own shows accompanied by Marie-Christine Soma. Starting in 2001, he journeyed through the universes of Racine (*Iphigénie*), Strindberg (*The Ghost Sonata*), Sarah Kane (*Blasted*), Martin Crimp and George Benjamin (for their opera *Into the Little Hill*) and Bulgakov (*Adam and Eve*). His collaboration with Marie-Christine Soma evolved towards a total partnership in theatre creation and directing. As pedagogues, they have just staged *Les Assassins de la charbonnière* (*The Coalwoman's Assassins*) after Labiche and Kafka with the students of group 37 at the Théâtre National de Strasbourg school. Associate director at the Théâtre Gérard-Philippe of Saint-Denis from 2002 to 2007 then at the Espace Malraux of Chambéry and the Maison de la Culture of Amiens, he has just been appointed director of the Studio-Théâtre of Vitry.

**Marie-Christine Soma** holds a bachelor's degree in classical literature and a master's in philosophy. After being lighting engineer at the Théâtre de la Criée in Marseille, she devoted herself to creation starting in 1985. She assisted Henri Alekan then Dominique Bruguère for the premiere of *Time and the Room* by Botho Strauss directed by Patrice Chéreau. Working both for the theatre and dance,



she has created the lighting for shows by Geneviève Sorin, Alain Fourneau, Marie Vayssière, François Rancillac, Jean-Claude Gallotta, Jean-Paul Delore, Jérôme Deschamps, Jacques Vincey, Michel Cerda, Éric Vigner, Arthur Nauzyciel, Catherine Diverrès... Since 2001, she has been Daniel Jeanneteau's artistic collaborator for all the shows whose staging they now handle together.

Born in Münster in 1874 into a modest family, **August Stramm** was first destined for theology before entering the German Post Office Ministry in 1893, in which he carved out his career, becoming an inspector in 1909. Starting in 1903 he concurrently had a career as a writer, publishing eight short plays, three poetry collections, two long poems and two prose texts. His first work *Émigrés* is an essay that was followed by his first play *The Peasants*. It was after 1909 that he successively wrote, apart from poems, *The Sacrifice*, *The Husband* and *The Sterile*, then *The Rudimentary System* (1912), *Sancta Susanna* and *The Bride of the Moor* (1913). He had problems finding a publisher and it was his meeting in 1914 with Herwath Walden (director of the review *Der Sturm*) that made it possible for his works to be published. Before being mobilized in August 1914, he wrote *The Last*, *Waiting*, *Awakening* and the draft of *Forces*, which he finished while on leave in January 1915. After having been in trench warfare in Alsace, then in the Somme, he was sent to the Russian front in April 1915. He died there on September 1<sup>st</sup>, the last combatant in his company, after having prepared a collection of poems, *Thou/Love Poems* and finishing his last play *Destiny*.

## Feux (Fires)

**Rudimentaire / La Fiancée des landes / Forces**  
(The Rudimentary System / The Bride of the Moor / Forces)

BY **AUGUST STRAMM**

7 8 9 10 12 13 14 15

GYMNASE AUBANEL • 6 p.m. • estimated running time  
2 hours 40 mins • 2008 premiere

french text by **Huguette** and **René Radrizzani**

direction, scenography and lighting **Daniel Jeanneteau**  
and **Marie-Christine Soma**

**Daniel Jeanneteau** and **Marie-Christine Soma** invite us to discover a German author little known in France. Three short plays, three incisive views on human passions, three immediate direct observations of the desires and impulses of individuals confronted with every tropism... Neither complaisance nor moral judgement, just great lucidity on human behaviours, dissected with a scalpel, examined under a magnifying glass in a set con-

struction combining transparency and light like a scientific laboratory. To have us follow the progression of thoughts that inhabit his characters, August Stramm invented a rigorous style based on a radical economy of words, a style that evolves through the three plays, presented here in the chronological order in which they were written. From the extraverted naturalism of *The Rudimentary System* to the cold expressionism of *Forces* by way of the lyric and poetic symbolism, close to Maeterlinck, of *The Bride of the Moor*, August Stramm wrote theatre to be acted, theatre for actors in which the slightest gesture, precisely inserted in very rich didascalia, is often more expressive than the words. We discover an author who digs deep into his characters' unconscious, who expresses, in a unique manner, the halting and constantly doubting thinking of man held in the labyrinth of his passions, his frustrations and his impotence. After Sarah Kane and Bulgakov, Daniel Jeanneteau and Marie-Christine Soma continue along their theatre path with an author whose freedom they admire both for its form - each text pushes the possibilities of expression a little bit further back - and for the opening of meaning, Stramm having had the courage, at an extreme moment of his existence, to consider life with complete lucidity. A journey to go, outside any soothing pity, as near as possible to what is built and destroyed between men when social conventions explode, when moral laws can no longer be applied, when civilized man, a prisoner of himself, forgets himself and voluntarily or unconsciously exposes himself.

## page 36 JAN FABRE

**Jan Fabre** is an artist who constantly questions the vitality of the human being and wonders about the place of art and the artist in our world. He explores, to its very limits, the artist's body, soul and visions. Inspired by art history, from the Flemish primitives to Marcel Duchamp, from the Greek theatre to Antonin Artaud, he expresses himself equally through drawing, sculpture, writing and drama in which theatre and dance are combined in the interpreters' bodies.

A plastic artist, he is the author of a prolific and protean body of work: drawings, monochromes, sculptures, photographs, performances. He has invested a host of venues not the least of which the Louvre, which devoted a major exhibition to him this spring. For the last few years, his "base camp" has been the Troubleyn in Antwerp, his projects' creation centre.

On the stage, his shows, whether danced or acted, whether accompanied by music or texts (which he often writes himself), have compelled recognition for over 20 years as one of the most radical sources of the revival of contemporary theatre. They are stagings of the body and its excesses, appearances and their distortions, moods and their palpitations, that propose a plastic of saturation that can shock and fascinate, bring about adhesion or rejection. He likes to call his actors "warriors of beauty", carried along to the excess of images and dreams. Jan Fabre, however, shows deep tenderness towards the human being and his weaknesses. From monologues (*Elle était et elle est, même, Étant donnés* [*She Was and She Is, Even*]) or intimate solos designed specifically for his interpreters (*Quando l'uomo principale è una donna, L'Ange de la mort* [*Angel of Death*]) to his flamboyant group pieces (recently, *Requiem pour une métamorphose* [*Requiem for a Metamorphosis*] premiered at the 2007 Salzburg Festival), Jan Fabre's approach retains a taste for childhood and its games.

Jan Fabre, who was associate artist of the 59<sup>th</sup> Festival in 2005, presented *Das glas im kopf wird vom glas* in 1988, *My Movements Are Alone Like Street Dogs* in 2000, *Je suis sang* (*I Am Blood*) and the plastic installation *Umbraculum* in 2001, *L'Ange de la mort* in 2004 and, in 2005, *L'Histoire des larmes* (*History of Tears*) and *Je suis sang* in the Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace, *L'Empereur de la perte* (*The Emperor of Perdition*) and *Le Roi du plagiat* as well as an exhibition at La Maison Jean Vilar, titled *For intérieur* (*Inner Depths*).

## Another sleepy dusty delta day

7 8 9 11 12 13 14 15 16

CHAPELLE DES PÉNITENTS BLANCS • 3 p.m.

running time to come • 2008 premiere

choreography **Jan Fabre** and **Ivana Jozic**

conception, text, scenography by **Jan Fabre**

**Three** years after having been associate artist, Jan Fabre returns to the Festival with *Another sleepy dusty delta day*, a solo danced by Ivana Jozic, one of his muses, a dancer of Croatian origin, with whom the Flemish director has been working for several years, having already created *L'Ange de la mort* together in 2003. For this return, he proposes a work based on the great leap into the void, death, the afterlife. The title *Another sleepy dusty delta day* takes its inspiration from the hit song *Ode to Billy Joe* by Bobbie Gentry, written in 1967 about a young man who committed suicide by jumping off a bridge. The opening line of this rather mysterious country and western song is still

the subject of speculation today. The show mixes autobiographical reminiscences, since it raises questions and looks back on the death of the artist's own mother, precise and intense choreographic work with Ivana Jozic and a text written by Jan Fabre celebrating the very act of jumping into the unknown and the dispersion of the body in matter as an eminently poetic undertaking. Jan Fabre wanted this type of withdrawal, leaving it up to Ivana Jozic to appear alone, embodying his writing and presence, whirling on the stage like a light but tragic spirit, born from the vision of a dying mother and the imagination of a man in love suddenly killing himself.

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## ALVIS HERMANIS

**Alvis Hermanis** has run the New Theatre of Riga, in Latvia, for nearly 10 years. At the age of 42, he was at the head of this state institution, provided with a permanent troupe of 25 actors, part of whose programming is devoted to the classic repertory, especially German and Russian authors. He also stages the most contemporary texts, such as *Sonia* by the Russian author Tatiana Tolstaia, as well as shows inspired by elements of concrete life, such as *Long Life*, unquestionably his most well-known creation, a play that benefited from an extensive international tour and that proposes a series of melancholic variations based on the life of old people and their very specific vision of the world. Alvis Hermanis and the New Theatre of Riga's shows are most often personal and collective creations with the actors, arising from different sources of inspiration, their own experience, literature such as *Ice* by Vladimir Sorokin or the Simon and Garfunkel album *The Sound of Silence*. Alvis Hermanis's theatre illustrates an inventive form of synthesis between two contradictory traditions: Germanic dramaturgy – structured, thought-out, abstract, reasoned –, and Russian theatre – offbeat, splintered, disorderly, sometimes encumbered with a certain madness. Hermanis's work with his actors, a vital part of his approach, seems constantly pulled between these two lines.

**Tatiana Tolstaia** was born in 1951 in Saint Petersburg. She comes from a family with a rich literary tradition. After studying at the state university of Leningrad, she moved to Moscow where she worked in a publishing firm before devoting herself completely to writing. As a journalist, Tatiana Tolstaia wrote about literature but also about current events in Russia. Today, she lives and works in

both the United States, where she teaches in a university, and Russia. She is considered one of the greatest contemporary Russian writers.

## Sonia

BY **TATIANA TOLSTAIA**

5 6 7 8 9

SALLE BENOÎT-XII • 3 p.m. • running time 1 hour 40 mins  
show in Russian with French supertitles • premiere in France  
directed by **Alvis Hermanis**

**Two** men with a rather coarse appearance enter a faded apartment, playing characters with dazzling virtuosity. One transforms himself into Sonia, a woman full of contrasts, even contradictions: a dreamer, solitary, romantic, innocent and naïve, but also a housewife, scouring the dishes, baking her cakes, ready for any sacrifice. The other is a kind of distinctly real and imaginary projection of the men she hasn't had, but also the incarnation of that cruel society that manipulates her, harms her and takes her right to despair to melodrama. Femininity is omnipresent whereas the woman is, however, not on the stage. It is the determination to live in a dream, while courageously confronting the ordinariness and misery of existence that this show portrays. Its strength stems from its radical simplicity: two men to play the entire world, in the style of Beckett, who go from one register to another with amazing ease – from the burlesque to the tragic, from the humorous to the pathetic, from the dream of love to the compelling feeling of death –, and ordinary, banal sets, recreating as far as the fetishist obsession a dull Russian interior of the 1930s. So well that *Sonia* offers the rare gift of an autonomous show, sufficient unto itself: everything is created without any exterior artifice or forced theatricality, as if, through the interlocking of stories, the entanglement of destinies, the mixture of registers, the frozen existence of these two men could suddenly come back to life on stage. With rigor, via a joyous tinkering of gestures and objects, everything is linked together in the invention of an imaginary figure, who seems both the key to and the curse of the show.

