

★ LA RENVERSE ★



LES OMBRES PORTÉES



# LA RENVERSE

## Compagnie Les ombres portées

Shadow theatre and music

show for all ages for the public space

performances held at nightfall

duration: 1 hour

premiered on May 2024 in Senlis

with La Faiënerie, théâtre de Creil

*Unless otherwise stated, all the images in this dossier are taken from the show.*



## THE TEAM

**The show was conceived by:** Erol Gülgönen, Séline Gülgönen, Florence Kormann, Christophe Pagnon, Claire Van Zande.

**Its creation was a collective effort by:** Erol Gülgönen and Florence Kormann (structure design, set and shadow design); Christophe Pagnon and Claire Van Zande (text, voice and lights); Séline Gülgönen, Fabien Guyot and Jean Lucas (music); Frédéric Laügt and Corentin Vigot (sound design); Nicolas Dalban-Moreynas (lighting design) and Violaine de Maupeou (costumes).

**Study and construction of the scenic structure:** Nil Obstrat, an artistic and technical creation centre dedicated to street arts, Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône.

**Manipulation:** Erol Gülgönen, Florence Kormann, Christophe Pagnon.

**Music:** Séline Gülgönen, Fabien Guyot, Jean Lucas.

**Lighting and sound:** Frédéric Laügt.

**Stage manager:** Donatien Letort, Cécile Mazelin (alternating).

**Production and distribution:** Christelle Lechat.

**Production and administration:** Susanna Hsing.

**With help from:** Baptiste Bouquin (outside ear), Martin Maniez (painting), Léo Maurel (conch shell), Thibault Moutin (lighting), Philippe Smith (voice), Marine Somerville (colorization).

# THE SHOW

*Out at sea, with its changing tides, there is a suspended moment known as 'La Renverse'. Like the popular saying 'between a rock and a hard place' on dry land, it is a notion that is as much elusive as it is magical. Some say that in this fleeting moment, between the incoming and outgoing tides, anything can happen.*

excerpt from the text

A lighthouse keeper discovers the logbook of a lonely sailor. After reading the final pages, which evoke as much mystery as they do desperation, he decides to set off in search of the sailor's sinking ship. This moment marks the beginning of an extraordinary journey that will take him to lands he once thought were beyond his wildest imagination.

Drawing on the tradition of the carnival arts and shadow theatre, this story is told by three musicians and three performers. Their stage is a travelling theatre installed in the public space, which lights up at nightfall. Poetic and dreamlike, the combination of shadow theatre, voice and music takes the audience on a journey of discovery through a fabulous universe that invites us to think about our world and to imagine the myriad of ways we can construct it.





## AN INVITATION TO TRAVEL AND IMAGINE

Imagination - the myriad forms it can take, its power and its relationship with reality - is fundamental to the work of our company. Found at the heart of all our creations, it comes alive in the fantastic tales of *Pekee-Nuee-Nuee*, the dreamt-up city of *Les Somnambules* and the unbridled inventiveness of the *Natchav* circus. Developing the imagination is also the main focus of our educational initiatives (workshops, transmission). We're convinced that it's the fundamental skill for living uniquely as well as for transforming and reinventing the world as we know it.

Imagination is therefore the central theme of *La Renverse*, as we tell the story of a lighthouse keeper's imaginary voyage. Combining poetic and dreamlike writing, the show takes audiences on a journey full of twists and turns, shaped by real and invented tales of travel (like those of Jules Verne or François Place) as well as poetic prose (like that of Italo Calvino).

Our show revolves around the adventures of the lighthouse keeper. After leaving his lighthouse, he is caught in a supernatural storm that thrusts him into an extraordinary universe. Audiences follow along as he embarks on his journey, passing through fantastic worlds and unexpected lands, all the way to the heart of his imagination.

Illustrated by projected shadow images and live music, this tale of adventure is also interspersed with spoken text, taking the form of part logbook-part narration.

