

COMPAGNIE

LES OMBRES PORTÉES

NATCHAV

THÉÂTRE D'OMBRES





NATCHAV

Compagnie Les ombres portées

Shadow theatre with live music

Show with no spoken

Suitable for all ages, from 8 years old

Running time: 1 hour

Premiered on December 2nd & 3rd 2019 at La Maison de la Culture de Nevers Agglomération

Idea and design: Les ombres portées

Puppets and lights: 4 puppeteers (alternating)
Margot Chamberlin, Erol Gülgönen, Florence Kormann, Frédéric Laügt, Marion Lefebvre, Christophe Pagnon, Claire Van Zande

Music and sound effects: 2 musicians (alternating)
Séline Gülgönen (clarinet, violin, percussion), Jean Lucas (trombone, accordion, percussion), Simon Plane (trumpet, accordion, percussion)

Lighting: Nicolas Dalban-Moreynas and Thibault Moutin (alternating)

Sound: Frédéric Laügt and Corentin Vigot (alternating)

Costumes: Zoé Caugant

Touring: Claire Van Zande

Production: Louise Champiré

Outside eye: Christophe Pagnon

With help from: Baptiste Bouquin (outside ear), Léo Maurel (sound effect machines), Jean-Yves Pénafiel (outside eye)

Also thanks to: Antonin Boischot, Elias Bonicel, Jacques Bouault, Andres Fabrykant, Stéphane Relevant, Théodore Sanchez, Elsa Vanzande

We dedicate this show to Olivier Cueto, a cherished member of the company who passed away in March 2020. He imagined, created and performed this show with us until the very end.

THE SHOW

In the darkness of the early morning, the Natchav circus arrives to town. Its caravan of trailers and lorries take their place in the central square. The sledge gang begins its concert of steady blows, pounding the first stakes into the ground; the sound of the immense canvas whips through the air as the tent poles are hoisted to the sky.

Suddenly, out of concern for security, the authorities order the circus to leave, forcing them onto a vacant lot in the outskirts of town. Following a scuffle, one of the acrobats is arrested and jailed for contempt and rebellion. So, the circus troupe, along with the other prisoners, decide to carry out a spectacular escape, one full of ingenuity and twists and turns...

Through an extraordinary play of shadow and light, *Natchav* (go away, run away in Rromani) recounts a story in which, on the margins of society, two fundamentally opposed worlds mingle — that of the circus and of the prison.

It is a story of intrigue that unfolds through a dynamic scenography. With no spoken dialogue, the visuals and music generated and performed live guide the narration, creating an original and provocative composition between reality and fantasy.

ARTISTIC STATEMENT

Natchav tackles the notion of freedom, an idea largely diminished due to overuse, so much so as to be left devoid of meaning by a world that controls, counts and submits.

With its roots in the preservation of a lifestyle of nomadism, independence, community, movement and play, the circus invites audiences on a journey into the extraordinary, the wonderful... Time is measured in the moment. There is even an expression in circus jargon: "the point of suspension", which describes the moment when an acrobat is free from the binds of laws, including that of gravity. In contrast, the primary purpose of a prison is the deprivation of liberty: it is there to punish and confine, with all that this implies in terms of permanent constraints, lack of space, solitude, inactivity and monotony. In addition to the lack of space, there is an excess of time.

The current difficulties facing most circuses reveal a fundamental discord between their way of life and the societies they live amongst: the progressive privatisation of public spaces prevents these communities from finding their place, the growing number of safety regulations generates changes and costs that they may not be able to ensure... Moreover, borders are increasingly being conceived as tools for controlling the movement of people, whereas travel and nomadism look past identities and states.

The freedom that these circuses defend and which we want to explore with *Natchav* is a sentient and infectious idea; it is a point of departure, a perpetual movement inextricable to anyone who wants to feel alive.



A SCENOGRAPHY IN MOVEMENT

Following the French-style puppet stand of *Pekee-Nuee-Nuee* and the large-scale production of *Les Somnambules*, the company *Les ombres portées* continues its exploration of the world of shadow theatre with its third creation.

In an attempt to break with the linear nature of image-based narratives, this creation plays with a scenography aimed at freeing the audience from the traditional frontal character of shadow theatre.