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## RICARDO BARTÍS

In 1978, **Ricardo Bartís** became known as a theatre and film actor before creating his company, Sportivo Teatral, in 1981. Located in an old renovated workshop which is a teaching, research and performance centre at the same time, the collective jealously protects its autonomy rejecting all

the compromises of the conventional and institutional theatre. Working many months on his shows, starting with improvisations, stressing the physical stagecraft that engages the entire actor in his communication, accepting the constraints of a relatively cramped venue, mixing amateur and professional actors, Sportivo Teatral has become the indispensable place for critical, polemic and poetic theatre. Shows that are emblematic of this work: *Postales argentinas* (1989), *El Corte* (1996), *De mal en peor* (2005) and *La Pesca* (*Fishing*, 2008), should not conceal the adventures carried out with Eduardo Pavlovsky (*Teleranas*, 1985), Beckett (*La Ultima Cinta Magnetica*, 1986 and *Krapp's Last Tape*, 2000), Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, 1991), Roberto Arlt (*El Pecado que no se puede nombrar* [*The Unnamed Sin*], 1999) and Ibsen (*Hedda Gabler*, 2007). At the Festival d'Avignon, Ricardo Bartís presented *El Pecado que no se puede nombrar* by Robert Arlt in 1999 and was supposed to present *Donde más duele* (*There Where It Hurts the Most*) in 2003.

## La Pesca (Fishing)

BY **RICARDO BARTÍS**

12 13 14 15 16 18 19 20 21 22 23

GYMNASE PAUL GIERA • 5 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 15 mins

show in Spanish with French supertitles • 2008 premiere  
direction and scenography by **Ricardo Bartís**

**A private** setting for three men of two different generations who are in a basement in Buenos Aires, a fishing club abandoned in the 1970s, the "Gesta Heroica". This basement is located above an underground river that crosses the city. There are no longer any fish in it apart from the myth of the "Titan" tararira, a giant fish that was supposed to have devoured the others and that the oldest members of the club say they have seen.

Ricardo Bartís, using this story as a base, builds, with the Sportivo Teatral's actors, a microcosm of characters who hold discussions on politics, love and morality and in this way journey through Argentina's reality as close as possible to its concerns, its fantasies and its history. The reign of Peron, the military dictatorship and democracy are the stuff of the conversations and debates of these three men who carry within themselves the melancholy of time that passes, disappointments of all sorts, childhood dreams that have not come true, frustrations in love and the fear of death. All that remains for them is the "Titan" tararira to escape from this mediocre daily life, all that remains for them is the myth of the giant fish so that they can continue to live. Always imagined with a great deal of closeness between the actors and the public, this work is a new step in the

process of reappropriating the human being that Ricardo Bartís and Sportivo Teatral carry out, aware as they are of the growing dehumanization that strikes so-called developed societies, and the Argentine society in particular. Always with boundless energy, mixing fierceness, tenderness and humour, never rejecting polemics, they want to communicate their conception of a theatre of non-asepticized, unconventional actors in constant movement, theatre that makes it possible to observe the complexity of man in the grip of the world's complexities.

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**LOLA ARIAS**  
& **STEFAN KAEGI**

Their life is made up of a host of languages. **Lola Arias** is Argentine, **Stefan Kaegi** is Swiss and lives in Berlin. They work all around the world, speak English, German, Spanish and French and like to hold discussions in Portuguese, the language of their first show together, of their encounter, in São Paulo, for *Chacara paraíso* (2006), a project with policemen with what policemen wish to express. Stefan Kaegi is, with Helgard Haug and Daniel Wetzl, a founding member of Rimini Protokoll, a Berlin theatre collective that practices "art trafficking", blending reality and representation: in *Kreuzworträtsel Boxenstopp* (2000), four ladies in their eighties became Formula 1 experts and researchers in high speed; with *Shooting Bourbaki* (2002), five teenagers from Lucerne shared their ballistic knowledge and pleasure in pistol shooting; in *Deadline* (2003), five doctors recounted their approaches to death; and in *Mnemopark*, in Avignon (2006), five pensioners who are model enthusiasts, and a young actress in charge of a switching station revisited eternal Switzerland through miniature trains. Lola Arias is an author, director and performer. In Buenos Aires, she founded the Compañía Postnuclear, a group of artists from different disciplines with whom she staged several shows. Her latest creation, which is a trilogy, *Striptease, Rêve avec revolver (Dream with Revolver)* and *L'Amour est un franc-tireur (Love Is a Freeshooter)*, focuses on the tension between reality and fiction. Her works have been presented at several international festivals and her texts are translated into French, English and German. *Airport Kids* is their second joint show. At the Festival d'Avignon, Stefan Kaegi / Rimini Protokoll presented *Mnemopark* and *Cargo Sofia-Avignon* in 2006.

## Airport Kids

BY **LOLA ARIAS** AND **STEFAN KAEGI**

6 7 8 10 11 12

GYMNASSE DU LYCÉE MISTRAL • 3 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 15 mins • *show in several languages with French supertitles* • 2008 premiere

directed by **Lola Arias** and **Stefan Kaegi**

**They** are called "nomad children", "portable children", "mobile children", they travel from one country to another but they feel like they are in the same place, they are bilingual or trilingual, have two or three passports, credit cards, instant messaging, connected friends everywhere and a diplomatic vocabulary. The director of an international school refers to them as "children of a third culture", neither local (birthplace) nor national (the host country), but global and intimate at the same time, which all of them share in the world and which however is specific only to them. Stefan Kaegi and Lola Arias met them near Lausanne where the head offices of multinational companies brought them together, often for just a few months, before their parents were transferred elsewhere. The two artists also met foreign children who arrived from the third world, new refugees, adopted, abandoned, who mixed with the expatriate's children. During a workshop, children from 8 to 14 years old were chosen who came from India, Morocco, Brazil, China, Romania, Russia and Angola. For a few months, Stefan Kaegi and Lola Arias invented stories and scenes with them, based on their nomadic life and the crossings of their cultures, languages and imaginations, fertilized by ultra-modern communication techniques. These are short, collective formats, sometimes sung, often shared through image, video and electronic and digital connections, that are presented in boxes (cardboard, aluminium) in which each individual recreates his own world. Hidden, isolated, in transit at certain moments; open, generous, inventive at others, these children are especially looking for a compass so that they can glimpse a future world that they imagine is nearly already behind them. They are post-modern children, sorcerer's apprentices who are frightening because of their instantaneous blend of innocence and technological knowledge, but who keep in themselves, however, inexhaustible reserves of utopia.

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## BENJAMIN VERDONCK

**Benjamin Verdonck** trained as an actor at the Royal Flemish Conservatory of Antwerp where he was the laureate in 1995. He worked with Ivo van Hove, Johan Simons and Paul Koek while creating a musical theatre group with Valentine Kempynck who subsequently was his associate in all his shows. Since 2000, he has staged works in different theatre installations in the public space, such as *Hiron-delle/Dooi Vogeltje/The Great Swallow*, seven days during which he remained perched in a nest 32 m high, installed on the façade of the administration centre of the city of Brussels calling out to passers-by; in *I Like America and America Likes Me*, he held discussions with a pig for three days, to evoke a certain disarray regarding the tensions between Iraq and the United States. Benjamin Verdonck is currently artist in residence at the CAMPO in Ghent, at the Toneelhuis in Antwerp and at the KVS in Brussels, and has notably worked with the director Arne Sierens and the Het Muziek Lod ensemble. Always very much involved in the concerns of his time, Benjamin Verdonck creates a highly political theatre that never tries to indoctrinate but simply to question, to make people think, with the weapons of poetry, humour and stagecraft. At the Festival d'Avignon, Benjamin Verdonck presented, with Fumiyo Ikeda and Alain Platel, *Nine Finger* in 2007.

### Wewillivestorm

BY **BENJAMIN VERDONCK**

20 21 22 23 • 3 p.m.

20 21 23 • 7 p.m.

CHAPELLE DES PÉNITENTS BLANCS

running time 1 hour • *premiere in France*

by **Benjamin Verdonck** and **Valentine Kempynck**

**What** is happening on the stage of *Wewillivestorm*, a personal work that Benjamin Verdonck created with his father and the musician Tomas Desmet? A silent journey in the actor's universe? A dramatic poem recounted by animated objects? A meeting between father and son? A fantasy world in which any pretension would be chased away to leave room for simplicity leading directly to beauty? A child's view on a universe too large for him? A questioning on time that passes and death that approaches? Undoubtedly all of these and a great many other things besides. Accumulating objects from daily life - bread, shoes, tables, etc. -, handling them, playing with them as if they were equals, making them come

alive before us just for the pleasure of sharing, with tenderness and humour, the stage with these objects themselves, Benjamin Verdonck places us in the heart of a mystery and makes us, in our turn, curious, intrigued, disturbed, captivated, moved... The precision with which each object is staged by the actor is only equalled by the beauty of this world cobbled together between night and day, between laughter and emotion. He does not tell one story but 10, 20, 100 stories that we interpret according to our fantasies and experiences. Benjamin Verdonck shifts, in a playful and deeply thought-out manner, our view on the world around us. Making these ordinary objects the heroes of his adventure, he forces us to perceive them differently and to question, for a few moments, the unfolding of increasingly sophisticated images, sounds and objects that await us outside the performance, outside the theatre. Curious, demanding, Benjamin Verdonck returns to Avignon to, without seeming to, question us on our rampant consumption, our thirst for useless sophistication. Politically incorrect? Yes, but with the lightness and freedom of a poet of the stage who imposes nothing but shares everything.

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## VIRGILIO SIENI

With his hard body, as though carved out of rock, **Virgilio Sieni** is an impressive dancer whose work is centred on the exploration of a grammar specific to the controlled gestures, positions and vagaries of the human shell. He is Florentine, trained in modern and classical dance at the same time as he studied art and architecture. In 1983, Virgilio Sieni founded his company and created short original pieces with a small number of dancers. He considers that dance is rooted in the concrete aspect of life, and the search for the simplest and most direct links between bodies encourages him to banish from the stage the spectacular leaps, academic repertory and incarnations that are too sentimental. The bodies he sets in place and gets to move all seem connected to visual research, to a sound ambience and human matter, as strange as they are dense and rigorous. His company's shows are regularly presented in Italy and throughout Europe.

Virgilio Sieni runs the Congo space which he founded in 2003 in Florence, a centre with an innovative concept, dedicated to experimentation on dance and the body's disciplines, as well as a contemporary artistic language. Congo is an international reference project open to encounters in Italy and to welcoming international artists. In

2007, he founded the Academy on the Art of the Gesture, a project focused on transmission, teaching and creation. The heart of the Academy is in Florence but its influence is cast much farther afield through the artists and teachers that Virgilio Sieni has trained.

## OSSO (Bone)

BY VIRGILIO SIENI

12 13 14

GYMNASÉ DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH

7 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. • running time 40 mins

with Virgilio and Fosco Sieni

**When** we see them side by side, Virgilio and Fosco Sieni, son and father, have the same serious face, the same determined look, a deep expression, and they share a melancholic authenticity of the people. The older, and smaller, is simply “even less of a dancer” than the younger. They constantly look for each other, hold each other, sometimes push each other away. They “dance” together, the body oblique, in an unstable equilibrium, sometimes taking each other’s hand, sharing a game, a drink, a table, a physical exercise, that is, poles apart from choreography and prestigious duets. Moreover, where are they lost, these two children from a common family? Here they are as though they were shut up in cold, desolate, sad places that they inhabit with the rare gesture and contained zeal. Suddenly, filial understanding is imposed, through magic tricks, a ball or hoop game, shared, tender as the pale sun that comes in through the windows. But often, each of them is sent back to his solitude to be condemned to melancholy, a strange ballet of jerky and repetitive gestures for the older man, purposeless contortions for the younger, as if these two only had the parallel trauma of the inability to communicate as an existence. This way of not talking, however, is also a plunge into origins, the son finding in the father the beginning of his own gestures. It is man’s condition that Virgilio Sieni explores in this show, which sometimes brings to mind the documentary film *San Clemente* by Raymond Depardon, the existence of this modern man who goes off to conquer himself and his physical identity. The only breaks are no less radical, floating in a halo of white, red and blue light, accompanied by an oppressive background sound, as though the father and son had been forgotten there to better find and understand each other again.

## and

Sujets à Vif Programme D  
Interrogations aux vertèbres

(Questions for Vertebrae)

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## PHILIPPE QUESNE / VIVARIUM STUDIO

**Philippe Quesne** created his first show *La Démangeaison des ailes (Itching Wings)* in 2003, a “revue-show” about the experience of flying and falling, played – or rather incarnated – by a few faithful followers (including the dog Hermes) brought together in the Vivarium Studio company. On a stage cluttered with the remains of today, Philippe Quesne, 37 years old, gives free rein to his inspiration. He has a fertile imagination, developed from concrete cases from daily life. His training as a plastic artist and his profession as a scenographer (which he exercised for about 10 years) are replayed on stage for each of his creations. The occupation of space and the miming of the arts are two characteristics of this stagecraft that Philippe Quesne wanted to be like a laboratory of extreme situations of the ordinary, a radical development of small experiments of urban and suburban melancholy. *D’après Nature (After Nature)*, in 2006, established the emergence of Vivarium Studio on the French and international stage, in which the 7 members play the end of the world like a musical comedy in a tempered milieu.