At the end of the performance, we invite the audience to share in a convivial moment by discovering the sets of the show.





# SHADOWS IN MOTION

To project the shadow images, we built large panoramic sets that illustrate the different landscapes crossed by the lighthouse keeper and will amplify the sensation of travel and discovery for the audience.

The complexity and richness of the sets allow us to shift back and forth between a wide, all-encompassing view to a more in-depth reading of the space, rich in unusual details.

We create dynamic, vivid images using articulated puppets to illustrate the actions of the characters and events.

Designed utilising various layers and levels, our sets create an effect of depth, thereby enriching the imagery.

It's the manipulation of light that creates the narrative rhythm of the show. By using portable lights to illuminate the sets, we bring this tableaux to life using techniques similar to those employed in the art of cinema (tracking shot, zoom, cut, etc.). The sequence of images set the pace of the story and provide dramatic effect.







# LIVE MUSIC AT THE FRONT OF THE STAGE

In *La Renverse*, three musicians accompany the narrative, while leaving the imagination of the audience to roam free. Music plays a more important role here than in the company's other creations. The pieces are developed in such a way that the audience attend an hybrid form between performance and concert.

The experience of composing and performing over the last fifteen years has led to a musical style that is truly unique to our company, one influenced by both jazz and traditional music. However, the rhythmic dimension of the music in *La Renverse* is more developed than in our previous shows, thanks to the presence of a percussionist, who reinforces the idea of the journey moving forward.

The music is performed by three multi-instrumentalists (trombone, accordion, clarinet and bass clarinet, different percussions, drums, conch shells), which enables a wide range of musical styles to be explored to illustrate the different moments of the journey. The use of voice and vocals also contributes to this richness. The sound effects (pedals) and the conch shells used as instruments accentuate the strangeness of some pieces in the underwater world.







# A SET DESIGNED FOR THE PUBLIC SPACE

Each of our productions experiments with new scenographic and theatrical forms, reflecting the subject matter of each piece. With *La Renverse*, we want to step out of the confines of the walls of a classic theatre and perform outside in the public space.

We propose a show that is mobile and can be performed anywhere, from town districts and village squares to the open fields of the countryside. However, like all shadow theatre, it requires obscurity and privacy of sound.

Our scenography creates a new relationship with the public space by taking it over and transforming it temporarily. With *La Renverse*, we want to connect with the audience in a new way for us, by being present and visible right from the start of the set up and by creating an event that lasts for long past the actual performance.

The performance begins at dusk and ends at nightfall. Performing during the evening gradually and naturally creates a special setting for our story, providing a unique ambience that will lead the audience to feel as if they are entering into a dream.

We have designed an optimised stage that will unfold from the trailer used to transport and store the sets. Using a system of hinges, the trailer opens on one side to form the base of the structure, making it quick and easy to set up.

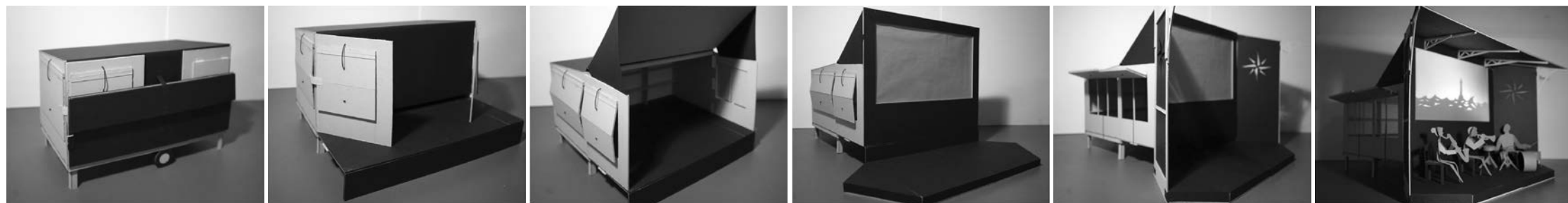
Once unfolded and assembled, this structure contains two distinct areas:

- backstage: the manipulators' area with all the sets;
- upstage: the musicians' stage, raised slightly by a number of risers, framed on two sides and protected by an awning.

