

AND...

THE WORKSHOPS OF THOUGHT

Site Louis Pasteur Supramuros de l'Université d'Avignon

Dialogue artists-audience with Karelle Prugnaud et Nathalie Papin, July 17 at 16:30

Should a cultural New Deal in France centre on artistic and popular education 2.0?

with Nathalie Papin and Karelle Prugnaud, *Nectart*, July 18 at 14:30

CINEMATIC TERRITORIES

July 7 to 22, cinéma Utopia-Manutention

Initiation to animation cinema workshops, July 17 to 21 at 14:00,

conservatoire du Grand Avignon

VISITS FOR THE FAMILIES

July 7 to 22 at 10:30, departure place du Palais des papes

informations and booking at visitejeunesse@festival-avignon.com

YOUNG SPECTATOR'S GUIDE

available in all Festival venues

PEDAGOGICAL FILE

Pièce (dé)montée produced by Canopé, available on festival-avignon.com

WEB-TV

A web documentary about the show is produced by the Young Culture Reporters

and will be available on festival-avignon.tv

TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- October 18, 2018, Scène nationale d'Aubusson
- November 8 and 9, Scène nationale d'Albi
- December 9 and 10, Théâtre des Quatre Saisons, Gradignan
- December 13 to 15, CDN de Normandie-Rouen
- December 18, Le Rayon Vert, Saint-Valéry-en-Caux
- January 10 and 11, 2019, Gallia Théâtre, Saintes
- January 14 and 15, Scène nationale Tulle/Brive, Brive
- January 17 and 18, Scène nationale Tulle/Brive, Tulle
- February 12 to 14, La Coursive, La Rochelle
- February 26, Dieppe Scène nationale
- March 7 and 8, Le Grand Bleu, Lille
- March 10 et 11, La Rose des Vents, Villeneuve-d'Ascq
- March 30 to April 1st, Festival Petits et Grands, Le Grand T, Nantes

72th
EDITION

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

FESTIVAL-AVIGNON.COM



#FDA18

LÉONIE AND NOÉLIE

Léonie and Noélie are sixteen-year-old identical twins. From the roof of a building, they watch the fire they started and assess the challenges they've almost mastered. For one of them, it's complete mastery over words. For the other, stegophilia, the void, and action. They are engaging in an extreme performance to overcome their childhood humiliations. *Léonie and Noélie*, written by Nathalie Papin, is a meditation about the other, its mirror, its wholeness and its emptiness, its loneliness and its desire to stand out. By inviting Karelle Prugnaud to adapt this text about the powers and ambiguities of twinship, the writer found a possible double in this performer in love with immediateness. To speak to this budding audience, they call on the absolute of childhood, the vertigo of the stage, and the animality of urges. "*It's also about the desire of a child to break away from his or her environment when his or her dreams cannot properly unfold there.*" Nathalie Papin

KARELLE PRUGNAUD

From her training as an acrobat, Karelle Prugnaud has kept the energy and the wonder of the moment. She quickly turned her attention to directing and started working with Eugène Durif within the company L'envers du décor, bringing together theatre, performance art, and circus. In 2017, she became artist-in-residence at the Scène nationale de Dieppe, where she directs the performance art festival Tous azimuts.

NATHALIE PAPIN

A major writer in the world of theatre for young audiences (*Eat Me, The Land of Nothing, When I'm 1001...*), Nathalie Papin has also written plays for adults. She believes that writing for children is essential, because they demand a form of consistency that keeps everything fluid and constantly reconfiguring. In 2016, *Léonie and Noélie* won the Grand Prix Artcena for dramatic literature for young audiences.

Léonie and Noélie by Nathalie Papin, edited by l'École des loisirs, is on sale at the bookshop in the Maison Jean Vilar.



FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON 72^e

JULY 16 17 18 | 20 21 22 23
CHAPELLE DES PÉNITENTS BLANCS

INTERVIEW WITH KARELLE PRUGNAUD AND NATHALIE PAPIN

Twinship seems to be a daunting theme, due to its mystery, its complexity, and its depth.

