

AND...

PRESS CONFERENCE with Michel Raskine,
July 8 at 11:00, cour du Cloître Saint-Louis

CONVERSATIONS À LA MAISON, LE FESTIVAL CÔTÉ LIVRE
Encounter with Marie Dilasser, July 14 at 11:30, Maison Jean Vilar

YOUNG AUDIENCE SHOWS

Love Triumphant, Olivier Py, July 5 to 13, gymnase du lycée Mistral

Young, Yakouba Konaté, July 13 to 17, Collège Joseph Vernet

Republic of the Bees, Céline Schaeffer,
July 16 to 22, Chapelle des Pénitents blancs

CINEMATIC TERRITORIES

July 6 to 22, cinéma Utopia-Manutention

VISITS FOR THE FAMILIES

July 7 to 22, departure place du Palais des papes
informations and booking at visitejeunesse@festival-avignon.com

YOUNG SPECTATOR'S GUIDE

available in all Festival venues

TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- October 1st to 4, 2019, La Comédie de Valence
Centre dramatique national
- October 8 to 12, Le Bateau Feu Scène nationale Dunkerque
- October 15, Le Rive Gauche (Saint-Étienne-du-Rouvray)
- November 6 and 7, Théâtre du Gymnase (Marseille)
- November 21 and 22, Théâtre du Vellein
Communauté d'Agglomération Porte de l'Isère (Villefontaine)
- December 4 to 6, La Comédie de Saint-Étienne
Centre dramatique national
- December 19 and 20, Théâtre Molière - Sète
Scène nationale archipel de Thau
- January 7 to 9, 2020, La Maison/Nevers
Scène conventionnée Art en territoire en préfiguration
- January 21 to 25, Théâtre de la Croix Rousse (Lyon)
- January 30 and 31, Château Rouge (Annemasse)

73rd
EDITION

In order to bring you this edition, over 1,700 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



#FDA19

SNOW WHIT, STORY OF A PRINCE

Between the shadow of the Brothers Grimm and the pop aesthetics of Walt Disney, Michel Raskine calls on his *Snow White* to give theatre a variation on the well-known theme. Much more the story of a prince than of a princess, his *Snow White* begins after the fairy tale. The wedding has been consummated, laziness is settling in, the kingdom is withering away, and while rivers are running dry, the dwarves are now 101 in number. If those malfunctions no longer lead to peaceful plains of happiness, Snow White isn't one to take it lying down. So what if we switched codes and points of view? To illustrate this original fairy tale in which nature is decimated and gender questioned, the director goes back to the basics of the stage and the principles of touring theatre to give younger audiences and adults alike the chance to keep believing in the movement of both objects and souls.

MICHEL RASKINE

An actor and director, **Michel Raskine** was the director of the Théâtre du Point du Jour in Lyon. He has directed plays (*Théâtres*, written for him by Olivier Py, Jean-Luc Lagarce's *It's Only the End of the World* for the Comédie-Française, Marivaux's *The Triumph of Love*, or Heiner Müller's *Quartett*) and operas (Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello*). *Snow White, story of a Prince* was a commission written by Marie Dilasser, and is Michel Raskine's first show for younger audiences.

MARIE DILASSER

Marie Dilasser lives in Brittany, where she writes and has managed a village bar for a long time. When she joined the creative writing department of the Ensatt in Lyon, she met Michel Raskine, and offered him to direct *Me zo gwin ha te zo dour* ou *Quoi être maintenant ? (Me zo gwin ha te zo dour, or, What to be now?)*, followed by *Le Sous-locataire (The Subletter)*. Her work (*Echo-Système [Echo-System]*, *Paysage Intérieur Brut [Raw Inner Landscape]*, etc.) has been published and performed throughout France.

Blanche-Neige, histoire d'un Prince by Marie Dilasser,
published by Les Solitaires intempestifs,
is on sale at the bookshop in the Maison Jean Vilar.



FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON 73RD

JULY 6 7 8 | 10 11 12
CHAPELLE DES PÉNITENTS BLANCS

INTERVIEW WITH MICHEL RASKINE

***Snow White, story of a Prince* is your first show for younger audiences.**

Why *Snow White*? Why now?