Above the musicians is a large screen, 3.80m wide by 2m high, onto which the shadows are projected.

The audience is positioned facing the screen and the musicians.

After the performance, the audience is able to take a look behind the scenes, thanks to a system of shutters which can be opened along the sides of the manipulators' area.



study of the roll-out of the scenographic structure





performance at the Arènes de Lutèce, Paris, France © Charlotte Moritz Art'R





musical prologue © Charlotte Moritz Art'R



daytime rehearsal © Marc Linnhoff



visit of the sets at the end of the performance



© Charlotte Moritz Art'R

# TECHNICAL INFORMATION

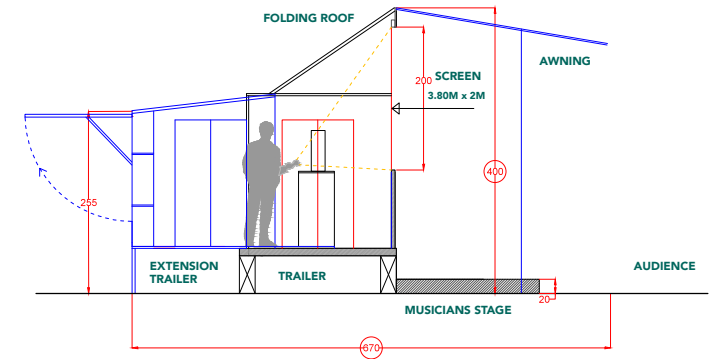
- 6-tonne convoy: 12.50m length x 2.80m height, including a 12m<sup>3</sup> van-type-towing vehicle and a 3.5-tonne trailer
- size of the structure (unfolded trailer): 7m wide x 7m depth x 4m height
- self-supporting structure
- minimum size of playing area and public seating area: 20m wide x 26m depth on flat and stabilised ground
- slightly raised stage for the musicians and overhead screen for good visibility
- sound and lighting control area located behind the audience, raised on a platform and protected by a marquee

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR TOURING

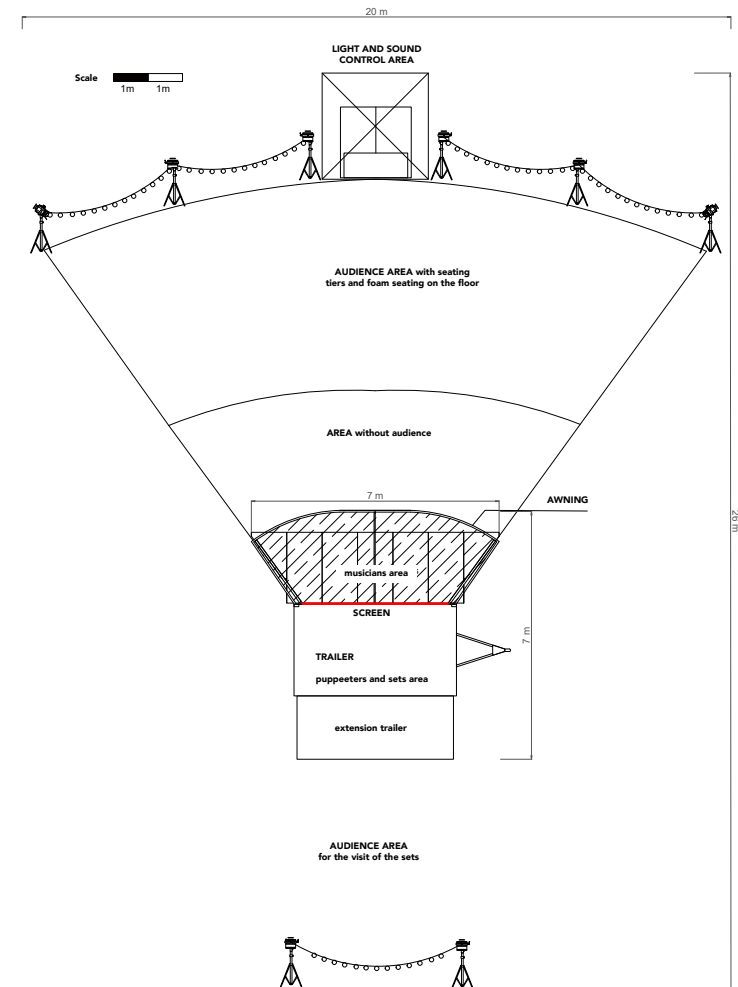
- team: 9 people: 3 musicians, 3 puppeteers, 1 stage manager, 1 sound manager, 1 promoter
- show designed for public spaces
- show performed at nightfall (obscurity and privacy of sound required)
- duration: 1 hour + exchange with the audience at the end of the performance
- capacity: between 400 and 500 spectators depending on the configuration of the space (audience positioned head-on)
- set up and rehearsals: 4 sessions of 4 hours (day before and day of the performance)
- strike out: 1 session of 4 hours (day after the performance)