At the Festival d’Avignon, Philippe Quesne presented, in the framework of the Vingt-cinquième heure, *Des Expériences (Experiences)* in 2004.

## La Mélancolie des dragons

(The Melancholy of Dragons)

BY PHILIPPE QUESNE

18 19 21 22 23 24

CLOÎTRE DES CÉLESTINS • 10 p.m. • estimated running time 1 hour 30 mins • 2008 premiere

conception, scenography, direction Philippe Quesne

**Practicing** the dissection of its title itself, a triple anatomy of language, image and myth, a genuine cutaway view of meaning, this show is built as it unfolds. We therefore see melancholy, which is the particular feature of the heroes forged by Philippe Quesne: those who question themselves on the texts, images, treatises, the humours of black bile and disenchantment, dragging their large carcass or small round belly in a world that they do not understand, even if they generally master its technologies. But these are whimsical techniques, that literally serve no purpose. We also see dragons, those fantastic and monstrous creatures that have accompanied man in all his adventures from pre-history to the contemporary manga. Where are the monsters hiding? On the stage, there are a whole set of possibilities, composed with the

actor's body, his disguise, his anxieties. We finally see what connects melancholy and the dragons: creation itself, as the creator, since Dürer, has necessarily been melancholy, and that the dragon is undeniably the deformed product that emerges from his spirit. Everything is in motion: these creatures move about in mobile homes, pulled by a small car, from one sycamore tree in the Cloître des Célestins to another. Philippe Quesne practices theatre as a chemical-physical experiment: he takes his own things, cuts out texts, music, references, images, stories from others, puts it all on the stage, before putting humans in it. And we rejoice in considering the way in which they disentangle themselves from this world, which sticks to their skin.

*in the framework of the Vingt-cinquième heure*

## L'Effet de Serge (Serge's Effect)

BY PHILIPPE QUESNE

on the nights of the 11 to the 12,  
the 12 to the 13, the 13 to the 14

ÉCOLE D'ART • 1 a.m. • running time 1 hour 15 mins  
conception, scenography, direction **Philippe Quesne**

**Sometimes** poignant about solitude, *Serge's Effect* is not at all a tragedy of modern life. Serge, a solitary being, has however friends for whom he organizes, each Sunday, one to three-minute shows using special effects in which he demonstrates, with cold humour, the scope of his poetic imagination. Between the melancholic inventor's solitude and the friendship of his circle of patient spectators, a strange territory emerges, very contemporary in what it says about the obsession of a character absorbed by his research, and moving because it shows a fervent desire to share which can be nothing but a source of disillusion.

## and

*with the CCAS, in the framework of Contre-courant*

## Échantillons (Samples)

12 July • ROND-POINT DE LA BARTHELASSE • 10 p.m. •  
estimated running time 45 mins • free admission

conception **Philippe Quesne**

*Échantillons* is a performance that questions the relationship with the spectator. It is from about a hundred captioned fragments, game instructions, notes, situations, special effects, from which the public is invited to make a choice and influence the rhythm of the sequences using a computer mouse.

## page 50 SUPERAMAS

In astrophysics, the French word "superamas" designates a galactic super cluster in migration, the largest known structure in the universe; in the southern United States, it is a supermarket chain; on the stage, it is a collective that says "us" to better assert its singularity. A **Superamas** show is therefore many people on the stage, incomparable energy, lightness and complexity mixed together, pleasure and seduction combined with a pitiless criticism of our media, social and political reality. As they say "An eminently political position is incumbent on artists today: to not leave the monopoly of amusement up to Walt Disney. In other words: "acting like a whore" can be an extremely subversive position. And Superamas' shows really cause critical damage through the implosion of pleasure: they perfectly mime our spectacular shortcomings to better challenge our condition of spectator/actor in an over-mediatized, over-productive world whose obsession with power runs in fourth gear as well as in neutral. The French and Austrian artists who make up Superamas, a migrant and international structure based in Vienna and Paris, play with all supports and all genres: theatre, dance, video, performance, installations, conversations, cocktail parties, the G8 or even schoolboy pranks between friends and a huge pharaonic spectacle. For the last 10 or so years, they have been produced in many theatres and festivals in Europe and have imposed their trilogy *Big 1<sup>st</sup> Episode - Artificial Intelligence/Reality Show*, *Big 2<sup>nd</sup> Episode - Show/Business*, *Big 3<sup>rd</sup> Episode - Happy/End*. Superamas presented *Big 3<sup>rd</sup> Episode* and the installation *High Art* at the Festival d'Avignon 2007.

## Empire (Art & Politics)

BY SUPERAMAS

19 20 21 22

GYMNASE GÉRARD PHILIPPE • 5 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 30 mins • show in English  
with French supertitles • 2008 premiere  
conception and production **Superamas**

**Superamas'** new show is a fable on the establishment and spreading of empires. Going from the recreation of a Napoleonic battle to the short travel film, from a worldly reception to a frenzied samba, from a ceremony with flags to fireworks with the smell of something burning, *Empire (Art & Politics)* is not exempt from a reflection on the nature of government propaganda or the fire-power of American imperialism. In May 1809, right

outside Vienna, the emperor Napoleon's armies crossed the Danube with the intention of destroying the forces of the archduke Karl. Over 175,000 soldiers fought in the battles and 40,000 died in two days. The Austrians have celebrated the Aspern victory ever since; French pupils know the battle won in Essling. Each side claims victory, but it was above all the first slaughter of the modern era, a vain combat with a victor that opened the way to industrial wars for cannon fodder. It was also a battle of press releases and triumphant editorials: how is a victory fabricated? Should the legend or the reality be printed? This is how empires are born and now they die. The Superamas' show begins with this paradoxical success that is also a strange defeat, and continues with an entertaining questioning on the empire as though it were one of the fine arts: its creation, its filming, its propaganda, its gossip, as well as its violence, its thirst for power and its unstoppable need to reproduce itself, even today, from summits gathering together the greatest powers to the war in Afghanistan. *Empire (Art & Politics)* shows all this on the stage, from Napoleonic imagery to George Bush on television: how, trading a military uniform for a three-piece suit, abandoning propaganda for the leisure industry, our politicians are dressed like our merchants, an inescapable sign of the dissemination of imperial ideology. What remains is to present it as a hysterical show and to have it smell like gunpowder.

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**FRANÇOIS TANGUY /**  
**THÉÂTRE DU RADEAU**

**François Tanguy's** theatre career is inseparably linked with that of his company the Théâtre du Radeau with which he has invented all his creations since 1982. Genuine ongoing research on theatre performance, constantly renewed questioning of "the possibilities of dramaturgy", the issue here is art and not communication, playful curiosity and not entertainment. A theatre art claimed as such, theatre where one must "be together" to visit theatre time and place. Each work by François Tanguy and the Théâtre du Radeau is the result of a patient and collective approach, comprised of a search for texts, music and acting improvisation, which explains why the creations are so few in number. From *Mystère Bouffe (Grub Mystery)* in 1986 to *Ricercar* in 2007, a unique body of work is offered to us, a work that slowly makes its way forward. *Jeu de Faust (Faust Game, 1987)*, *Woyzek-Büchner, fragments forains (Woyzek-Büchner, Fairground fragments, 1989)*,

*Chant du bouc (Goat Song, 1991)*, *Choral (1994)*, *Bataille du Tagliamento (Battle of the Tagliamento, 1996)*, *Orphéon (1998)*, *Les Cantates (2001)* and *Coda (2004)* are so many phases, so many evaluations of a research that constantly intertwines all the elements of theatre performance.

## Ricercar

BY **FRANÇOIS TANGUY**

17 18 19 21 22 23 24 25 • 6 p.m.

19 22 • 8.30 p.m.

GYMNASE DU LYCÉE MISTRAL

running time 1 hour 25 mins

direction, scenography and lighting **François Tanguy**

**A demanding** and generous artist, François Tanguy takes the time needed for his ambitious projects that he executes with passion. For *Ricercar*, he has once again brought together a group of actors and technicians to create a theatre of resistance with methods, with superficial entertainment facilities, with sectarian theories, with formalism, with mindlessness, a theatre that focuses on the pleasure of thinking, the strength of the imaginary and the violence of dramatic poetry. A theatre of urgency that is not created in confusion but in rigor and that summons onto the stage all the arts that can enrich it and without which it would only perhaps be an empty shell: painting, music, literature, philosophy... A theatre of the ceremonial that is built and destroyed in the same movement, a theatre that is composed and decomposed, is effaced and is reborn, that is turned inside out like a glove, a theatre of repeating motifs. The *ricercar* is a contrapuntal musical form that is less elaborate than the fugue - which appeared later and uses a generating theme in a systematic manner, whereas the *ricercar* links different episodes in which there are not necessarily any thematic connections. As François Tanguy explains, "the title *Ricercar*, even if it evokes these intertwining and repeated movements that come from diverse sources and sound dynamisms, will here be the indication of a 'milieu', derived from the word itself. *Ricercare*: look for, examine, travel through... That, the returning inclusion of the figures, bodies, words, in the appearing of space and time - deliberations constantly taken up again, summoned and revoked from the quick and the dead, semblances and meanings, airs and herbs." On the stage, the theatre directs itself. It is not solely a question of having the words of François Villon and Dante, Pirandello and Kafka, Ezra Pound and Mandelstam, Liszt, Berio, Berg, Verdi, Stravinsky or Beethoven heard; François Tanguy and his companions create, drawing from these literary and musical universes, a world of fiction and invention,



peopled with disjointed bodies that move in a framed-unframed space, made of depth, skilful diagonals, shadows and light, planks and tulle, that constantly alter the approach to and the perception of images. The show is meticulously built in this constant fragmentation that allows time for suspension and respiration in which everything seems to be able to happen on the stage. Theatre that has absolute trust in each spectator and his immeasurable capacity to dream, to be astonished, to accept turmoil, to penetrate the shadows, to go through the mirror of semblances, to share those ineffable moments that François Tanguy and the Théâtre du Radeau offer us.

**and**

## Les rendez-vous de la pirogue

(The Pirogue's Rendez-vous)

Certain mornings at 11 a.m., François Tanguy and the Théâtre du Radeau invite the public to the Gymnase du lycée Mistral to meet their artist, philosopher and anthropologist friends.

*detailed program in the spectator's guide, available at the beginning of July*

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## CIRQUE ICI – JOHANN LE GUILLERM

**Johann Le Guillerm** trained on the tightrope and circus arts at the Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC). He graduated from the school in 1989 with honours. He subsequently toured with Archaos, then took part in the creation of La Volière Dromesko, co-founded the O circus with CNAC alumni and created his own circus, Cirque Ici in 1994. A year later, *Où ça (Where's That)*, his first solo, came into being. In 1996, he was awarded the National Grand Prix of the Circus. In 1999, he started out on an 18-month journey that took him to every continent where he brought his uncertainties face to face with the imbalances of marginalized populations. When he returned in 2001, he laid the first bases of *ATTRACTION*, a step in his quest to understand the world. A vast project that includes, as of this date: *Secret*, the show, *La Motte (The Lump)*, circus phenomenon, *Monstration*, the installation. These artistic objects form points of reference in a universe of an artist who wants to have a 360° view of the world around him.

Johann Le Guillerm presented *Secret* at the Festival d'Avignon in 2004.

