

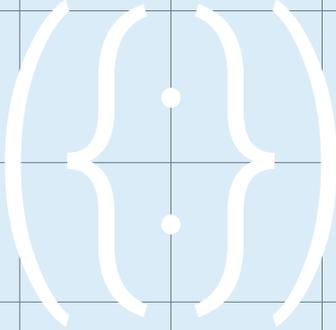
2018

2018



2018

2018



Project Presentation

((:)) is a theatrical performance combined with a sensory installation through which we can explore a peculiar geography: female genitalia, from the vulva to the cervix. The aim is to discover and reclaim this uncharted territory, to turn it into a landscape of one's own. Our desire to work on this subject comes from our realization that a great majority of us are mired in ignorance when it comes to our own genitals. This part of the female anatomy is rarely looked at—both literally and metaphorically—and scientific knowledge in this area is still surprisingly limited.

((:)) is an invitation to curiosity. Designed as a walk for the senses, the performance goes through different seasons and climates. The performers become Sherpa guides and go through a heterogeneous theatrical score composed of scientific data, poetic musings and intimate words. Through both visual art and stage design, we aim to move away from

Note of Intent

Female genitalia form a territory that has been examined, defined, indicted and/or mutilated by medical, scientific and religious communities. It was particularly demonised during the witch hunt during which the clitoris, also called "the devil's nipple," of presumed witches was examined. In England, clitoris excisions were carried out for most of the 19th century to prevent masturbation, which was believed to cause a wide variety of ailments (hysteria, depression, digestive problems, etc...). Likewise, menstruations were long regarded as a curse (everything a menstruating woman touches starts to decay, fade or deteriorate). Nowadays, gynaecological abuse is still taking a toll on many victims, through practices such as episiotomy (a surgical act that consists in partially severing a woman's perineum during delivery), which is often unnecessary and yet is systematically practised in many hospitals without the patient's consent. Similarly, labiaplasty (also known as nymphoplasty), is a plastic surgery procedure that aims to reduce the size of the vulva's labia minora (smaller

the image of the tunnel often associated with female genitals and to rethink the vulva and the vagina as multidimensional sensory territories. The audience is invited to explore its plains, its recesses, its folds and its depths, to climb its mountains and to be refreshed in its rivers...

In spite of its highly political content, we approach this topic through a recreational angle (the discovery of this lesser-known southern territory) rather than through traumatic (such as rape, mutilation, and gynaecological abuses) or utilitarian aspects (the vagina is "meant for" reproduction or coitus) that are too often associated to the female genitals.

lips). This type of intervention appeared about a decade ago and is becoming increasingly popular (according to the INAMI, the amount of procedures increased by 70% within 7 years).

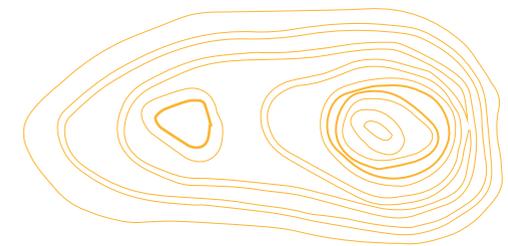
Even today few people have a clear physiological representation of female genitalia and of how feminine pleasure works—they are usually understood on the basis of male physiological and erotic standards. The vagina is a hole, the vulva a gateway, an organ that exists only as the opposite or the complement to its male counterpart, and not on its own. The vulva remains an unknown territory that sparks off suspicion, fear or clumsiness rather than interest and curiosity.

Hence the need to offer the audience an adventure aiming at reclaiming what is theirs. Instead of an activist project focused on protest, we want to develop an innovative point of view that makes possible a delicate and joyful recapture of that hilly land.

Moreover, if we decide to forget what we know or what we think we know, how do we perceive this part of our anatomy? How does it look? How is it shaped? How does it feel? The vulva remains a persistent taboo. The graffiti on the toilet walls of any dive bar reveals how easily the penis is both pictorially and discursively represented, in opposition to the vulva which is hardly ever mentioned or shown. On a larger scale, the vulva is not addressed in either the public or the private spheres. As a result, it becomes mysterious, if not suspect. Indeed, we note that, in addition to the lack of scientific and empirical knowledge about the vulva, it is also perceived as dirty and often provokes disgust. By approaching it through the lens of discovery, we want to counter those tendencies and develop a positive relationship with female genitalia.