On stage, in full view of the audience, the performers illuminate and manipulate the different sets and characters of the narration. Installed on mobile supports, the prison, cells, marquee and others are brought and arranged on stage as the story unfolds — their shadows projected in large on a panoramic screen at the back of the stage.

The spectator's eyes are drawn from one direction to the other by the projection of the shadows, the theatrical play of the puppeteers and the musicians on the stage.

These interwoven narratives participate in a multi-layered theatrical and scenic composition, allowing the audience to witness the making of the story as it happens.



SHADOW AND LIGHT

Both of the worlds encountered in *Natchav* lend themselves particularly well to the techniques of shadow theatre.

The world of the prison is a setting of opacity, secrecy and silence. It is never revealed what really happens within the cells. The truth is hidden behind a maze of walls and bars. The shadows reflect this dark, obscure and hidden dimension. What is shown of the prison is revealed through various angles and vantages. Cracks, prison bars, peepholes and cameras act as filters, providing an intimate glimpse inside.

On the other hand, in the dreamlike world of the circus, everything is visible: from the arrival of the caravans and the rigging of the tent to the smallest details of the acts themselves under the spotlight. The physical manipulation of the sets and characters in full view of the audience captures this raw exposure and provokes a feeling of tension in the audience comparable to that experienced during a real-life circus performance.

A CINEMATOGRAPHIC MONTAGE

The treatment of the plot is borrowed in part from the narrative techniques of noir novels and film narratives, mixing suspense with an array of twists and turns.

Like a camera, light serves as a guide for the narration, offering spectators a myriad of perspectives. Panning shots, zooms and cuts rhyme with the narration and create a dynamic reading of the story like a film shot live using multiple cameras.

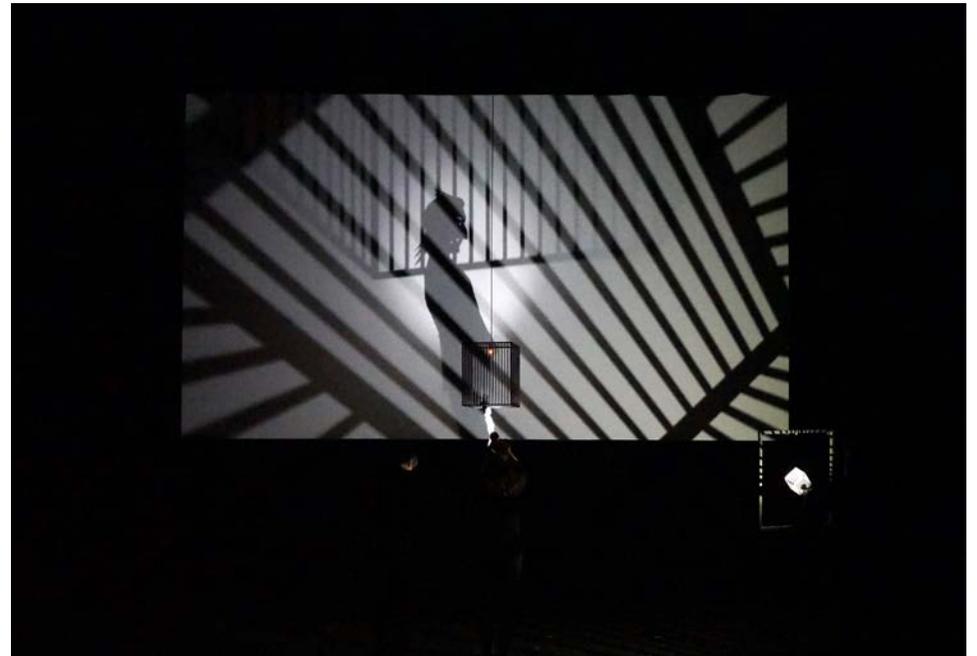
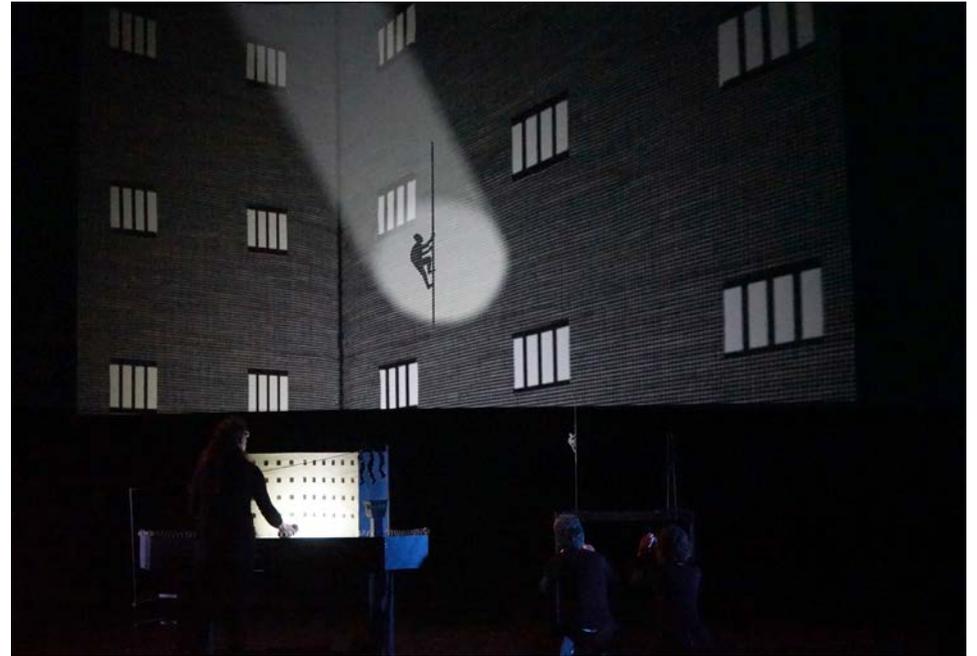
LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The music, played on stage live and in full view of the audience by two multi-instrumentalists, features original compositions, musical improvisation and sound effects. Partly inspired by traditional circus themes, the musical score expands on the genre by adding a cinematographic dimension. As with live film concerts, the music actively participates in the narration and highlights or creates tension and surprises.