Nathalie Papin: I've wanted to write about twinship for over ten years. In 2007, I tried to talk to my mother about her relationship with her own twin. She gave me an hour. No more, no less. After that conversation, I wrote and rewrote a lot, but *Léonie and Noélie* soon appeared as the freest version, detached from her personal history. With writing now autonomous, it allowed me to avoid the risk of a symbolic fusion. Here, the twins are 16, but in an earlier version, I went over their entire life, ending with their death. This act of writing forced me to unconsciously confront myself to the image I had of my mother as a child, to my own image as a writer and as a child. There was a fusion there, too. Often in my texts, childhoods get mixed together and children seem to create themselves. The present of the writing allows them to find themselves again. *Léonie and Noélie* allowed me to make those superimposed childhoods happen. I explored alterity... There was a shift in my own source of inspiration, as if a levee had broken between me and the world and that now, writing could flow through without trouble. Léonie wants to learn the dictionary by heart, Noélie wants to be a funambulist... It's also about the desire of a child to break away from their environment when their dreams cannot properly unfold there. To escape the first world you knew requires great strength. It's a way to give yourself unbelievable challenges. It's a leap into the unknown... It's also a way to put your trust more in words than in the adults around you. As a child, failing to learn the dictionary was one of my first failures. Creating this character is a way to tell the child I used to be that I've managed to learn the dictionary. It's a sort of transmission that's done thanks to writing.

Karelle Prugnaud: These two characters also ask us what it means "to be one." There's a reflection about emancipation and identity there. If, all of a sudden, each of them is granted access to herself, what do they have to let go of? And then there's a fascination for the twins themselves: their culture is at once shared and personal, they have their own language. It's at once a shared, modern language, and an archaic one, because it is based on memories. There are therefore words, but also an embodiment of what being twins means. We've been working with the actresses on this physical bond. Through their clothes first, with an evolution in the way they dress, while keeping the idea of the schoolgirl, who is a social being. We also play with the world of Japanese culture, which the two teenagers know well. They're at an age where they still embody the image of the "little girl" while also having to choose their own path. Adolescence is this transitory state where desire either finds its object in the "social being" or doesn't. It's a temporality we accept, one we even look for in this no man's land made of silence, emptiness, and solitude. Even though the twins live in a state of fusion, they remain forever alone. With composer Rémy Lesperon, we've been looking for something close to ataraxia, a sense of soft fulfilment, like one of Chopin's nocturnes... Even if we know this is but a temporary state, followed by periods of chaos. Moments of reanimation, that allow us to be reincarnated.

There is a troubling link between this performative relationship you, Nathalie, have with writing, and you, Karelle, with your work as a performer. Would you describe it as a mirror effect?

Karelle Prugnaud: *Léonie and Noélie* is a brand new adventure for me. I usually work with very dense writing (with writers like Eugène Durif). Images often echo the text, and sometimes I do away with dramaturgy altogether... Here, words are chosen carefully. I don't see it as writing for children, it's just writing. The text is full of ellipses, but it's not banal, there's a real weight to it. You can think you're getting all of it right away, but that's not the case. It's like a gesture in a Pina Bausch number: if it's not done properly, even though it looks so simple, it becomes hollow. It's this exercise in precision we have to explore with the actresses. Strangely enough, in their work outside of this project, they'd already done some research on twinship. It creates a bond which I think is perceptible onstage.

Nathalie Papin: When I came across Karelle's work, I saw its extravagance, its moments of dazzling poetry, and I thought she would be able to reveal all the text's secrets. It was an intuition that came to me slowly. There is no holding back in our relationship as writer and director, but an act of total sharing which explodes outwards in all directions. It allows me to rethink the way I write and realise that it's not "over," that there can be more, and that I can be a part of it. It's dizzying! Art makes you dizzy like that.

Karelle Prugnaud: It's as if I'd been given a text transfusion. I like challenges, and directing this play has become a performance in and of itself. You have to confront a language, a certain brutality. You can't think that you're "directing" a show for children, but rather that you're on a journey with the text. You have to wander and try things... We're taking the risk of falling. I find myself faced with the challenge of the artist who has to accept to step out of her comfort zone and into worlds that aren't hers.

Can you tell us about the roof on which most of the play takes place? About this passion shared by both characters, stegophilia?

Karelle Prugnaud: The roof is purgatory. It exists out of time. It's halfway between childhood and adolescence. Just like the writing, it's stretched out and creates tension, between urgency and moments of calm. This roof is on the stage. Thierry Grand, our scenographer, works on metal, and his idea was to reproduce this notion of height. It also allows Mattias the freerunner, Simon Nogueira's character, to move around above the abyss.

Nathalie Papin: In French, *toit*, or roof, and *toi*, you, the other, are homonyms. Stego means "roof" in Greek. When you get up there, you've got a clear point of view, unassailable. Stegophiliacs want to get away from the noise, from the whirlwind of life on the ground. That's also what I'm talking about with the characters of Mattias and of the two girls. They're waiting, watching the fire, in a state of weightlessness.

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Interview conducted by Marion Guilloux and translated by Gaël Schmidt-Cléach