## Secret ATTRACTION, le spectacle

(*ATTRACTION*, the show)

6 7 9 10 12 13 15 16 18  
19 20 22 23 25 26

COUR DU LYCÉE MISTRAL • 10 p.m.

running time 1 hour 45 mins

conception, staging, interpretation **Johann Le Guillerm**

**Out of sync**, as though outside of time, Johann Le Guillerm is a troubling character. In the ring, he installs his feats as well as exposes his vulnerability, handling the symbolic and playing with the complexities of thought and the triviality of bodies. *Secret*, the show in the *ATTRACTION* project explores the artist's relationship with matter. Number after number, Johann Le Guillerm will share everything he knows about his reactions and his metamorphoses with the spectator. Between extreme concentration and sardonic absurdity, he scoffs at the elements, institutes suspense, vanquishes or renounces in the man-matter clinch that mysteriously poetic tableaux vivants form. He growls before adversity, furiously goes at it without fearing the boredom that such obstinacy could cause and, in repetition, skims the surface of something existential. *Secret* has evolved since 2004; stripped of certain numbers which are entirely circus performances, it has become purer. And the plastic constructions that comprise the show have taken on a new importance, perhaps more essential to the project's global sense. But we are still at the circus. A circus under pressure, between power and fragility. And a strange and sidereal beauty wells up out of this shared "Secret".

## Monstration & La Motte

*ATTRACTION*, l'installation

(*Monstration & The Lump*. *ATTRACTION*, the installation)

5-26 July

LA MIROITERIE • opening hours 12 - 7 p.m.

creation **Johann Le Guillerm**

**At the heart of the *ATTRACTION* system, *Monstration* is the "laboratory" where Johann Le Guillerm has given form for the last seven years to his poetic research based on the point: the attraction point of the circus, the balance point, but also, as the smallest identifiable element, a point common to all of us... In his workshop, the artist became fascinated with spheres, turned around them, minutely noted every viewpoint, then observed the metamorphoses that these spheres underwent when they entered in contact with each other and the combinations offered. Families of object-machines and other strange structures were born after this long gestation, translations of**

his observations. He called them “work sites” to describe their perpetual evolution. The public is invited to handle some of these machines in which the point is highlighted to penetrate the circus universe and to appropriate its discoveries. Other, more plastic machines are exhibited. *La Motte (The Lump)*, *prototype IV*, a mineral and vegetal circus phenomenon in perpetual motion, comes directly from the “circumambulations” workshop. This spectacular planet visible to the naked eye sends man back to his own planet earth. Currently a prototype, *La Motte (The Lump)* should be 12 m high in its final version... We are in an experimental field in which Johann Le Guillerm shares the poetry of his “science of the idiot”, as he calls it, a science that borrows a kind of very personal grammar with a brand-new vocabulary from its totally intuitive cosmogony. Here, Johann Le Guillerm signs a manifesto, the stance of an artist who is not satisfied with any viewpoint that he has not tested beforehand. And in this dream of a 360° view of the world, the entire circus is summoned, this “circular architecture of viewpoints”.

**and**  
**Le Chantier des Architectures**  
 (The Work Site of Architectures)

These monumental structures created for the Festival d'Avignon 2008, taken from *Monstration*, will be exhibited at several venues: La Miroiterie and La Chapelle du Miracle (venue of the Île-de-France region).

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**HEINER GOEBBELS**

Born in 1952 in a family where making music was second nature, **Heiner Goebbels** learned to play the piano, guitar and cello and took part in the family's amateur musical trio. In the 1970s, he decided to study sociology, more politically correct than music studies in the context of the period. It was when he discovered the life and work of the composer Hanns Eisler that he understood the political importance that music can bear and that he created a group, “The Supposed Extreme Left-Wing Woodwind Orchestra” which was linked to the protest movements that were developing in Frankfurt. His career as a composer led him to the theatre: he composed incidental music and audio plays based on the texts of Heiner Müller. While working with many directors, in particular Matthias Langhoff, Claus Peymann and Ruth Berghaus, he also composed for dance and cinema and, starting in 1988, for the Ensemble Modern and the Ensemble Intercontemporain. His compositions for large

and small ensembles, as for example *Surrogate Cities*, have been played by many orchestras around the world, including the Berlin Philharmonic under the direction of Sir Simon Rattle. In 1993, he presented the first musical that he directed *Or the Disastrous Disembarkment*, followed by *The Repetition (Die Wiederholung* after Kierkegaard and Alain Robbe-Grillet, 1995), *Black on White* (1996), *Max Black* (with André Wilms, 1998), *Hashirigaki* (on the texts of Gertrude Stein, 2000) and *Eraritjaritjaka* (based on the work of Elias Canetti, 2004). He premiered his first opera *Landscape with Distant Relatives* in 2002 after having paid tribute to Hanns Eisler with *Eislermaterial* in 1998. His works are played throughout the world and in particular at a host of festivals (Paris, Edinburgh, Vienna, Istanbul, Bologna, Brussels, Sydney, Singapore, Moscow, New York, Tokyo...) and have been awarded many prizes. Heiner Goebbels is bringing a creation to the Festival d'Avignon for the first time. He was present at the Festival as the composer for *Les lieux de là (Places from There)* by Mathilde Monnier in 1999.

**Stifters Dinge**

6 7 8 10 11 12 13 14 • 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.  
 10 11 12 13 • 9 p.m.

TINEL DE LA CHARTREUSE

Running time 1 hour 10 mins • *Premiere in France*  
 conception, music, direction **Heiner Goebbels**

**Heiner Goebbels'** theatre is unclassifiable, resisting any attempt at definition, any reduction to known and recognized codes. It is however, a theatre that is recognizable among a thousand but always in movement, from one universe to another, following the imagination of its creator, who always makes sure to stay in touch with the realities of the present. With *Stifters Dinge*, the spectator does not escape this search for a new form based on composite elements that fit together like a giant puzzle. Objects, here five pianos used in a surprising way, sounds, music – from Bach to the chants of Colombian Indians – video images, paintings by Paolo Uccello or Ruisdael, are brought on the stage and mixed, are exchanged, are modified, talk to each other, play together, amuse each other and amuse us, surprise each other and surprise us. Heiner Goebbels, once again, knows better than anyone how to summon the arts, for a gripping tribute to theatre machinery that shifts our view on and our relationship with nature. Here, the theatre is the place where the words of the sociologist, the novelist, particularly those of Adalbert Stifter, the politician, Malcolm X, or the ethnologist join those of the composer, the place where the video-maker

fraternizes with the painter. Always under pressure, always in motion, with the minute details that enchant, from one glide to another, it is the world of illusion and *trompe l'oeil* that appears to us. The imperceptible play of lights that creates a group of disquieting shapes, the perfection of a sound montage that gives all its force to a surprising polyphony. An elegant and refined demiurge, a demanding and meticulous craftsman, a choreographer for unusual objects, a composer for unknown instruments, Heiner Goebbels uses the most sophisticated technologies to serve a thought and an imaginary dimension that he offers as his share to his contemporaries. The live performance that Heiner Goebbels' theatre represents lets us see and hear in another way, sometimes intrigues us but never leaves us indifferent.

## page 58 KRIS VERDONCK

From the laboratory that tested F16 fighter plane engines, which fascinated the son of a military engineer during his childhood, **Kris Verdonck** has kept his taste for the humming machine. Today, at the age of 34, this Flemish artist invents other mechanical devices, which he tries to tune bodies to and to compare sensorial logics. In his Brussels workshop, he designs these strange installations that, on each occasion, are used to make what he calls "the puppet's spirit" appear and come to life. It is this dual training (closer to the stage: he began with directing; but attentive to images: he has a master's in visual arts from the University of Antwerp) that he intends to place at the service of robots and cyborgs, while attempting to grasp what, in the human being, goes beyond the mechanical object or the digital connection. Kris Verdonck presented his first installations at the *Kunstenfestivaldesarts* of Brussels, in two series of five plays, in 2003 and 2005, seven of which the artist has revived for the Festival d'Avignon.

### Variation IV

BY KRIS VERDONCK

18 19 20 22 23 24

CHARTREUSE • 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. • estimated running time 1 hour 50 mins • *premiere in France* • *strolling show not recommended for spectators with reduced mobility*  
installations presented *Box*, *Dancer*, *In*, *Heart*, *Patent Human Energy*, *Duet*, *Rain*  
conception **Kris Verdonck**

**In** this itinerary inside the Chartreuse of Villeneuve lez Avignon, the spectator is invited to an initiation

of nearly two hours, blending participation in cybernetic experiments and the contemplation of the extreme states in a deeply human progression. In the installation *Heart*, a young woman dressed in white looks at the spectators. A machine interacts with her every 500 heartbeats. Who holds the power, the machine or the human being, the artist seems to wonder before the spectators. The entire itinerary however seems to reserve a very subtle answer because the stage asserts the presence of the actor, the interpreter, who is merely a docile guinea pig subjected to the all powerful mechanization of contemporary life. He knows how to resist and finds the tricks of the body to often snatch power away from the machine. As in *Duet*, where the circular motion of a mechanism creates the energy of the two weightless bodies, which are caught and caught again, undoubtedly letting us perceive what there is that is most human in man: those gestures that go beyond the power of the object to trust only the other. It is to this constant interaction that Verdonck's installations invite us, as on each occasion man adapts himself to the mechanical power to better counteract it: sunglasses let him look at the light of the apocalypse (*Box*), impulses guide the woman laying down on thin metal bars (*Patent Human Energy*), the human being seems to be reborn through a single steel rod shaken by a turning movement as though "danced" (*Dancer*). What, all things considered, seems the essence of this tension, ever palpable, sometimes panicky, or on the contrary reasoned, is a form of unstable equilibrium: Kris Verdonck's installations are located very precisely on the balance point between the very old and the overly modern, between life and inertia, light and shade, machinery and the body, the stage and society, that is to say, the very space of disquieting strangeness.

## page 60 THE QUAY BROTHERS

**The Quay brothers** hold a separate place in movie-making. That of eccentricity and the bizarre, whose cult they have maintained since their first films, in the late 1970s, *Nocturna Artificialia* for example. Stephen and Timothy Quay, identical twins, were born in Philadelphia in 1947. It was in their small Southbank studio in London, with its jumble of odd objects, bits of unusual sets and puppets, that they filmed on a miniature stage parts of their animated films, inspired by a universe devoted to the ghosts of the eccentric and the phantoms of nonconformity. There are the influences here of Mitteleuropa, the writers Robert

Walsler, Bruno Schulz and Franz Kafka and the film-makers Jan Svankmajer, Ladislav Starewicz and Jiri Trnka, but also Franju, Luis Buñuel, Lewis Carroll, Karl Stockhausen and the Belgian surrealists. It is this museum of the weird, kept like a curiosities cabinet, that a large number of short films have come from over the last 30 years among which are *The Cabinet of Jan Svankmajer* (1984), *The Street of Crocodiles* (1986), *Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies* (1987), the *Stille Nacht* series, *Anamorphosis* (1991), *In Absentia* (2000), *The Phantom Museum* (2003) as well as two long films, *Institute Benjamenta* (1995) and *The Piano Tuner of Earthquakes* (2006), masterpieces of utterly strange feature-length films.

## Night Nursery *Ceux qui désirent sans fin*

(Those who Endlessly Desire)

EXHIBITION BY **THE QUAY BROTHERS**

6-26 July

HÔTEL DE FORBIN LA BARBEN

opening hours 12 - 7 p.m. • 2008 premiere

conception and production **the Quay brothers**

In this cinema installation, forgetting reason, guided by his sensations, giving up narration to travel through the regions dedicated to visual affections and sound impressions, in a darkness pierced by luminous streaks, the visitor will be able to abandon himself, his senses awakened, to the sleep of the imagination. The Quay brothers invest, in Avignon, the Hôtel de Forbin La Barben, an old building in the centre of the city, to install, on several floors, *Night Nursery*, *Those who Endlessly Desire*, made up of extracts from their very recent films and productions – such as the shorts *Orpheo* and *Eurydice*, film-ballets inspired by Monteverdi's opera –, sets and objects. In each nook and cranny may be found this inimitable manner of breathing life into matter, of having brand-new visual impressions emerge, of exploring the strangest stains, deposits, cracks, folds and objects, of having unknown sounds heard, hissing murmurings, muffled music, or of filming dolls as though they were touching human beings damaged by time and the ups and downs of existence. We could think that the ghosts of this private mansion of old Avignon would love these intruders who play with our sensations, invite us to experience the semi-consciousness of the projections and disturb the habits of theatre and dance through these images that come from nowhere.