The work of a lutherie was incorporated to design singular instruments and sound effects, which act as acoustic counterparts to the visual devices.







Performance photos



Set decor and puppets





STAGE PLAN

For the staging of the show, a large cyclorama is placed at the back of the stage. It is framed by borders at the bottom, on the sides and at the top.

Several large-scale mobile sets are used to represent the different scenes of the narration. These sets and the puppets are manipulated live by 4 puppeteers and their shadows are projected onto the large screen at the back of the stage. As the show progresses, the sets are brought to and from the wings to the stage.

Two musicians, playing live side by side, are positioned downstage right.

Leg drapes are required, with either Italian or German front curtain openings depending on the theatre.

STAGE REQUIREMENTS

The audience is to be seated directly in front of the stage.

Total darkness is required for the room.

The stage must be raised or at ground level.

The stage must be covered in black vinyl dance flooring.

Stage dimensions (minimum) // German stage curtain opening (fly curtain)

Wall-to-wall clearance: 12.5 m

Depth: 9.5 m

Height to lighting rig: 6 m

Proscenium width: 9 m

Stage dimensions (ideal) // Typical stage curtain opening (swag curtain)

Wall-to-wall clearance: 16 m

Depth: 12 m

Height to lighting rig: 7.5 m

MAIN TECHNICAL INFORMATION

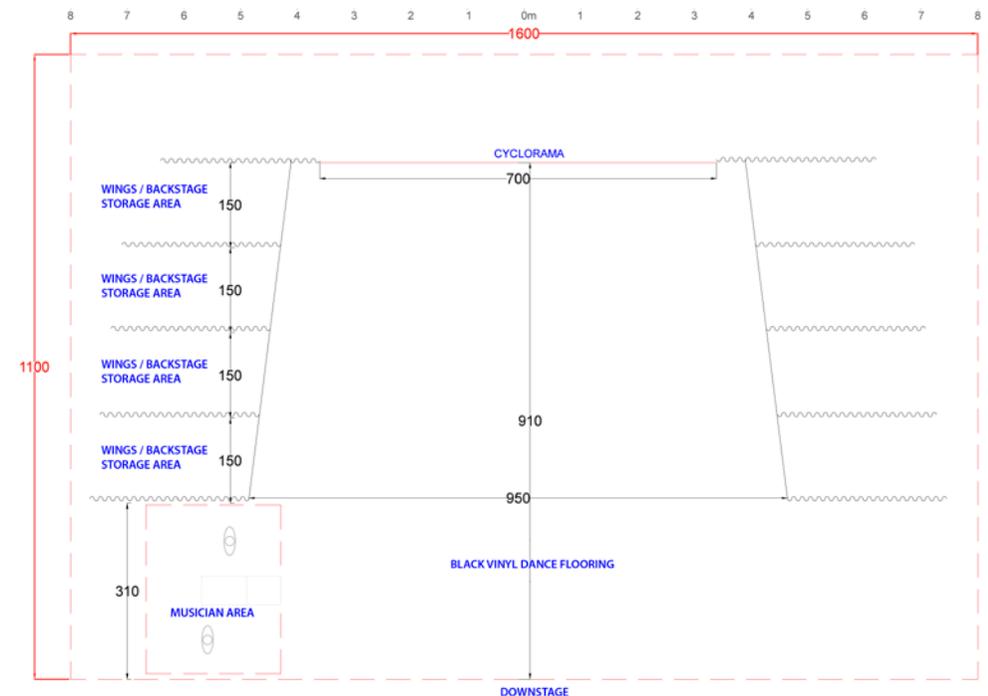
Touring company: 9 members (4 puppeteers, 2 musicians, 1 lighting technician, 1 sound technician, 1 tour manager)

Running time: 1 hour

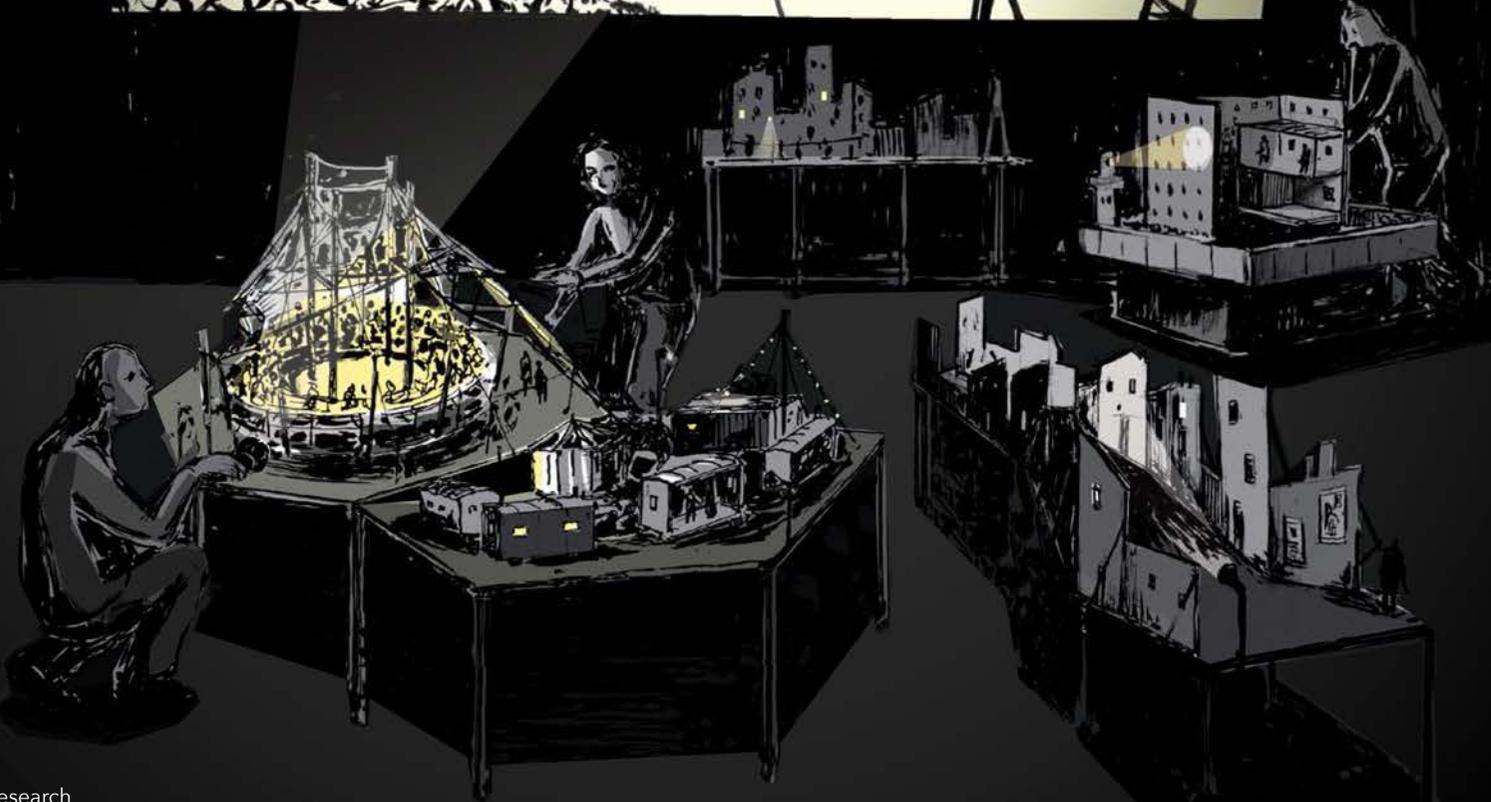
Capacity for all-ages performances: between 250 and 400 people (to be adjusted according to the seating configuration)