We wish to focus on the feminine genitals, beyond their reproductive functions and the political issues related to abuse. Indeed, those two aspects, respectively broached by biology classes and the media, seem to remain the only discourses allowed on this organ in the public area today. What we are more concerned with, is to respond to the lack of representation we actually face, and to do so in a very concrete way: through the sensations linked to that part of the female body. In our collective culture, we hardly know anything about its texture, its colours, the way it changes shapes or size through cycles and ages, its topology/topography. In a word, we don't know the female genitals as a landscape. Our aim is also to move away from a reductive vision of the female genitals that would only be "meant for" making children. We will not extend the journey beyond the cervix. We will stop at the threshold.

This performance presents itself as an attempt to give flesh to a particularly incomplete imagination and to invite the audience to consider vulvas (their own or their friends') more carefully by means of scientific data as well as poetic images.



Staging and Dramaturgy Project



GENERAL OVERVIEW

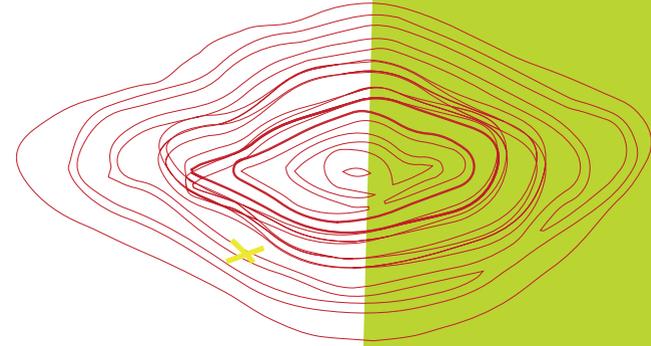
In the theater hall, before and after the performance, the spectators can participate to a blind sensorial experimentation. They enter a "sensorial booth", sit behind a curtain, and the performers invite them to touch several objects and textures that resemble, more or less, the organic texture of vulvas. The sound design contributes to plunge the spectators into a specific state of awareness.

When the show begins, the spectators penetrate, one by one, the "vag-wash", an installation by Charlotte Lippinois. Making their way into this scenographic element, they will receive a caress (see picture in p.8).

Then, the audience gets to their seats, in a bi-frontal stage setting. The performance starts with Salomé Richard, dressed as a mountain guide, who presents the guided tour of a hill : there is a footpath, some trees, a panorama, a stream... It is a metaphorical introduction aiming to discover an intimate landscape: the Mount Pubis ("careful, the climbing is steep"), the bordering regions (the Uretra canal, the industrial region of the Kidneys, the green area of the lungs, etc), the Leukorrhoea River, the Hymen path, the visible and invisible pollutions, the mushrooms, the vaginal flora, ... The hike promises to be intense and full of surprises.

When this fictional frame is set, the three performers install their temporary camp on the side of the hill.

Several sequences follow, in an order yet to be defined, and in various registers: a night under the stars where one of the performers watches her vulva in a mirror, hidden in the tent, her silhouette appearing in shadows, answering the other girls' questions ("are your labia symmetrical?", "when you touch the inside, how does it feel?"); observations of a scientist who studies the richness of the vaginal microbiote ; set up of a giant anatomical model using the camping accessories ; sensual choreography of two hands exploring each other; repertoire of songs to sing along by the fire ; history of the explorers who have "planted their flag" on many of our organs ; night walk in the deep dark forest of our shames, doubts, and anguishes ; earthquakes provoked by orgasms, etc.