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## EMIO GRECO / PIETER C. SCHOLTEN

**Emio Greco, Pieter C. Scholten** as well as the troupe they founded a dozen years ago lay claim to the age of maturity. Located in Amsterdam, the Emio Greco|PC company tours more or less everywhere in the world. But the spirit of experimentation has not gone away and the institution has continued its international forum initiatives, the Accademia Mobile, proposing training sessions and teaching, inviting troupes, publishing a review, books, a DVD and programmatic texts. Emio Greco, an Italian dancer and choreographer, and Pieter C. Scholten, a Dutch choreographer, first proposed a trilogy, *Bianco, Rosso, Extra Dry* (1996-2000), Emio Greco's body being the central subject. Then the *Double Points* series (begun in 1998), short experimental pieces, was responsible for them being produced in many theatres and festivals in Europe. Lastly, *Hell*, a show premiered at the Festival Montpellier Danse in 2006, the result of four years of work, was the first of 4 sections inspired by *The Divine Comedy* by Dante. [*purgatorio*], which naturally follows, is divided into two parts, *POPOPERA*, which "is still a little bit of hell", and *In visione*, which "is already a little bit of paradise". Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten presented *Double Points: Hell* in the Sujets à vif program at the Festival d'Avignon in 2005.

## [purgatorio] POPOPERA

BY **EMIO GRECO AND PIETER C. SCHOLTEN**

17 18 19 20

COUR DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 15 mins • 2008 premiere

choreography, lighting, sound conception **Emio Greco,**

**Pieter C. Scholten**

**Often**, looking at the dancers in [*purgatorio*] *POP-OPERA*, one has the impression of confronting the legendary hydra, a monstrous creature with multiple heads, being both one and many, moving together but each part of whose body seems autonomous, a strange movement blending the general intention and specific rhythms. The reason is that this body with seven heads is both very united and highly differentiated. It moves together, provided with broad arm gestures, collapses collectively, brings itself back up in the same manner, spiked with electric guitar necks that make it look like a rock group while strengthening its heroic and martial appearance. But it is also very individualized through each dancer's personality and body. All around the stage, keeping its distance

with the beast, but sometimes mixing with it in disturbing fusions, a singer walks, with her golden voice, her classical airs, her folk songs, her lamé dress. The omnipresent object of temptation in [*purgatorio*] *POPOPERA* is the electric guitar, always on stage, taken in hand, then continuously carried and played in the second part of the show. The music by the American composer Michael Gordon seems to engender poses, gestures, figures, movements, as so many affects and sound moods that would take on successive states of incarnation. The dance proposed is as technical as it is physical, brilliant and exhausting. A desired trial that makes these guitar heroes exemplary beings of purgatory: torn apart, courageous, full of hope, but doomed to wander in tragedy.

## HELL

BY **EMIO GRECO** AND **PIETER C. SCHOLTEN**

23 24

COUR DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH • 10 p.m.

running time 1 hour 45 mins

conception, lighting, scenography and sound

**Emio Greco, Pieter C. Scholten**

**Hell** begins in a strange disco atmosphere. Then, in the dark, the dancers return, between a dead tree and a gate of lights. As of this moment, they impose their strange presence-absence, in a chiaroscuro that is increasingly raw and blinding. What does one do in hell? One smokes, one tries to relearn – or unlearn – gestures, even the most ordinary ones. It is hard, it causes suffering, but at least one suffers here in a group. There seems to be an unknown choreography, and all these bodies, very dissimilar, are looking for it, imposing a dance that is as nervous as it is wild, but with its pauses and, sometimes, an almost morbid holding of the movement. The bodies finish stripping themselves while dancing naked in the white, or bluish, light and when two black shapes come to meet them, like the guardians of the underworld and the Styx ferryman.

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## OLIVIER DUBOIS

**Olivier Dubois** is an atypical dancer. That can be seen on his body in a milieu that is often standardized: a round body, with curves, that he totally assumes. But a body that moves a great deal, gracefully and supplely. “I started dance late,” he says. “I felt that nothing could have been more obvious than trying it. I wanted to situate myself opposite something that I would never succeed in

completely achieving. It was my challenge and my way of meeting it consisting in seeing everything, reading everything, learning everything, swallowing dance. I had this late relationship with dance and an immediate one with its past and its present.” Twelve years later, in June 2007, Olivier Dubois was awarded the special prize of the Syndicat de la Critique for his career as an interpreter and choreographer. He started with Laura Simi and Damiano Foa, then worked as a dancer with Andy Degroat, Elio Gervasi, Jan Fabre, Karine Saporta, Angelin Preljocaj, Charles Cré-Ange, Dominique Boivin, Marie Pessemier, Nasser Martin-Gousseand and Sasha Waltz. Relatively quickly, he also proposed his own choreographies: *Under Cover*, a solo he danced in 1999, then a duet with Christine Corday, *Féroces (Ferocious)*, and *En Sourdine (On the sly)* and *Peter Pan* for a young audience. For the Festival d'Avignon, Olivier Dubois presented *Pour tout l'or du monde (For All the Gold in the World)* in the Sujets à vif program in 2006 and was present as a dancer in *MC 14/22 (This Is My Body)* by Angelin Preljocaj in 2001 and *Je suis sang (I Am Blood)* and *L'Histoire des larmes (The History of Tears)* by Jan Fabre in 2005.

## Faune(s) (Fau[n][s])

BY **VASLAV NIJINSKI / DOMINIQUE BRUN,**

**SOPHIE PEREZ / XAVIER BOUSSIRON,**

**CHRISTOPHE HONORÉ, OLIVIER DUBOIS**

6 7 8 9 11 12 13

CLOÎTRE DES CÉLESTINS • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 10 mins • 2008 premiere

original idea and interpretation **Olivier Dubois**

**Faune(s)** is a reappropriation of the modern dance heritage: a project that aims at being both archaeological and contemporary, historic and almost iconoclastic. Before Bakst's large canvas, as it was arranged in 1912 on the stage of the Théâtre du Châtelet for the premiere, the idea was to revive *L'Après-midi d'un faune (Afternoon of a Faun)* choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes with respect, rigor and modesty, under the direction of the choreographer Dominique Brun, while bringing this story up to the present. To the present of “the interpretation”, since Olivier Dubois, surrounded by nymphs, takes on the role danced by Nijinsky, the icon of the art of the stage that he appropriates. To the present of the “reinterpretation” as well, because he has turned over to several artists the task of freely revisiting this fetish heritage, in the form of solos: the director and scenographer Sophie Perez who works with the musician Xavier Boussiron, the film-maker Christophe Honoré, and Olivier Dubois himself. The latter dances during the entire show, putting the question of the interpreter at the heart

of the project: where are his combat and his contribution? In measuring up to the faun, to its myth, to the performance par excellence, to the history of an entire art? In the idea of simply making possible contemporary variations, opening this history up to today's theatre? Or in the resistance to these very variations, when a body is imposed by itself and conceals any necessary betrayals. "Crossing, composing and recomposing the work. Submitting yourself to it, bending to it and nevertheless perverting to allow the work to exist...", Olivier Dubois writes about his desire to do battle with the faun. In other words, incarnating it to excess, and in this very excess, to disappear.

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**JOJI INC /**  
**JOHANNE SAUNIER**  
**& JIM CLAYBURGH**

The **Joji Inc** company was founded by Johanne Saunier and Jim Clayburgh in 1998. She - "Jo" - comes from Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's Rosas company in which she was one of the principal dancers for 10 years, notably in *Mikrokosmos*, *Stella and ERTS*. She has also worked with Michèle Anne de Mey, Fatou Traoré and Thierry de Mey, and has taught at the PARTS school. Johanne Saunier is an interpreter par excellence. He - "Ji" - was one of the founders, 30 years ago, of the Wooster Group in New York, where he was a decorator, lighting designer and official scenographer. Jim Clayburgh also created sets for several shows by the Mabou Mines, Richard Foreman and the Isabella Soupарт company. The two of them, the brunette who isn't afraid of anything and the tall elegant New Yorker, form a complementary choreography/scenographer couple. Since 1998, they have created, together, about 10 shows, the solo *Sans la voix des maîtres (Without the Masters' Voice)*, the piece for three dancers *Final Scene*, another for four dancers, *Landscape with 4 Figures*, and *It's Like... SWOT, Urban Bubbles*. Launched in 2004, the *Erase-E(X)* project unfolds successively in six parts choreographed and danced by Johanne Saunier and other interpreters. This show achieves the equilibrium, always unstable, that illustrates the definition of art according to Joji Inc: a dance that would be just as physical as sedate, as overflowing with energy as technically unstoppable, constantly relaunched by the inventiveness of the interpreter's gestures and stage practices. At the Festival d'Avignon, Johanne Saunier and Jim Clayburgh presented parts 1, 2 and 3 of *Erase-E(X)* in the Sujets à vif program in 2004 and 2005.

## Erase-E(X) parts 1,2,3,4,5,6

BY **THE WOOSTER GROUP, ANNE TERESA DE KEERSMAEKER, ISABELLA SOUPART, KURT D'HAESELEER, GEORGES APERGHIS AND JOHANNE SAUNIER**

23 25 26

SALLE BENOÎT-XII • 5 p.m.

running time 2 hours 30 mins including intermission

concept **Joji Inc**

choreography **The Wooster Group** (1), **Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker** (2), **Isabella Soupарт** (3), **Johanne Saunier** (6)

videoperformance **Kurt d'Haeseleer** (4)

musical text **Georges Aperghis** (5)

scenography, light **Jim Clayburgh**

**In 1953**, Robert Rauschenberg erased a painting by Willem De Kooning to reappropriate it. It was on the radical model of this act of modern art, *Erased De Kooning Drawing*, that Johanne Saunier and Jim Clayburgh imagined their own show, *Erase-E(X)*, interpreted by Johanne Saunier: a palimpsest dance, a relay in which several choreographers will erase and recreate the piece of another. The first sketch is offered by the Belgian choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, a reinterpreted dance on the model of the mechanism that functions, races, then jams, by The Wooster Group as a variation based on the character of Bardot in *Le Mépris (Contempt)* by Jean-Luc Godard. Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker next recasts the piece as a pure, abstract rite, accompanied by Indian percussion instruments, before the Brussels actress-dancer, director and choreographer Isabella Soupарт makes Bardot spring up again, but decked out with a strange cybernetic, paranoid and blundering bodyguard. In the next two parts, the video-maker Kurt D'Haeseleer then the composer Georges Aperghis take hold of this staging and sound game through creating/erasing. Lastly, it is Johanne Saunier herself who closes the cycle on a very sensual note by surrounding herself with two dancers. Before these six pieces performed in their continuity, we feel even more the physical work of a dance that makes the machine seize up, contaminates and traps the myth of the femme fatale, disturbs the communication between beings and between the media, attacks movie glamour to project it and scatter it on the stage of gestures and moods. *Le Mépris* is replayed here in a panicky version, the diva becoming a moth that knocks into the projectors' light, and the languid sensuality of the star is little by little minutely examined through a biting but absolutely joyous irony. The dancer Johanne Saunier goes from one universe to the other with astonishing ease, engraving her share of artist-interpreter in each of the show's writings.

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## SIDI LARBI CHERKAOUI

At the age of 32, **Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui**, associate artist at the Toneelhuis of Antwerp, has already compelled recognition as one of the virtuoso dancers of his generation, and one of the most inventive choreographers calling on eclectic and surprising music in his shows with their very diverse styles and techniques. He danced with the Ballets C. de la B. in *Its Op Bach* by Alain Platel in 1998 and quickly became known as a choreographer with *Rien de rien (Absolutely Nothing)* in 2000, a piece for six dancers influenced by the melancholy of folk songs. In 2002, in Avignon, his work as an interpreter in the solo *It* by Wim Vandekeybus was hailed as the event of Vif du sujet. The same year, with Damien Jalet and two of Sasha Waltz's dancers, he premiered *D'avant (Before)*, a show inspired by 13<sup>th</sup> century songs that went deeply into the violence of bodies and the fanaticism of minds while mixing in gentle breathing and poetic suspensions. *Foi (Faith)*, 2003, *Tempus fugit* (2004), *In Memoriam* (2005), *Mea Culpa* (2006), *Myth* (2007) and *Origine* (2008) have since confirmed his inspiration, blending sophisticated, erudite, medieval sources and generous, colourful, subtle and spectacular interpretations. Straddling cultures, naturally comfortable in crossing sources and in encounters, his work with the English dancer and choreographer of Bengali origin, Akram Khan, *Zero Degrees* (2005), finally made Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui an important figure on the European stage. Baroque in his heart, curious, demanding, he will continue to regard dance as an adventure. At the Festival d'Avignon, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui presented *It* (in collaboration with Wim Vandekeybus) in the Vif du sujet program in 2002 and *Tempus fugit* in 2004; he was scheduled to present *Foi* in 2003.