Capacity for school performances: between 250 and 300 people maximum

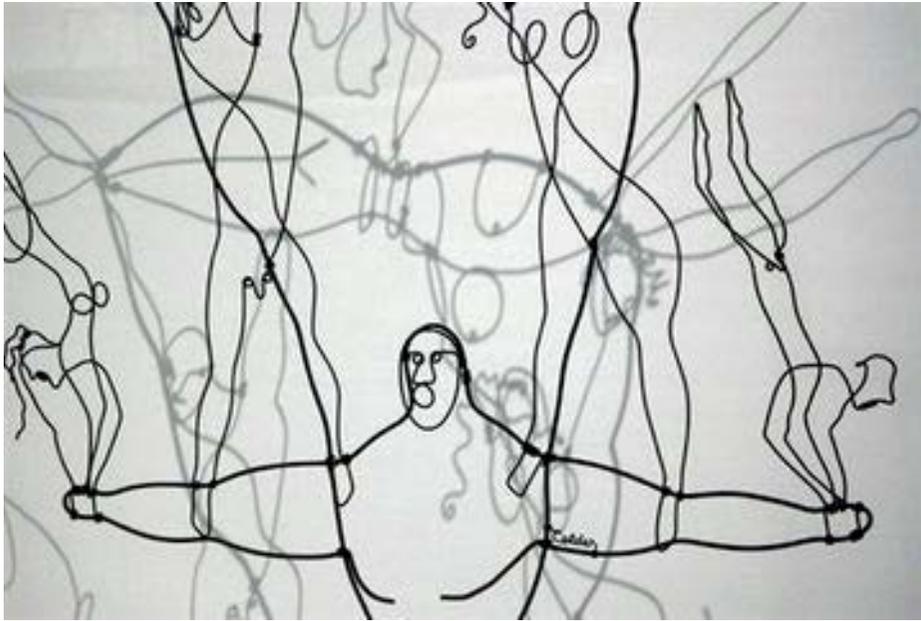
Installation: Advance set-up of drapery, lighting and sound system required + 4 installation and fitting sessions.