DRAMATURGY

The theatrical score is being written on stage, collectively, in a peculiar intimate language, breaking free from the tenacious stereotypes related to our topic. We are hoping that our approach will make the audience realize how narrow the current views on the vulva are. We rely on scientific materials but also on private experiences, and furthermore we leave a lot of room for imagination. The dramaturgy used here is non-linear therefore signification arises from accumulation and juxtaposition, and not from a classical narrative structure. Also, the performance's temporality being based on the menstrual cycle, the audience will experiment several phases similar to the four seasons, which also form the pattern of the dramaturgy. On one hand, the geographic metaphor allows us to approach our topic more freely. At the same time, this provides us with an opportunity to speak in a very accurate language without sounding crude in order to start a dialogue that will not be intimidating. Moreover, we aim to find concreteness that is not strictly related to

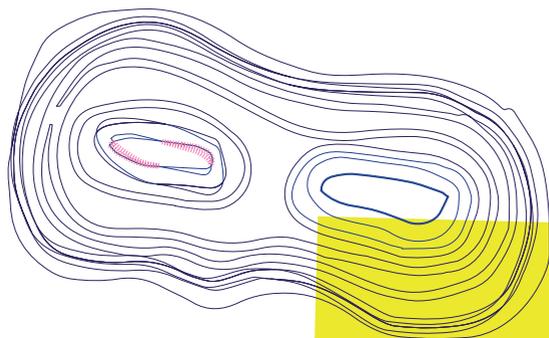
anatomy. Therefore we will regularly go back and forth from the landscape, to the discovery of the fauna, to this singular biotope's flora, its vegetation, its microorganism. As nature guides and occasional hikers, the performers will be there to invite the audience to take a look and form their own opinion rather than try to preach and pass on rigid knowledge. If the relationship to intimacy is the actual background of the project, we did not design the performance as a collection of statements, as in *The Vagina Monologues*. On the contrary, we emphasize a kaleidoscopic approach by alternating writing registers and also by focusing on the sensory experience. The dramaturgy combines concrete and recreational elements with fiction, while intimate words border on the popularization of science.



AESTHETICS and GRAPHIC IDENTITY

With regard to aesthetics, it is important for us to move away from both the cloying and scandalous fantasies commonly associated to everything that is linked to femininity. From menstruations (flowery sanitary towels soaked in some blue liquid) to female pleasure, female sexuality is too often pictured in our collective imagination with candles, soft music, silk sheets, leopard patterns, leather, and spike heels. We aim to imagine alternative aesthetics, some other visual codes to approach this vast

and dense universe. Hence we attach great importance to both the colour shades and the materials used to avoid a monolithic and/or stereotyped approach to our topic. To get a better sense of the aesthetic universe designed by Charlotte Lippinois, you can refer to the prototypes and sketches that resulted from our first plastic research residency (pages 8 to 13)



Audience development / Permanent Education

It seems fundamental to us to generate interest from a wide array of associations around our project by communicating with the Family Planning Services, psycho-medical-legal counselling centres, and feminist associations concerned with those issues. Indeed, if the performance does not aim at making a political statement nor at educating, we thought it would be interesting to develop these possibilities around our artistic project. The performance can constitute a tool, a gateway allowing to discuss burning issues, notably when it comes to lifelong learning. All sorts of activities are conceivable but we can already imagine women groups meetings, talks after the show, debates supervised by feminist associations, etc. Although the performance is originally dedicated to an adult audience, it can also fit the high school audience from 16 years old. Indeed, on that matter, we wish to discuss with teenagers who constitute an audience that has the privilege to concretely and privately experience the discovery of their

body and sexuality. On a different level, this project seems like an interesting opening to talk about the EVRAS (Relational, Affective & Sexual Education) in schools. Indeed, this very new "subject" is often giving teachers a hard time while they are already struggling to find the ideal approach to fit it into their classes. The project can also be related to both French and Civil Education classes. In other terms, to any classes broaching narration, image, introduction to art and culture or introduction to social issues considerations. In this way, we will offer interested teachers an educational file and activities in class, supervised by members of the artistic crew.