For details of technical requirements and a typical schedule, we can send you our technical rider.

Cross section



Plan



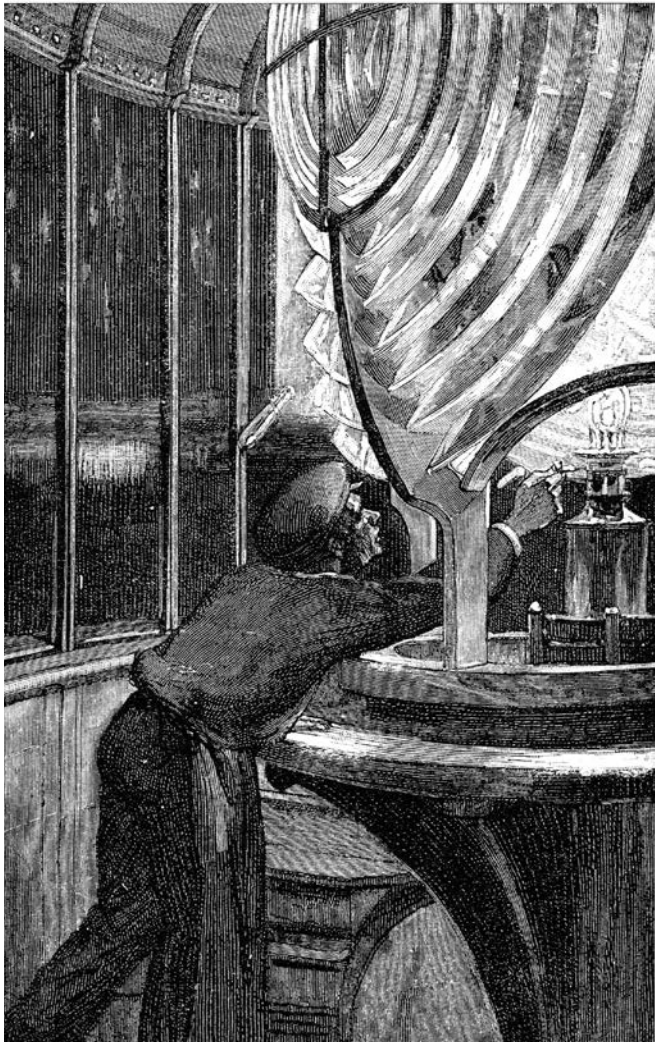




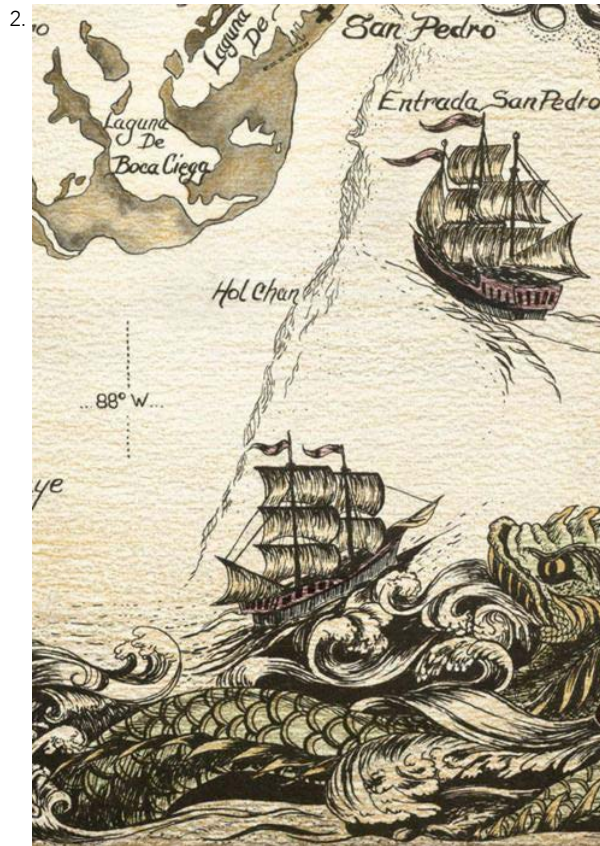


# SOURCES AND INSPIRATIONS

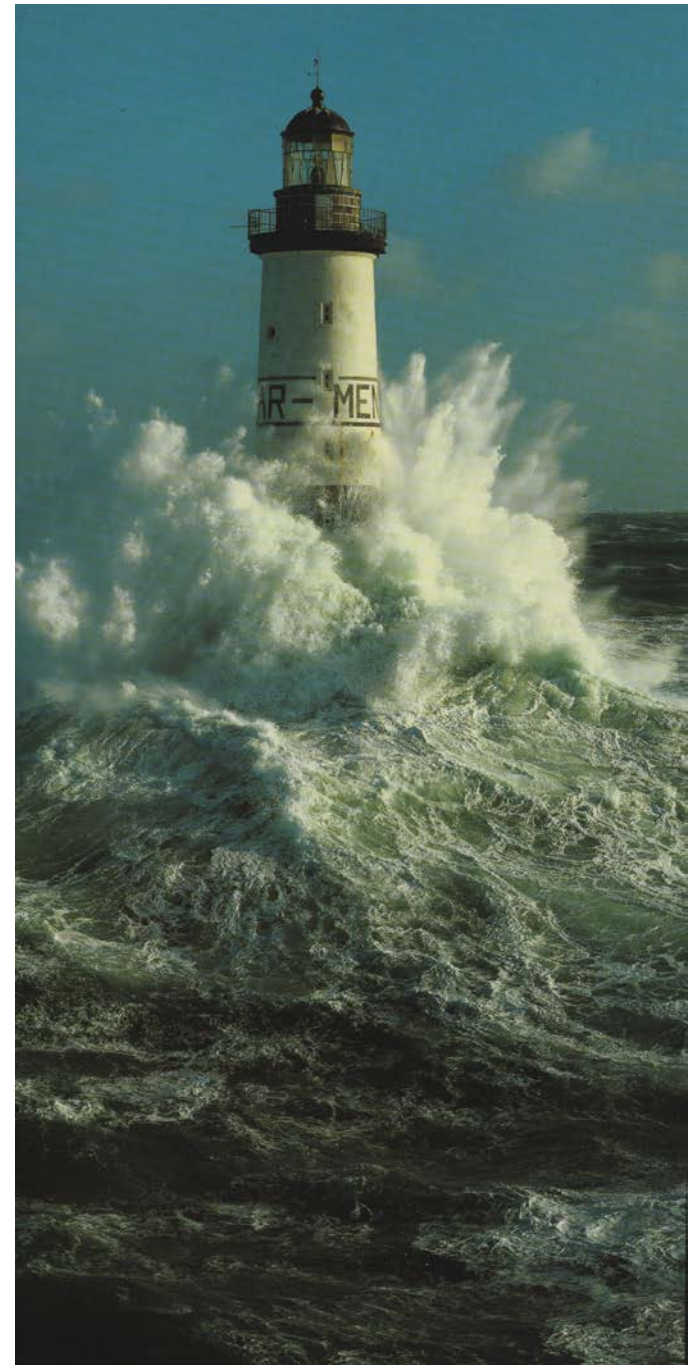
1. Illustration by G. Roux engraving by Froment, *The Lighthouse at the End of the World*, 1905, Jules Verne
2. Antique illustrated nautical chart
3. *Tout seul*, Christophe Chabouté, 2008
4. Photograph of the Ar-Men lighthouse, Philip Plisson