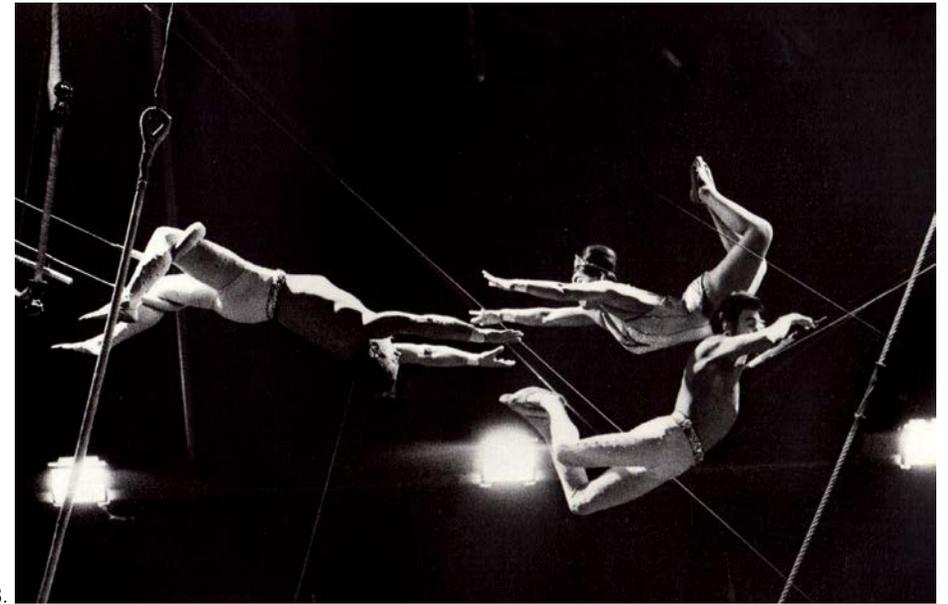
Typical stage layout



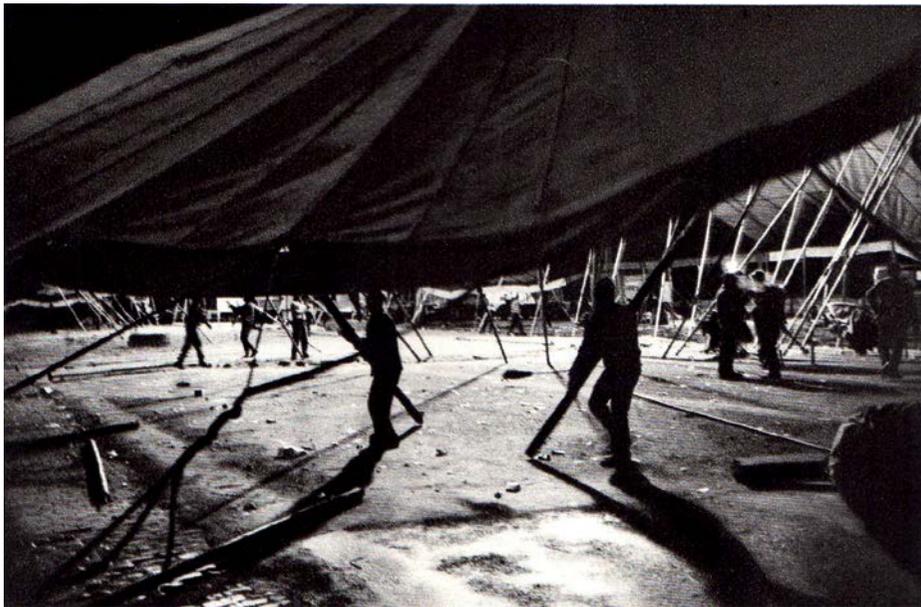
SOURCES AND INSPIRATIONS



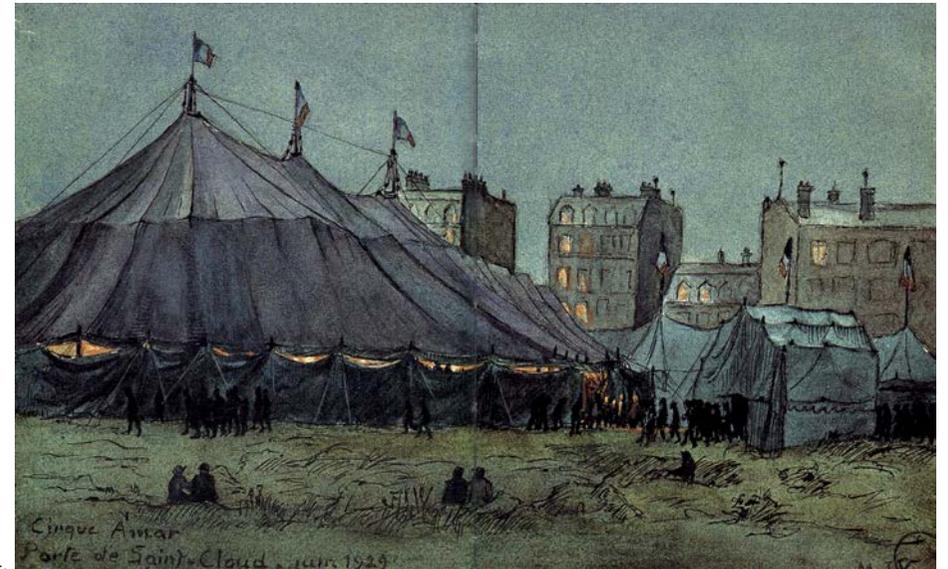
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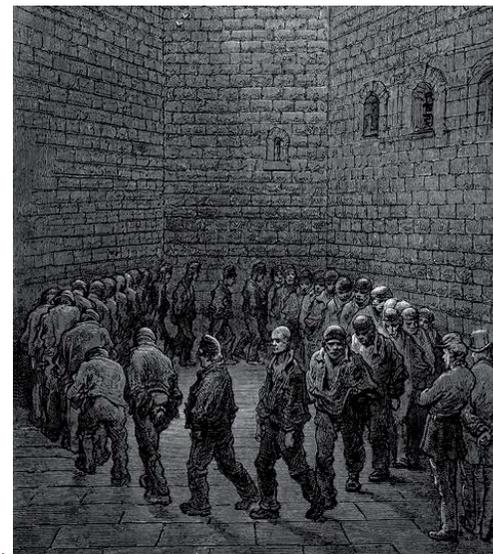
1. *The Brass Family*, brass wire, 1929, Alexander Calder
2. *Breaking Down the Grand Cirque de France During the Night*, 1963, Paul de Cordon, *Instants de Cirque*
3. *Un passage des Palacios*, Ringling Brother and Barnum & Bailey Circus, 1963, Paul de Cordon
4. *The Cirque Amar at Porte de St Cloud (Paris) in June 1929*, the Vesque Sisters



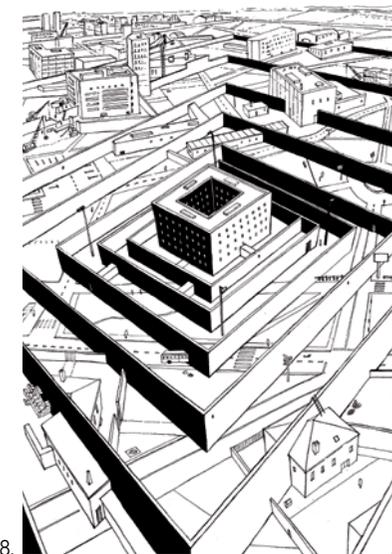
5.



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En piste, Le cirque en images des sœurs Vesque, Découvertes Gallimard, 1992
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No Beast So Fierce, Edward Bunker, 1973
L'Envolée, Serge Coutel, 1985
Un jardin à la cour, Hafed Benotman, 2016
Révolte à perpétuité, Daniel Koehl, 2002
Soledad Brother, George Jackson, 1970
Bruno Sulak, Pauline Sulak, ed. Carrère 1985
Monstres en cavale, Cloé Mehdi, ed. Le Masque, 2014
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FILMOGRAPHY