### Sutra

BY **SIDI LARBI CHERKAOUI / ANTONY GORMLEY**  
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY **SZYMON BRZÓSKA**  
WITH THE **MONKS OF THE SHAOLIN TEMPLE**

9 10 11 12 13

COUR DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH • 10 p.m.

estimated running time 1 hour 15 mins • 2008 premiere  
direction and choreography **Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui**

**Sutra** is a kind of travel log, which led Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui to one of the sources of his inspiration, the Shaolin temple in China, the cradle of kung-fu, the mythic site where one comes across the ghost of Bruce Lee and one of the world's most elabo-

rated body of thought on the human body, the monks' spirituality and the practice of martial arts. Working at the Henan monastery, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui sought a dual initiation: he received gestures, rituals, rhythms and intuitions from the monks at the Shaolin temple, while offering them a contemporary choreographic framework, composed of the arrangement of bodies, other speeds, other types of musicality. This exchange, transferred to the stage of a show, resembles the learning of a new language, written between East and West, that respects the kung-fu tradition and contributes an original viewpoint to it, as though it concerned going back to the origins of an art that is also a life-style. It is the body and its energy – mastered, released, vital, animal – that enlivens the stage of *Sutra*, where 17 Shaolin monks encircle Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui in a choreography that shuns folkloric recreation to better reinvent a philosophy of life through its speeds and pauses, its bursts and its withdrawals, its apparent vivacity and its internal release, its animal inspiration and its spiritual surges. The English artist Antony Gormley composed the visual and scenographic part of this universe while the Polish musician Szymon Brzóška worked on its most intimate revelation, between pulsing rhythm and melancholic discretion. In this strange zone, where bodies use all the physical means at their disposal while preserving the soothing powers of mediation, a physical grammar composed of tradition and modernity, of matter and imagination has been written that tries to build a passage between a civilization and those who discover it: this journey of initiation that leads to the beauty of gesture.

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## WAJDI MOUAWAD

Born in Lebanon in 1968, **Wajdi Mouawad**, at the age of 8, was forced to abandon his native land because of the civil war and began an exile that led him to France. He was obliged, however, to leave France in 1983 because the state refused to give him the papers required to remain in the country, and he left for Quebec. He went to school there and in 1991 received his diploma from the National Theatre School of Montreal. A writer and director, he founded his first company Théâtre Ô Parleur, then, in 2000, he became the artistic director of the Théâtre de Quat'sous before setting up the first French-Quebec company, *Abé carré cé carré / Au carré de l'hypothénuse*. Staging his own texts *Littoral*, *Willy Protogoras enfermé dans les toilettes (Willy Protogoras, Shut up in the Lavatory)*, *Rêves (Dreams)*, *Incendies*

(*Fires*) and in 2006 *Forêts (Forests)*, he also became interested in Shakespeare (*Macbeth*), Cervantes (*Don Quixote*), Irvine Welsh (*Trainspotting*), Sophocles (*The Trojans*), Frank Wedekind (*Lulu*), Pirandello (*Six Characters in Search of an Author*), Chekhov (*The Three Sisters*) and Louise Bombardier (*Ma mère chien [My Mother Dog]*). Since 2007, he has been artistic director of the French Theatre of the National Arts Centre of Ottawa. Working on both sides of the Atlantic, he brings many producers in France and Canada into his project, mobilizing French and Canadian actors. He produces unique works that he says do not consist “in putting something on stage but in putting something in the mind”, directing “the actors to bring them to a state of mind that is specific to them and also specific to the show in which they act, to contaminate the spectators”.

Wajdi Mouawad presented *Littoral* at the Festival d'Avignon in 1999.

## Seuls

BY **WAJDI MOUAWAD**

19 20 21 22 24 25

GYMNASE AUBANEL • 6 p.m. • running time 2 hours

2008 premiere

text, direction and interpretation **Wajdi Mouawad**

**Is it** Wajdi Mouawad who undertakes, alone on the stage, a journey into his unconscious, in quest of his most deeply buried desires, in quest of the child he once was and whose image has been effaced, in quest of a forgotten mother tongue? Yes and no... because the author-director-actor throws us off the scent and makes himself the master of true-lying, novelized autobiography, theatre self-fiction, using dramatic turns of events to better shed light on the complexity of his thought processes. Based on the principle “I is another”, he puts together a journey full of adventures, alternating epic moments full of humour and tragic episodes, a journey in the present into a past concealed deep within the unconscious that suddenly unmask itself. In this complex and rich itinerary, the hero is “Seuls”, simultaneously and concurrently a prodigal son, a blocked writer, an evolving artist, a child knocked about. Using the maximum polymorphy and polyphony that the theatre permits, mixing text, music, video and lighting, Wajdi Mouawad composes this living portrait of a man who touches and moves us with his questioning, his anguish, his incapacities, his desires, his wish to understand and assume his relationship with the world by releasing himself from his conscious or unconscious mental blocks. By going as deeply as possible into himself, by exposing himself without any false modesty, he touches the universality of

human destiny. The uncontested master of the stage that he transforms into an artist's studio, organizing a permanent game of hide-and-seek, not rejecting extreme simplicity while daring extreme complexity, not trying to explain but trying to feel, Wajdi Mouawad knows how to light the invisible that is hidden in each individual, becoming one of the great contemporary poets of human pain and suffering.

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**SUJETS À VIF** with the Sacd

6-13 and 18-25 July

JARDIN DE LA VIERGE DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH

6 7 8 10 11 12 13 • 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Program A • 11 a.m.

**I-Fang Lin** dancer • **Christian Rizzo** choreographer

The Taiwanese dancer I Fan Ling and the choreographer Christian Rizzo take off to explore the cuisines and markets of Taipei and cookbooks. A proposal to dance the taste of the time that one must know how to take “to be at work at the stove”. I Fan Ling is also an interpreter in *2008 vallée* by Mathilde Monnier and Philippe Katerine.

and  
**She's Mine**

**Marta Izquierdo Muñoz** dancer and choreographer

**Mark Tompkins** and **Frans Poelstra** artistic collaborators

This solo alludes to popular “hand-made” stars, as seen in Almodóvar and Fabio McNamara's works, but also to those fleeting, disposable stars that seem to say, like Edie Sedgwick: “I'd like to excite the whole world even for just a minute”. Marta Izquierdo Muñoz benefits here from the artistic overview of Mark Tompkins and Frans Poelstra, two great choreographers and interpreters in whom the continuity of life and the show allows the freedom to choose what belongs to one or the other.

Program B • 6 p.m.

**Brut de lettres** (Brut Letters)

**Julia Cima** actress and dancer • **Denis Lavant** actor and director • **Alain Didier-Weill** playwright and psychoanalyst

Julia Cima, accompanied by the actor Denis Lavant, takes hold of “brut writings”, found in the archives of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries psychiatric hospitals written by people interned in them. Alain Didier-Weill contributes his experience to this exploration.



and  
3 cailloux (3 Pebbles)

**Laurent Poitrenaux** actor • **Sylvain Prunec** dancer

**Didier Galas** director

"Do you want to know who you are? Don't ask. Act." Dider Galas, Laruent Poitrenaux and Sylvain Prunec venture into the work of the Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz, a genuine detonator for reflecting on our relationship with the intimate faced with the values of today's world that is based on profitability, classification and quantification. They propose a reflection on artistic form as well as on the real and human nature.

18 19 20 22 23 24 25 • 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Program C • 11 a.m.

Chanteur plutôt qu'acteur

(Singer Rather Than Actor)

**Massimo Furlan** performer • **Marielle Pinsard** author

Massimo Furlan, Swiss of Italian origin, meets Marielle Pinsard, a Swiss author, in an offbeat performance that is different every day. They invite, in the form of a strange public debate, philosophers, historians and personalities whom they will sometimes interpret themselves.

and  
La Nudité du ragout (The Nakedness of Stew)

**Ludor Citrik** clown • **Isabelle Wéry** director and author

A clown meets an actress: "the taming and taking wing of verbs, the jester tenderly drools before the high-spirited Belgian author". This encounter gave birth to the project: a colour lithograph of the music hall, the clash of styles, the throb of moods. A universe is created that is playful and sensual, lustful and insatiable.

Program D • 6 p.m.

Barok

**Sonia Brunelli** dancer • **Simon Vincenzi** choreographer

The action grows out of a sound enclosed in a room and its infinite repetition. The figure consequently changes form, opening up a dialogue between inside and outside, between what acts and what is perceived.

and  
Interrogations aux vertèbres

(Questions on Vertebrae)

**Virgilio Sieni** dancer • **Stefano Scodanibbio** musician and composer • **Giorgio Agamben** philosopher

The result of a dialogue between Virgilio Sieni and the philosopher Giorgio Agamben, the dancer proposes, with the musician Stefano Scodanibbio, five studies, a first attempt at questions on vertebrae. What happens when they start to move?

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LA VINGT-CINQUIÈME HEURE

(The 25<sup>th</sup> Hour)

8 9 11 12 13 15 16 18 19 20 21

ÉCOLE D'ART

An invitation to artists to come and disturb Avignon nights. Five strange shows, close to performance art, in the École d'Art basement.

during the nights of the 8 to the 9  
and the 9 to the 10 July at 1 a.m.

Guardamunt 55' (poème & considérations)

running time 55 mins • after a poem by **Vaslav Nijinsky** and an extract from his diary

Bénédicte Le Lamer and Pascal Kirsch, who founded the pEQUOd company in 2003, continue their cycle based on Vaslav Nijinsky's diaries proposing a new form, a new variation on the star dancer's withdrawal into the Guardamunt villa where he devoted himself to writing - shortly before he was interned. From dance to writing, from music to silence, from the dazzle of life to long years of isolation, *Guardamunt 55'* gives tangible substance, in the form of a concert, to a poem by Nijinsky, taking us into territories with shifting borders, those of an intimacy overflowing with sensitivity.

during the nights of the 11 to the 12,  
the 12 to the 13 and the 13 to the 14 July at 1 a.m.

L'Effet de Serge (Serge's Effect)

running time 1 hour 15 mins • conception, scenography and direction **Philippe Quesne**

Inviting his friends to share the show of his weekly creations, Serge forges a joint ceremony that is both derisory but indispensable to his survival as a solitary man and to the perpetuation of his eternal childhood.

during the nights of the 15 to the 16  
and the 16 to the 17 July at 1 a.m.

Frans Poelstra, son dramaturge

et Bach (Frans Poelstra, his playwright and Bach)

running time 1 hour 45 mins • conception and production

**Frans Poelstra**, **Robert Steijn** and **Johann Sebastian Bach**

"Everything this play recounts is potentially true", Frans Poelstra admits with a smile. According to what Robert Steijn (the playwright) says, Frans Poelstra (the interpreter) supposedly discovered dance with Bach. Working as a policeman, marked by the *Goldberg Variations*, he supposedly followed his intuition and left Amsterdam to improvise, for a summer, in the streets bordering the Popes' Palace in Avignon. There, as everyone knows, a career can start and, in fact, his career started there. With self-mockery, the pair will set

forth, point by point, the protocol of creation without avoiding its contradictions.

during the nights of the 18 to the 19  
and the 19 to the 20 July at 1 a.m.

### You Invited Me, Don't You Remember? • Self Service My Name Is Neo (for fifteen minutes)

running time 1 hour • 3 short performances by

**Yan Duyvendak** • direction **Imanol Atorrasagasti**

Yan Duyvendak's performances are based on a play between TV or movie images and their impossible reproduction with the resources of live performance. In *You Invited Me...*, the artist uses sound tracks from films to call up that figure to whom the cinema, principally American, has given tangible substance: evil. In *Self Service*, Yan Duyvendak raises questions about the relationships between text and image: which of them creates meaning? Lastly, in *My Name Is Neo...*, the performer grapples with the final 15 minutes of the cult film *Matrix*.

during the nights of the 20 to the 21  
and the 21 to the 22 July at 1 a.m.