Casting and crew

Performance : Céline Estenne, Réhab Mehal, Salomé Richard

Staging : Lorette Moreau

Plastic installation : Charlotte Lippinois

Dramaturgy : Caroline Godart

Lighting design : Laurence Magnée

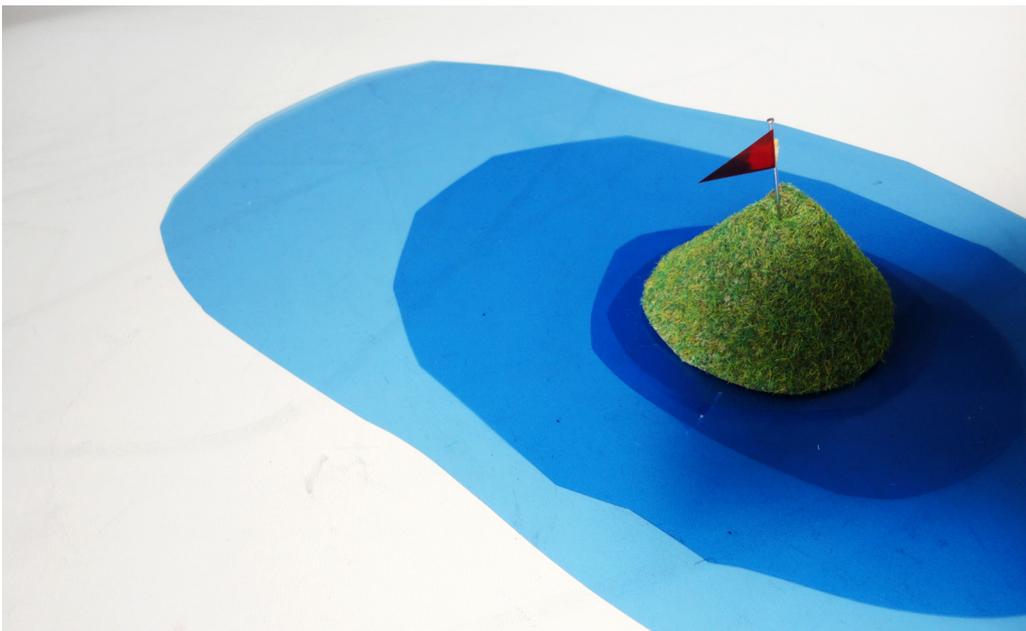
Sound design : Jennifer Cousin

With the complicity of : Isabelle Jans et Mathilde Messina

Residencies and support from : Le Corridor (Liège),
Kunstenwerkplaats Pianofabriek, la Fabrique de théâtre (Frameries),
Centre Culturel de Chênée, la Montagne Magique (Bruxelles) and
Festival Emulation/ Théâtre de Liège.

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Aesthetics research : First prototypes