Man on a Tightrope, Elia Kazan, 1953
The Circus, Charlie Chaplin, 1969
Freaks, Tod Browning, 1932
Parade, Jacques Tati, 1974
People Who Travel, Jacques Feyder, 1938
Planète cirque, D Auclair and L Chevallier, documentary series, 1992–1993
Calder's Circus, Carlos Vilardebo, 1961
I clowns, F Fellini, 1971
Sawdust and Tinsel, I Bergman, 1953. I. Bergman 1953
Runaway train, Konchalovski, 1985
The Hole, Jacques Becker, 1960
Animal Factory, Steve Buscemi, 2000
Omblin, Stéphane Cazes, 2012
Down by law, Jim Jarmusch, 1986
A Man Escaped, Robert Bresson, 1956
Freedom for Us, René Clair, 1931
Starred Up, David Mackenzie, 2014

5. Screenshot from the film *Le Trou* de Jacques Becker, 1960

6. Aerial view of the prison in Fleury-Mérogis, Cliché Avia-Taxi

7. *Newgate Prison Courtyard*, Gustave Doré, 1872

8. Illustration for the newspaper *L'Envolée*, Erol Gülgönen

THE COMPANY

Les ombres portées was created in 2009 by a group of individuals coming from different worlds (music, scenography, construction, drawing, photography, etc.) who sought to bring their talents together and work collectively. For any given project, up to a dozen members, artists and technicians may be involved.