### JERK

running time 55 mins • after a short story by **Dennis**

**Cooper** • conception and direction **Gisèle Vienne**

*Jerk* is a strange, poetic, humorous and dark imaginary reconstruction of the hideous crimes of the American serial killer Dean Corll. With this solo for a hand puppeteer interpreted by Jonathan Capdevielle, Gisèle Vienne continues her work on our different experiences of the perception of the real. What is broached here is the further questioning of the borders between realism and the poetic, having us experience the links between fantasy and reality.

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### LA VIERGE ROUGE

Simone Weil, fragments

(The Red Virgin. Simone Weil, fragments)

21 July

GYMNASSE DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH • 7 p.m.

proposed by **Laure Adler** • with **Anouk Grinberg**

Simone Weil, born in 1909, a philosopher and important figure of intellectual engagement, was a teacher, factory worker, union organizer, militant in the National Front party, combatant alongside the Spanish Republicans in the Durruti Column, then a farm worker. In 1940, Jewish and lucid about the tragedy gripping Europe, she fled Paris for Marseille where she became a Resistance fighter. She left France for New York on the penul-

timate ship accompanied by her parents. Once in the United States, she felt the absolute necessity of returning to Europe to once again fight in the Resistance. She was brought into General de Gaulle's cabinet in London where she wrote a large number of texts on France's future. She died at the age of 34, in 1943. Throughout her life as a writer, from the École Normale Supérieure (teachers college) at the start of the 1930s where the director nicknamed her "the red virgin" for her fervent support of the weakest members of society, to her last days impregnated by an ultimate mystical crisis, Simone Weil battled against social destitution, supported the worker's condition and politically, philosophically and spiritually defended the cause of freedom against oppression. Her style is incandescent and she loved the theatre, she even wrote a play that was never published. Laure Adler, drawing fragments from her correspondence with her brother, in certain philosophical and political writings, proposes, with the actress Anouk Grinberg, a staged reading. A voyage through Simone Weil's work and life that seeks to make the voice of those who will not submit heard.

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### THE FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON AND THE ISTS WELCOME THEATRE SCHOOLS

ATELIER ISTS, CLOÎTRE SAINT-LOUIS • free admission  
tickets available at the Cloître Saint-Louis as of 1<sup>st</sup> July

How do we learn, how do we transmit? This question reappears time and again in the Festival 2008. As an echo to these concerns, the ISTS (Higher Institute of Show Techniques), with the help of the Festival d'Avignon, will open the doors of its workshop in the Cloître Saint-Louis to students of two theatre schools so they can present the result of their schoolwork to spectators and professionals and enrich themselves with the Festival experience. Two pedagogical projects of different natures have been chosen: one trains directors under the aegis of Anatoli Vassiliev at the ENSATT, the other actors directed by Ludovic Lagard and Laurent Poitrenaux at the ERAC. Moreover, students from Dominique Valadié's class at the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique will take part in a "Rendez-vous avec Antoine Vitez".

ENSATT - Atelier Vassiliev • 7.30 p.m.

5 and 9 July Platon/Magritte 1 (Plato/Magritte 1)

running time 4 hours

6 and 10 July Platon/Magritte 2 (Plato/Magritte 2)

running time 4 hours

8 and 11 July L'Impromptu de Versailles (The Versailles Impromptu) • running time 2 hours 45 mins

directors **Agnès Adam, Hugues Badet, Yves Beauget, Cyril Cotinaut, Philippe Cotten, Marion Delplancke, Giampaolo Gotti, David Jauzion-Graverolles, Cédric Jonchiere, Pierre Heitz, Stéphanie Lupo, Stéphane Poliakov, Judith von Radetzki and Anatoli Vassiliev**

The ENSATT (National Higher School of Theatre Arts and Techniques) has welcomed, from 2004 to 2008, students and trainees from the directing group, gathered around Anatoli Vassiliev for a kind of permanent laboratory for artistic research and training in directing. How can the light breath of the theatre be found again? How can a verbal text be transformed into a text for the stage? For the *Plato/Magritte* evenings, the solution is in the development of two parallel lines of action, that of the verbalism of Plato's dialogues and that of the dynamic image taken from Magritte's pictures. *L'Impromptu de Versailles* is based on the practice of study; it is a manifesto of a rehearsal method, a means of free improvisation that brings us into this dialogue on art to look for, with Molière, the very root of artistic creativity. This collective training experience and these shows have given rise to a directors' collective: the "Laboratoire-Spectacle" association.

ERAC - Ensemble 16 • 6 p.m.

18 19 20 22 23 24 July *Sœurs et frères* (Sisters and Brothers) • estimated running time 1 hour 30 mins

text **Olivier Cadiot** • directed by **Ludovic Lagarde**

and **Laurent Poitrenaux**

"Sortie d'école" (final year show) by the third-year students at the ERAC (Regional Actors School of Cannes) supervised by the director Ludovic Lagarde and the actor Laurent Poitrenaux with *Sœurs et frères* (Sisters and Brothers) by Olivier Cadiot. Seven brothers and sisters meet during an inventory in the family house, their childhood playground. But rather than material goods, it is their common memory that they attempt to share... *Sœurs et frères* was premiered by Ludovic Lagarde in 1993. In 2008, the text was adapted by the author for this "final year show" that will have two different casts presented in rotation.

A special issue of *Alternatives théâtrales*, devoted to the artists in the Festival's programming, questions, in particular, the connection between creation and transmission.

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## THÉÂTRE DES IDÉES

(Theatre of Ideas)

9 10 13 14 16 18 19 23

GYMNASE DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH • 3 p.m.

estimated running time 2 hours • free admission

*definitive program in the spectator's guide, available at the beginning of July*

Based on dialogues between philosophers, sociologists and historians, the Théâtre des Idées – which stemmed from discussions with the associate artists – helps to shed light on certain questions raised by the Festival's programming and constructs a critical space in line with the themes treated by the Festival's artistic proposals.

conception and moderation **Nicolas Truong**

The debates of the first four years of the Théâtre des Idées (2004-2007) are brought together in a book titled *Le Théâtre des idées* (Flammarion éditions).

9 July • What Are Life's New Ages and Customs?

Children are adolescents earlier and earlier, young people remain so longer and longer, adults balk at leaving their youth and the elderly aspire to nothing less than a second youth... How can this confusion be handled between generations that experiment with other rhythms and rites of passages, new ways of living and dying, being born and transmitting?

with **Pierre-Henri Tavoillot** philosopher

10 July • The Divine Comedy Today

A journey of initiation and metaphysics, a poetic and political experience, Dante's masterpiece is contemporary with the birth of purgatory, that third place of the hereafter, located between hell and paradise, invented by a society that aspired to more justice and recognition for the individual. What makes *The Divine Comedy* one of the frameworks of our modernity?

with **Jacques Le Goff** historian

**Jacqueline Risset** author and translator

13 July • Which Return to Spirituality?

Alongside "God's revenge" and the fanatical excesses that haunt a rendered planet, the spiritual force of religions – and especially of the Christian heritage – appears as a way to postpone the crisis of hope, the absolute, meaning and horizon of a disenchanting world. A new future comprised of an illusion or the only possible path to emancipation?

with **Tzvetan Todorov** historian and essayist

**François Flahault** philosopher

### 14 July • In Praise of Love

Whether it is reduced to the biology of passions or diluted in relational individualism, love is threatened on all sides. Love however is an event that, just like art or rebellion, bursts into reality and rends its banality to open us up to difference, to the encounter with the possibility of “Two”. It is a political weapon as well, which must be saved and reinvented.

with **Alain Badiou** philosopher

### 16 July • Is Another World Possible?

Through an encounter with an Italian philosopher who has worked on the idea of “biopolitics”, a neologism meant to identify a form of exercise of power that no longer concerns just territories but the life of individuals, that exceptional state which has become the rule in our societies will be treated by referring to his work in progress.

with **Giorgio Agamben** philosopher

### 18 July • Beyond Reason?

Does the sleep of reason beget monsters, as Goya wrote? Without slipping into a certain form of esotericism, isn't there a way of reaching the mysteries of the human being without having recourse to the traditional attributes of Western rationality? How do dreams, childhood, sleep and other states of consciousness challenge our certainties?

participants to come

### 19 July • What Kind of Approach to Images?

In a world where images proliferate and block our imagination, it seems necessary to turn once again to critical activity in order to question the conditions for a possible approach to the imagination. An invitation to dig deeper into the unconscious memory of images, to look at our own history with the tools that thinkers and artists such as Walter Benjamin and Pasolini offer us.

with **Georges Didi-Huberman** philosopher and art historian

### 23 July • The Spectator's Place: What Is His Responsibility?

What place does the spectator of live performances hold in the “show society” in which the real world as it is experienced seems to be far if not absent from the television image? Must art deliver a message, impose a single meaning or permit the spectator to construct his viewpoint himself, at the risk of disorientation?

with **Florence Dupont** theatre anthropologist

**Marie-José Mondzain** philosopher

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### TRAITS D'UNION

27 nouvelles pièces d'Europe

(27 new European plays)

12 13 14 15 17 18 19 20 21

JARDIN DE LA RUE DE MONS • 11 a.m. • free admission  
definitive program in the spectator's guide, available at the beginning of July

On the occasion of the European Cultural Season which will take place during the second half of 2008, in the framework of the French presidency of the European Union, an exceptional European theatre project has been decided on: the selection of 27 European texts translated into French, published and presented at public readings. This project, initiated by Culturesfrance, wishes to have the diversity and richness of contemporary European theatre writing be heard while having the public discover European playwrights known in their country but still unpublished in France. Three reading cycles, at the Festival d'Avignon, the Festival La Mousson d'été (23 to 29 August) and the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe (1 to 29 November) will present 27 playwrights who come from each of the 27 member countries of the European Union, translated with the support of the Maison Antoine Vitez and the Atelier Européen de la Traduction and published by éditions Théâtrales. The Festival has chosen Patrick Pineau to produce the readings in Avignon. Five plays will be recorded and broadcast on France Culture.

readings by **Nicolas Bonnefoy, Hervé Briau,**  
**Éric Elmosnino, Sylvie Orcier, Patrick Pineau,**  
**Julie Pouillon and Anne Soisson**

#### Belgium

Risquons tout (Let's Risk Everything)

by **Filip Vanluchene** • translation **Monique Nagielkopf**

#### Bulgaria

Petite Pièce pour chambre d'enfants

(Short Play for Children's Bedroom)

by **Iana Borisova** • translation **Evgueniy Djurov,**  
**Frédéric Vossier**

#### Denmark

Chef-d'œuvre (Masterpiece)

by **Christian Lollike** • translation **Catherine Lise Dubost**

#### Ireland

Terminus

by **Mark O'Rowe** • translation **Isabelle Famchon**

#### Latvia

Les Cerfs noirs (The Black Stags)

by **Inga Abele** • translation **Gita Grinberga, Henri Menantaud**

## Netherlands

Le jour, et la nuit, et le jour, après la mort (The Day, and the Night, and the Day, After Death)

by **Esther Gerritsen** • translation **Monique Nagielkopf**

## United Kingdom

Débris

by **Dennis Kelly** • translation **Philippe Le Moine,**

**Pauline Sales**

## Slovenia

Toute une vie (A Whole Life)

by **Andreja Zelinka** • translation **Liza Japelj Carone**

## Sweden

Invasion!

by **Jonas Hassen Khemiri** • translation **Susanne Burstein**

(with the collaboration of Aziz Chouaki)

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### THE EUROPEAN MEETINGS OF THE AIX AND AVIGNON FESTIVALS

11 and 12 july • 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. • free admission

These meetings, a continuation of those initiated last year by the Avignon Festival, gather political, artistic, intellectual and cultural personalities to share a European cultural issue. Strengthened and broadened, the ambition of these meetings is also to be a space for reflection whose purpose is to have art be an integral part of the European political project. They are the result of close collaboration between two international festivals, the International Lyric Art Festival of Aix-en-Provence and the Avignon Festival. On the occasion of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the two festivals intend, based on concrete artistic experiences, to reflect on this idea and to query it in order to lay the foundations of future actions. From the dawn of time, cultures and forms of artistic expressions have been subject to cross-breeding and reciprocal influences. Globalization and the population movements it induces strengthen, accelerate and impact these phenomena. We are now witnessing a broad decompartmentalization, a genuine movement towards interdisciplinarity, the emergence of artistic forms that reflect a multicultural society. Concurrently, we are observing the rise in communitarianism, accompanied by a strong temptation to fall back on one's identity. Intercultural dialogue can also appear in its turn either as a panacea that guarantees the appeasement of conflicts or as the spectre of acculturation or the enemy of cultural diversity. Are there several acceptances of this idea of

intercultural dialogue? Is it based on respect and mutual recognition or on domination and assimilation? What role does Europe have to play in promoting an active dialogue between the cultures that have founded it and those of other continents? Can we ignore Europe's colonial past and hierarchization, even the cultural domination that accompanied it? Is intercultural dialogue likely to reduce fundamentalism, fight exclusions and build a common, imaginary, geographic, peaceful and prospective space? Artists and cultural operators are confronted with these basic questions in their practice.