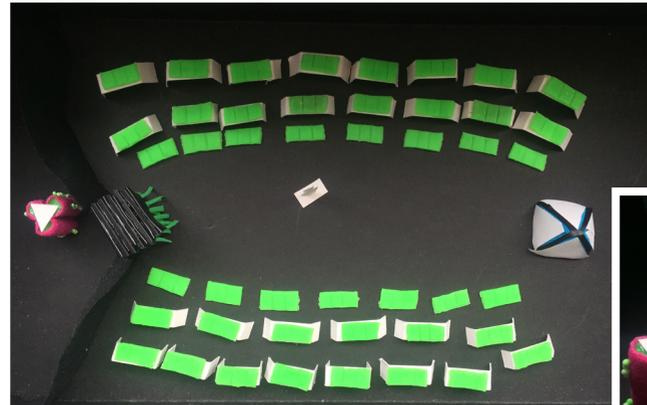




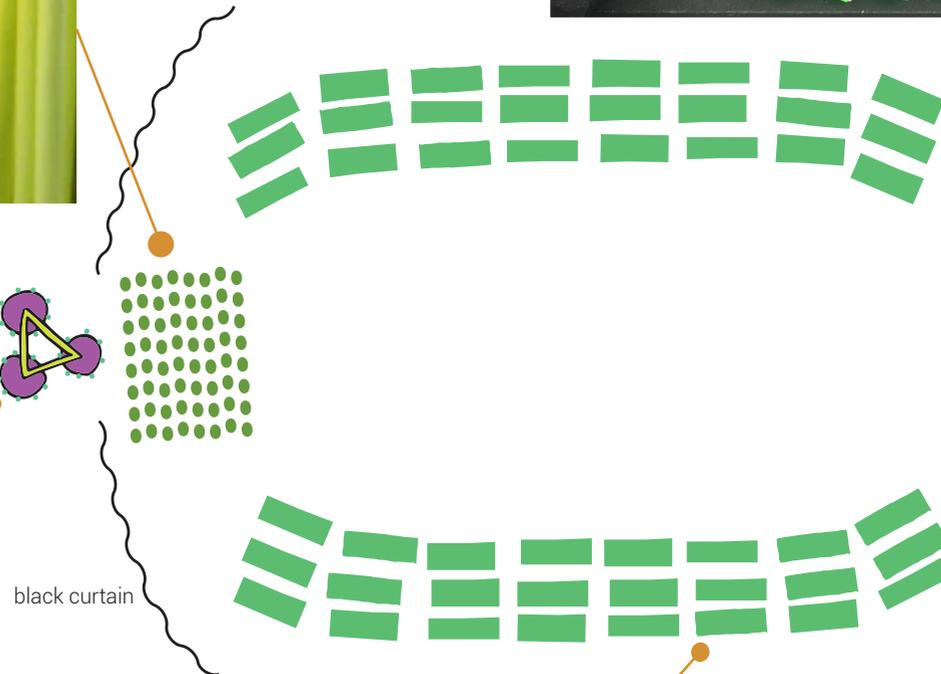
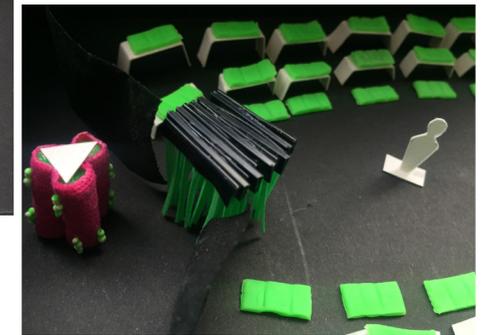
GENERAL OVERVIEW



noodle forest



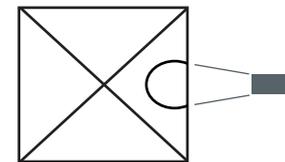
3D model



vag'wash



black curtain



beamer

igloo tent / projection screen



spectators seats



fabric cover in which we put 3 yoga balloons half inflated

PREVIOUS RESIDENCIES

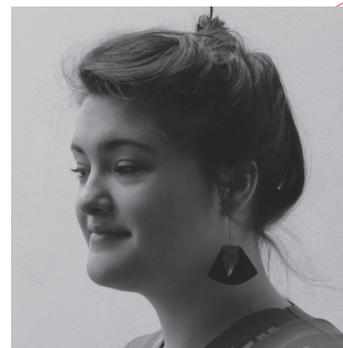


Crew Biographies

LORETTE MOREAU, *director*

Graduated from the dramatic art section of le Conservatoire Royal de Mons/Arts² in 2012. As a director, Lorette Moreau has undertaken several artistic projects. During 2012-2013, she attended Les Laboréales, support device for young interdisciplinary creation, initiated by Le Manège.Mons (currently Mars), la Bellone, le C.A.S., le C.F.A.S., la Balsamine and Buda Kunstcentrum (Kortrijk). In that context and after a residency at le Théâtre des Doms (Avignon), she presented a work in progress of "Cataclap enzovoorts" in June 2013 at the three partner sites. Between 2011 and 2015 she worked for Anne Thuot as an artistic assistant on several projects. Thus, she took part in "Histoires pour faire des cauchemars", performance for young audience by Etienne Lepage, "J'ai enduré vos discours et j'ai l'oreille en feu", created in La Balsamine in 2013 and "Wild", performance for young audience co-produced by le Manège.Mons and la Montagne Magique.

Simultaneously, Lorette Moreau develops her artistic project "Cataclap enzovoorts" which creation occurred in January 2016 at le Théâtre de la Balsamine. Moreover, she co-writes the play "On va bâtir une île et élever des palmiers" with Axel Cornil, whose creation is scheduled for 2019. Starting 2017, she collaborates with Julien Fournet and Antoine Defoort from l'Amicale de Production (Lille) and initiates the research project E.D.I.T. (transdisciplinary dramaturgic writing and transcription) with the graphic designer Lisa Gilot.