The company revisits the art of shadow theatre with an original and innovative poetical take offered in the form of shows for all ages. Accompanied by live music and without any spoken dialogue, each project is an opportunity to develop a singular scenographic proposal and musical aesthetic that is always in line with the message being conveyed.

Approaching its work from a collective and collaborative stance, the company invests a considerable amount of time into creating each production. It also offers numerous shadow theatre workshops for all ages.

Pekee-nuee-nuee (2011) and *Les Somnambules* (2015) have been performed over 150 times in France and around the world (Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, South Korea, etc.), and continue to tour today. *Natchav* (2019) is the company's third collective creation.

Since September 2020, the company has been an associated artist with the theatre La Faiencerie de Creil, being part of its artist roster for the last three seasons. It has also been registered with the Île-de-France Regional Department of Cultural Affairs since 2020.



The greatest stars of the flying trapeze circus, Ringling Brother and Barnum & Bailey Circus, 1935. Colour-adjusted image

TOURING

2019 - 2020 SEASON

Maison de la Culture de Nevers Agglomération • Nevers (58)
Le Théâtre, scène conventionnée • Laval (53)
La Minoterie, scène conventionnée • Dijon (21)
TJP, CDN Strasbourg – Grand Est • Strasbourg (67)
Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt avec l'Espace Germinal de Fosses • Goussainville (95)
Espace Lino Ventura • Garges-lès-Gonesse (95)
Espace des Arts, scène nationale • Chalon-sur-Saône (71)
Espace Marcel Carné • Saint-Michel-sur-Orge (91) *
Théâtre de Jouy • Jouy-le-Moutier (95) *
Théâtre Roger Barat • Herblay (95) *
Théâtre Jean Vilar avec le Vellein, Scènes de la CAPI • Bourgoin-Jallieu (38) *
Théâtre Charles Dullin • Le Grand-Quevilly (76) *
La Ferme du Buisson, scène nationale • Noisiel (77) *
La Ferme de Bel Ebat • Guyancourt (78) *

2020 - 2021 SEASON

Espace Marcel Carné / service culturel de La Norville • Saint-Michel-sur-Orge (91)
Théâtre Charles Dullin • Le Grand-Quevilly (76)
MA scène nationale • Montbéliard (25) *
Théâtre des Quatre Saisons • Gradignan (33) *
La Mouche • Saint-Genis-Laval (69) *
Théâtre Ephémère, scène nationale de l'Essonne • Evry (91) *
Théâtre Sénart, scène nationale • Lieusaint (77)
Le Triangle / Festival Compli'Cité en partenariat avec Momix • Huingue (68) *
Les Rotondes • Luxembourg
Les Bords de scènes, Espace Jean Lurçat • Juvisy sur orge (91) *
Théâtre Roger Barat • Herblay (95) *
Théâtre du Cormier • Cormeilles en Parisis (95) *
Théâtre Le Dôme • Saumur (49) *
La Faiëncerie, scène conventionnée • Creil (60)
Biennale internationale des arts de la marionnette • Pantin (93)
Le Carré, scène nationale • Château-Gontier (53) *
Le Théâtre de Jouy • Jouy-le-Moutier (95) *

** shows cancelled due to COVID-19*

For a detailed agenda, please take a look at our website.





SUPPORT

Co-production:

Maison de la Culture de Nevers Agglomération • La Minoterie, Dijon • Le Théâtre, scène conventionnée de Laval • Théâtre-Sénart, scène nationale • TJP, CDN Strasbourg - Grand Est

Artist-in-residence programmes and assistance:

Espace Périphérique - Mairie de Paris - Parc de la Villette • Festival Momix et le CREA, scène conventionnée Jeune Public d'Alsace, Kingersheim • La Fabrique, Messeugne • La Faiènerie, Théâtre de Creil • La Ferme du Buisson, scène nationale de Marne-la-Vallée • La Fonderie, Le Mans • La Maison des Enfants du Quercy, Le Bouyssou • Le TANDEM, scène nationale, Arras-Douai • Le Tas de Sable, Amiens • MA scène nationale, Montbéliard • Théâtre La Licorne, Dunkerque

FUNDING

Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication - DRAC Île-de-France • Région Ile-de-France

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