Michel Raskine : The show is a variation, not only on *Snow White*, but on archetypes, in order to better challenge them: what's a prince? A *Snow White*? A slattern, this shunned sister? For the Brothers Grimm? For Walt Disney? Today? The entire history of Western theatre is a constant re-exploration of archetypes. Together with actress Marief Guittier, we wanted to continue the series of portraits we began years ago. We'd put on, among other plays, *Bluebeard*, *Hope of women*, by German author Dea Loher in 2001. Here, in response to that earlier work, we wanted to work on a fairy tale character belonging specifically to the world of childhood: *Snow White*. Or rather, on the story of the prince, a prince no one knows anything about. It is indeed my first show "for children," I like this old-fashioned designation. Our variation on the fairy tale plays with the moral of the story, since Marie Dilasser laughs at its prudishness. We can see in it the violence inherent to relationships, have fun with a plethora of "cuss words," and of course return to the central theme of death. The text was a commission, and it was built through a playful back-and-forth between the author and myself which lasted almost a year. The idea was to put into words ideas we shared, without flattening the original writing. Sometimes, we played like children at coming up with fun situations: "And what if this happened?..." This young woman has a very recognisable style, very frank and straight to the point, very direct; it's perfect to explore the cruelty of the Grimms' fairy tales, and Walt Disney's bowdlerised version. She uses many puns, which are at the heart of children's vocabulary. The two heroes of the story are inventors of language. I was interested in the figures of the princess and the prince because this story is very well-known in the Western world; it's part of a cultural background, admittedly patriarchal, that we share. Everyone knows at least some fragments of it. That's why it was so enjoyable to play with its figures and codes.

In your version of the fairy tale, everything dies: the landscape, the kingdom, the Prince, everything but *Snow White*, who dies in the original. Did you try to invert the codes of the story?

The story begins after the original fairy tale, after the wedding. Here are the stage directions for the beginning: "*Right after the wedding, Snow White began to grow, grow, grow, and the Prince to grow old, old, old. And the older he got, the more battles and wars he won, and the kingdom spread and the people multiplied. And so did the dwarves in the forest.*" The story mostly revolves around a dysfunctional couple, accompanied by a third androgynous character: yellow-haired Slattern. We wanted, in a way, to subvert expectations based on the traditional fairy tale. There are three actors for many roles, including about a hundred dwarves: an actor-technician, Alexandre Bazan, who acts as a stage manager directly from the stage; young and slender Tibor Ockenfels, who plays *Snow White*; and 40-something Marief Guittier, his elder, who plays the Prince.

The inversion allows us to create more theatre, to open the play to comedy with a simple physical shift. Switching genders doesn't prevent traditional codes from being omnipresent. The story simply evokes some of our contemporary preoccupations. The relationship between man and woman can lead to debates about gender, if we so desire. The dying forest and dried-up rivers allow us to tackle the question of ecology. *Snow White* is clearly the carrier of a feminist discourse, faced with the chauvinistic behaviour of her prince. Since the text was built by sailing from one daydream to the next, it looks like we've entered a world on the edge of collapse, where nature is dying and the question of gender doesn't matter much, but where magic still exists, as proven by the intervention of the celestial character of the Moon, for instance.

You mentioned the idea that the audience can see theatre being made onstage, which brings to mind object theatre...

With Claire Dancoisne's collaboration, object theatre features prominently in the play. It's an integral part of *Snow White, story of a Prince*, a little like a toy box in which we'd see all the puppet strings. Costumes and props are often second-hand or discarded objects, which had a first and a second life before and are being used again, because an object can tell its own story, or tell you about the world. They're very important onstage to move from one world to another. But what I'm saying here is just a definition of what theatre is. We created the scenography and other visual elements with Stéphanie Mathieu during the writing, in order to make sure that the various elements worked and communicated perfectly with each other. Every one of them is part of a larger mechanism. Onstage, theatre is shown at the same time it is performed. The action takes place in a small theatre, with a small stage, on which Slattern handles props, sets, and hangers in full view of the audience. The Moon, for instance, is a great silver circle with a mouth and eyes that can move, which appears and disappears as a homage to the special effects devised by the great filmmaker and illusionist Georges Méliès. The object is at once handmade and fairly sophisticated. The set is like a big music box, or a big magic box. It's independent and mobile, with an entirely hand-operated mechanism and some painted elements. The Moon, the forest, or the storm remain simplified, non-realistic representations, to play once more with the magic at the heart of the codes of theatre. Even the make-up of the three characters, their painted faces with their big, wide-open eyes is a reference both to the aesthetics of animation films and to something darker, an expressionist nightmare borrowed from Maguy Marin's mythical *May B* or from Egon Schiele. Visual effects are thus very simple, and images are constantly changing. My dream was for the text to dissolve at the end and for the visual world to take over completely. The longer it goes, the less people talk. And that's good!

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