CHARLOTTE LIPPINOIS, *plastic artist*

Graduated in object design and interior design from l'ESAPV – Arts² (Mons) and in textile design from l'ARBA-ESA (Brussels). Charlotte Lippinois practices in the cultural field since 2015. As a designer, she has created the collectives Papayalippi (silkscreen printed objects) and Premier Baisers (ready-to-wear line). Furthermore, she takes part in several fashion designer markets (for instance; le X-mas at la Lustrerie) as well as collective exhibitions: Prix Tremplin et Exposition Tandem WCC-BF in Mons and Galerie MariaClara Artpoint and Home des Ursulines in Brussels. In 2015, she arranges the public spaces of le Théâtre de la Montagne Magique and also creates a scenography for the association Terres Rouges at le Centre Culturel d'Uccle. Simultaneously, she collaborates with the stage director Anne Thuot on the projects "J'ai enduré vos discours et j'ai l'oreille en feu" (graphic creation), "WILD" (graphic creation and scenographic assistantship), "Lydia Richardson" and "Lydia Richardson: Europe in pieces" (plastic creation). She assists the artist Stefan Goldrajch on the project « Les Brodeurs » and creates the stage design for « Lysistrata », collective creation from la Nunc Company.

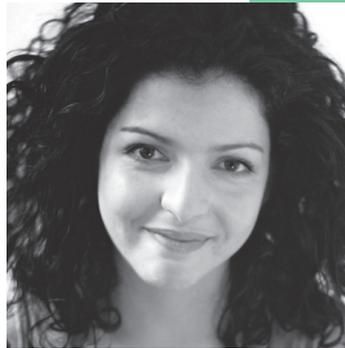
CÉLINE ESTENNE, *performer*

Céline Estenne has a degree in both romanian languages and dramatic art. Indeed, after studying literature in Paris, Montréal and Brussels, she enters Frédéric Dussenne's class in le Conservatoire of Mons – Arts². Since then, she has been working with Anne-Cécile Vandalem ("Que puis-je faire pour vous?", Mons 2015), Anne Thuot ("WILD", "Lydia Richardson"), Michaël Delaunoy ("La jeune fille folle de son âme", Fernand Crommelynck, Rideau de Bruxelles), Lorette Moreau ("Cataclap enzovoorts", Théâtre de la Balsamine), Michiel Soete ("Capsaïcin", Kaaistudio), X/ TNT ("Le Code de la Déconduite", Atelier 231, Rouen) and Jean-Baptiste Polge ("Mehr Licht!", a 72-hours performance presented on the occasion of la Grande Invasion by L'L / Halles de Schaerbeek). She is currently working on a solo project "Mais, le voisin a taillé dans la haie ?!" on the occasion of Émergence(s), which is a support device for emerging creation carried out by Arts²/drama section's awardees, initiated by the company L'acteur et L'écrit, sponsored by Arts²/drama section, Le Manège.Mons, La Charge du Rhinocéros, and le Théâtre de la Vie, after several residencies at le BRASS (Forest) and at the Corridor (Liège).



SALOMÉ RICHARD, *performer*

Salomé Richard is a 30-years-old actress from Brussels. After (almost) accidentally ending up in the cinema industry, she moved towards theatre entering the Kleine Academie under the direction of Luc Desmet and later on, Frédéric Dussenne's class in the Conservatoire of Mons. Simultaneously, she keeps on acting for the cinema in several short films such as "Pour toi je ferai bataille" by Rachel Lang, for which she received the best actress award at the festival "Le Court en Dit Long" at the Vendôme film festival. She steps behind the camera as well with "Septembre", her first short film that was rewarded at the Festival International du Film Francophone de Namur with the jury prize and also by the CNC with the quality prize. After graduating from Arts²/drama section, she keeps up collaborating with Rachel Lang by handling the leading part in her first feature film "Baden Baden" for which she received the best actress award at the Festival International du Film de Femmes de Salé and the Most Promising Young Actress award at the Magrittes ceremony. In the meantime, she continues her theatrical projects under the direction of Anne Thuot with the performance "Wild" created at Le Manège.Mons. Afterwards, she performed in "La part sauvage", a first feature film by Guérin van de Voorst. She is currently finishing her second short film's post-production, "La grande vacance", while writing her first feature film.