1.

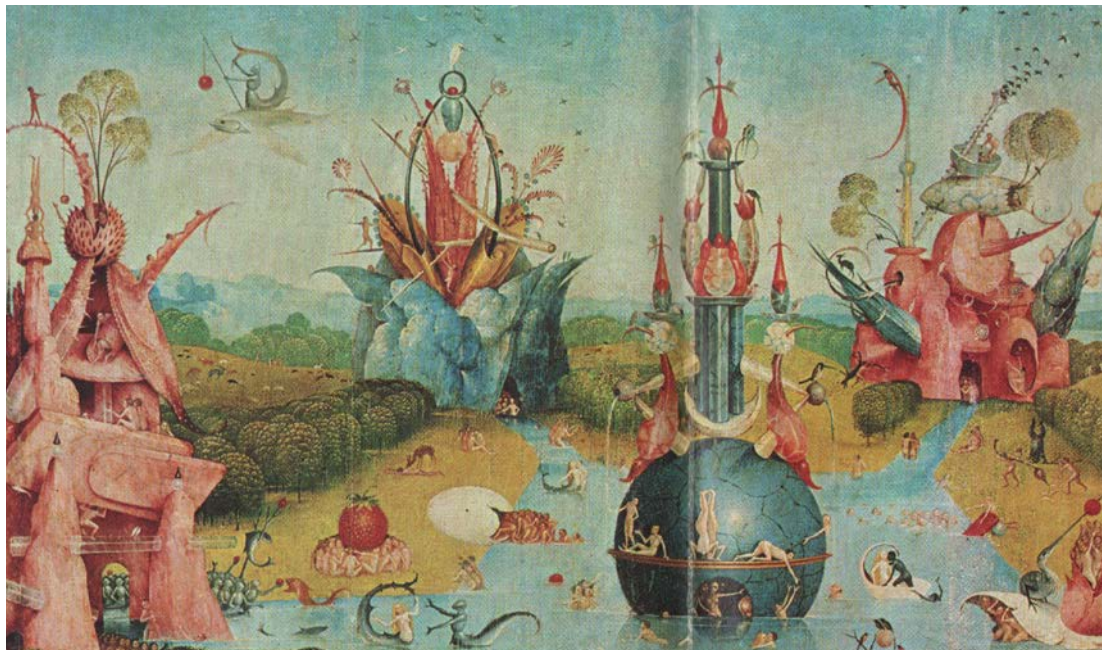


3.



4.