## Program

*detailed program in the spectator's guide, available in July*

### 11 july

GYMNASE DU LYCÉE SAINT-JOSEPH • AVIGNON

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Is art a laboratory for interculturality?

3 p.m. - 6 p.m. • Migration and artistic creation

### 12 july

AMPHITHÉÂTRE DE L'INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES POLITIQUES

AIX-EN-PROVENCE

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Art and conflict

3 p.m. - 6 p.m. • What are the conditions for a fertile intercultural dialogue in the artistic field?

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### THE SPECTATOR'S GUIDE

To complement the program, day by day, the spectator's guide gives details on readings, exhibitions, encounters, debates and more, events that are most often free organized by the Festival or its partners. It is available at the Cloître Saint-Louis and all the Festival's venues at the beginning of July.

## INTERNET SITE

[www.festival-avignon.com](http://www.festival-avignon.com)

You will be able to find all the information on the Festival on the web site, which shows (press releases, images...) as well as many videos (press conferences, encounters with the artists, etc.). A new section will also let you share your impressions on the shows you have seen. Computers will be available for the public at the École d'Art.

## ITINERARY

Please note: on 14 July, the national holiday, because of the fireworks, you will encounter delays crossing the Rhone river and reaching the city of Avignon from the end of the afternoon.

### Carrière de Boulbon

(15 km/20 mins from the main post office)

- turn right outside the ramparts, follow the sign “autres directions”
- take the pont de l'Europe bridge, follow the sign “Nîmes”
- at the end of the bridge, turn right, follow the sign “Villeneuve/Font d'Irac”
- at the stop sign, turn right, follow the sign “Aramon”
- continue for 9.3 km and at the roundabout, take the bridge following the sign “Vallabrègues/Boulbon”
- at the end of the bridge, turn right, following the sign “Boulbon”, then immediately turn left, following the sign “La Carrière” (itinerary signposted)

### Châteaublanc Parc des expositions

chemin des Férons, Avignon

(10 km/30-40 mins from the main post office)

- turn left outside the ramparts, follow the sign “Aix-en-Provence”, keeping to the ramparts
- follow the sign “Cavaillon/Aix-en-Provence/Marseille” (N7) for 8 km until the airport roundabout (3<sup>rd</sup> roundabout, be careful not to turn before)
- at the roundabout, take the exit “Parc des expositions” (itinerary signposted)

### La Chartreuse de Villeneuve lez Avignon (the Carthusian monastery)

58 rue de la République, Villeneuve lez Avignon

(2.5 km/20 mins from the main post office)

- turn right outside the ramparts, follow the sign “autres directions”
- keep to the ramparts, follow the sign “Barthelasse” until the Daladier bridge
- go under the bridge and follow the sign “Villeneuve”
- take the bridge and cross both arms of the Rhone
- at the end of the bridge, turn right and follow the sign “Villeneuve centre”
- continue for about 1 km until the roundabout, turn left and follow the sign “centre historique/Hôtel de Ville”
- continue to the monastery (itinerary signposted)
- the car park is on the right about 20 m after the entrance (limited number of spaces)

### Gymnase Paul Giera

55 avenue Eisenhower, Avignon

(1.8 km/5 mins by car, 20 mins on foot from the main post office, leave from the Saint-Charles gate)

- turn right outside the ramparts, follow the sign “autres directions”
- keep to the ramparts for about 300 m and at the 2<sup>nd</sup> traffic light, turn left onto the avenue Eisenhower and follow the sign “Champfleury/Palais Omnisport”
- continue straight ahead on the avenue Eisenhower to the 1<sup>st</sup> roundabout, follow the sign “Hameau de Champfleury” to the 2<sup>nd</sup> roundabout, then follow the sign “gare TGV/Hameau de Champfleury”
- the gymnasium is on the left, 200 m from this point

### Gymnase Gérard Philipe

75 rue Pablo Picasso, Avignon

(4.5 km/12 mins by car from the main post office)

- turn left outside the ramparts
- keep to the ramparts for about 2 km
- turn right on the avenue de la Folie, follow the sign “Pont des deux-eaux/Polyclinique Urbain V”
- continue straight ahead for about 2.2 km following the sign “Pont des deux-eaux”
- at the 3<sup>rd</sup> roundabout, turn right onto the rue Vincent Van Gogh, following the sign “halte-garderie”
- at the intersection (300 m from this point), turn left onto the rue Pablo Picasso
- the gymnasium is just on your left

### La Miroiterie

3 route de Lyon, Avignon

(200 m on foot from the Saint-Lazare gate)

- turn right outside the ramparts, then left following the sign “Orange/Valence”
- the venue is 20 m from this point

### Shuttle buses

Detailed schedules in the spectator's guide available at the beginning of July

Shuttle buses to the various show venues leave from the main post office

- Festival shuttles for Châteaublanc - Parc des expositions and the Carrière de Boulbon
- Bustival lines for the Gymnase Paul Giera the Gymnase Gérard Philipe and the Chartreuse of Villeneuve lez Avignon
- Bustival TCRA also has buses that run in the evening

## TICKET RESERVATIONS

open from 16 June

### by telephone

+33 (0) 4 90 14 14 14

- from 16 June to 3 July from Monday to Friday
- from 4 July seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. (reservation fees: 1.60€ per ticket, 25€ flat rate for 25 seats or more)

### Payment

- **by credit card:** confirmation at time of reservation
- **by cheque:** until 30 June
  - Confirmation when the cheque (bank or postal for French accounts or eurocheque from abroad) is received made out to the Festival d'Avignon (please write your customer code on the back of the cheque) and sent to the following address: Festival d'Avignon, Service réservation, 20 rue du portail Boquier, 84000 Avignon
  - Your cheque must arrive within five days of your phone reservation. The order becomes valid on receipt of payment. If no payment arrives after these five days, your reservation will be cancelled
  - Starting on 1 July, only phone reservations paid by credit card will be accepted.

### By Internet

[www.festival-avignon.com](http://www.festival-avignon.com)

- reservation fees: 1.60€ per ticket
- open from 16 June at 9 a.m.
- payment only by credit card
- ticket sales are available until midnight of the night before the performance

### Ticket collection

So that you receive your tickets on time, tickets reserved by phone or Internet are not mailed but are to be picked up at the ticket office

- from 16 June to 3 July, from Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- from 4 July, seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.
- on the day of the show:
  - at the Cloître Saint-Louis until three hours before the start of the first show you have chosen
  - at the ticket booth at the venue of the first show chosen, 45 mins before the start of the performance

### At the ticket office, Cloître Saint-Louis

20 rue du portail Boquier, 84000 Avignon

- from 16 June to 3 July, from Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- from 4 July, seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.
- for shows on the same day, reservations close three hours before the start of each performance. Any remaining tickets go on sale at the entrance to the show venue, 45 mins before the start of the performance

### At the Fnac

reservation fees: 1.60€ per ticket

discount tickets for Fnac members only

### In the stores

in all Fnac stores in France, Switzerland and Belgium

### or on [www.fnac.com](http://www.fnac.com)

reservation fees: 1.60€ per ticket

(from 6 a.m. to 11.45 p.m., French time; except for 16 June when reservations open at 9 a.m.)

### Payment

- **by credit card:** immediate confirmation when order is placed
- **by cheque:** at least 10 days before the date of the first performance
  - the reservation is confirmed when the check is received (please write your customer code on the back of the cheque)
  - Tickets must be picked up during Fnac opening hours
  - Please note that Fnac stores are closed on Sundays and bank holidays

### Ticket prices

#### • Cour d'honneur at the Popes' palace

	normal	reduced	folding seat
category I	36 €	30 €	25 €
category II	30 €	25 €	13 €

#### • Opera theatre

	normal	reduced
category I	25 €	20 €
category II	16 €	13 €

Cat. I numbered seating: pit, stalls and dress circle

Cat. II seats are not numbered: circle and upper circle

#### • All other venues:

see ticket prices, show by show, in the schedule

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## Discounts

For everyone

- for the purchase of more than 25 tickets (discount price)
- individual multi-ticket for six or more shows for the same person in the same order (discount price)

Available on the Internet, by phone and at the ticket office at the Cloître Saint-Louis

On presentation of documentary proof for

- job-seekers (discount price)
- people working in the performing arts (discount price)
- young people under 25 years (**single price 13 €**)
- students (**single price 13 €**)

- by phone only until 1 July with payment by cheque and a photocopy of documentary proof

(you must show the original document when you pick up your tickets)

- at the ticket office of the Cloître Saint-Louis

- at the entrance to the show venue

Note: these reductions are not available at the Fnac.

## Practical information

### Accessibility

Seats are available for spectators in wheelchairs or with reduced mobility.

Reservations by phone only at +33 (0) 4 90 14 14 14 until the day before each performance.

Unfortunately, because of their layout, certain venues are not accessible.

In addition, certain shows are more easily accessible to the hearing and vision impaired.

For more information, please call +33 (0) 4 90 14 14 60

Please read carefully

- The doors open 15 to 30 mins before the start of each show unless, for artistic or technical reasons, the audience may be seated later (example: if the artists are on stage when the spectators take their seats)
- The performances begin on time. If you arrive late, you will not be admitted and your ticket will not be refunded
- 5 mins before the start of the show, unpaid seats will be put on sale and numbered seats are no longer guaranteed in the concerned venues
- Children must have a ticket to be admitted to the venues
- Tickets are non-refundable and not-transferable
- Venues with numbered seats: Cour d'honneur, Cour du lycée Saint-Joseph, Opéra-théâtre (cat. I), Carrière de Boulbon
- all other venues: no numbered seats
- Light meals, snacks and beverages may be

purchased at venues outside the city: the Carrière de Boulbon, the Chartreuse of Villeneuve lez Avignon and the Gymnase Gérard Philipe for the *Roman tragedies*.

*Please note: on 14 July, the national holiday, because of the fireworks, you will encounter delays crossing the Rhone river and reaching the city of Avignon from the end of the afternoon.*

Avignon Pass: to discover the city

By presenting your ticket to the Avignon Festival at the entrance to the main monuments and museums in Avignon and Villeneuve lez Avignon, you'll receive the PASS price (20 to 50 % reduction depending on the venues visited) For more information, please contact the Tourist Office at +33 (0)4 32 74 32 74 / [www.ot-avignon.fr](http://www.ot-avignon.fr)

For any further information please call +33 (0) 4 90 14 14 60

## INFORMATION IN ENGLISH

The programme in English is available at the Festival Office in Avignon, or by post on request (+33 (0) 4 90 14 14 60). You can also find information in English on our website [www.festival-avignon.com](http://www.festival-avignon.com)

### Translations of the shows into English

The Avignon Festival wishes to give non-French-speaking spectators a particularly warm welcome. For five shows in the programming, one performance will be translated into English either through supertitles or a simultaneous translation: **10 July** *Ordet (La Parole)* • **11 July** *Partage de midi* • **21 July** *La Mélancolie des dragons* • **22 July** *Seuls* • **23 July** *Je tremble (1 et 2)*

When you make your reservations, please let us know if you would like to benefit from the English translations.

Moreover, the shows *Airport Kids* by Stefan Kaegi and Lola Arias and *Empire (Art & Politics)* by Superamas being mostly in English, they are accessible to anglophone spectators for all the performances. Lastly, many of the shows with strong visual and musical components can be seen without any problems in comprehension by non-French-speaking spectators, especially *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*, *Another sleepy dusty delta day*, *Secret*, *Sutra*, *Erase-E(X)*, *[purgatorio] POPOPORA*, *Hell*, *Faune(s)*, *2008 vallée*, *Wewilllivesorm*, *Osso* and *Variation IV*.