#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Jean-Pierre Abraham, *Armen*, 1988
- Italo Calvino, *Marcovaldo*, 1963; *Invisible Cities*, 1972
- Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865
- Louis Cozan, *Un feu sur la mer*, 2010
- Homère, *The Odyssey*, 8<sup>th</sup> century BC
- Paolo Rumiz, *Il Ciclope*, 2015
- Lucien de Samosate, *True History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> century
- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 1721
- Jules Verne, *Five Weeks in a Balloon*, 1863; *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, 1864; *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, 1869-1870...
- Bernard Moitessier, *The Long Way*, 1971
- Alain Bombard, *Naufragé volontaire*, 1953
- Thor Heyerdahl, *The Kon-Tiki Expedition*, 1948

#### ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

- Mitsumasa Anno, *Ce jour là...*, 1978
- Christophe Chabouté, *Tout seul*, 2008
- Winsor McCay, *Little Nemo*, 1910
- François Place, *The Last Giants*, 1992

#### FILMOGRAPHY

- Jean Epstein, *Le tempestaire*, 1947
- Jean Painlevé, films about the marine world from 1934 onwards
- Richard Fleischer, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, 1954

5. Engraving by E. Riou, 1867, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, Jules Verne

6. Dragon puppet, shadow theatre, China

7. Illustrated plate of shells

8. Detail from *The Garden of Delights*, Hieronymus Bosch, 1503-1505

# THE COMPANY



Created in 2009, Les ombres portées is a shadow theatre company composed of a collective of artists and technicians from a diverse range of backgrounds. For any given project, up to twenty members come together pooling their various expertises (music, stage design, construction, drawing, lighting, writing, etc.) to create a singular production.

Revisiting the art of shadow theatre, the company produces original creations for audiences of all ages. Performed both on the traditional stage and in public spaces, the shows interweave dynamic visual elements with live music. Each project is an opportunity to develop a new narrative approach, unique scenographic device and distinct musical score in line with the themes and ideas being explored and defended.

The shows *Pekee-nuee-nuee* (2011), *Les Somnambules* (2015), *Natchav* (2019) and *La Renverse* (2024) have been performed throughout France and abroad.

In addition to producing shows, the company offers a wide range of outreach activities for all types of audiences, as well as scenographic projects.

The company is an associated artist with the Théâtre-Sénart (2024 to 2026) and is the recipient of a territorial residence with PIVO (2024 to 2025). The company has been supported by the DRAC Île-de-France since 2020 and its activities have been funded by the Région Île-de-France since 2024.





# TOURING

## 2024 SEASON

La Faïencerie, théâtre de Creil • Les Tombées de la Nuit, Rennes • Festival Récidives, Dives-sur-mer • Festival Primo, Villeparisis • Goussainville with PIVO, Pôle itinérant en Val d'Oise • Art'R, Paris

## 2025 SEASON

Cultural Service of Sannois with PIVO, Pôle itinérant en Val d'Oise • Théâtre Rutebeuf, Clichy-la-Garenne • Festival Mimos, Périgueux • Festival Éclats de rue, Caen • Domaine de Villarceaux avec PIVO • *more, in progress...*

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

# SUPPORT

## CO-PRODUCTIONS AND RESIDENCIES

Espace d'Albret, City of Nérac • Espace Périphérique, La Villette and City of Paris • La Faïencerie, théâtre de Creil • La Lisière, lieu de création en Île-de-France pour les arts de la rue et les arts dans et pour l'espace public, Bruyères-le-Châtel • Le Sablier, Centre national de la marionnette, Ifs et Dives-sur-mer • Le Théâtre-Sénart, scène nationale • Les Tombées de la Nuit, Rennes • Nil Obstrat, centre de création de Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône • PIVO, Pôle itinérant en Val d'Oise with Points communs, scène nationale de Cergy-Pontoise/Val d'Oise • Risotto, réseau pour l'essor des arts de la rue et de l'espace public en Île-de-France

## GRANTS

Ministry of Culture - National grant for creations in street and circus arts (2024)  
• Touring grant from the City of Paris

## CONTACT

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