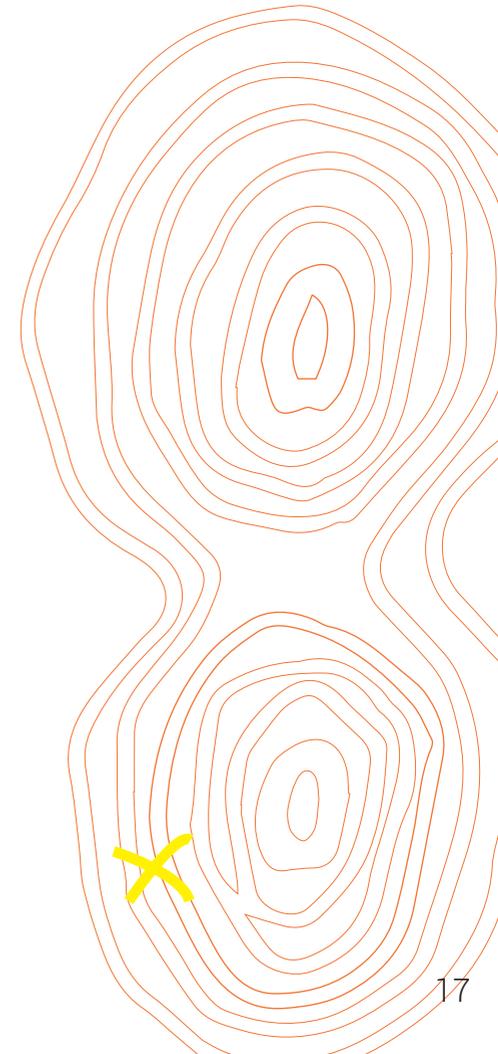


REHAB MEHAL, *performer*

Réhab Méhal grew up in Montpellier. Once she graduated, she left France to enter l'InSAS in Brussels, under the direction of Martine Wijckaert, Armel Roussel, Ingrid Von Wantoch Rekowski. Since she graduated in 2010, she performed in "L'Éveil du Printemps" (Théâtre Le Public) and "Le Mouton et la Baleine" (Théâtre Océan Nord), both from the stage director Jasmina Douieb, "Les royaumes d'artifices" by Lucile Urbani (Théâtre Poème), "Villa" directed by Sarah Siré. She is a member of the company Les Viandes Magnétiques through which she performed in "L'Écolier Kevin", "La Machine et la Montagne", "L'Archéologue et l'Écran Plat", "Le Nu Civil". On the other hand, she continues working with Jean-Baptiste Calame in "Les Pollutions Lumineuses" created in april 2016 (Théâtre de la Balsamine). She worked as an external counsellor and as a director on the project "Housewife" collective creation from Morgane Choupay and The PloyBoy in April 2016 (Théâtre National de Bruxelles). In France, she regularly works for several partnerships such as Le Festival Premiers Actes in Alsace, le Festival à Villeréal in Lot-et-Garonne and le Bouillon cube in Hérault. Equally author and stage director, she founded her company Charlie ASBL in 2014. She created "El Kouds" and "Sur le Chemin" two solos which were scheduled many times both in France and Belgium. She is currently working on the third part of her trio: "La fille du Sacrifice".

LAURENCE MAGNÉE, *lighting designer*

Laurence Magnée was born in 1989 and started her training as an actress at le Conservatoire de Mons/Arts²(Belgium) between 2008 and 2012. Afterwards, she enters the École Supérieure d'Art Dramatique du Théâtre National de Strasbourg where she studies technical performance management and graduates in 2016. While studying, she specifically took an interest for lightning design. She notably worked on "Karukinka", a contemporary musical performance by Francisco Alvarado presented on the occasion of the MUSICA Festival in Strasbourg. In 2016 she also works as a lightning designer on "Cataclap enzovoorts" by Lorette Moreau at le Théâtre de la Balsamine (Bruxelles). She completes her training at the TNS by creating the lightning design of "Radeau de la Méduse" by Georg Kaiser, directed by Thomas Jolly and presented at Le Festival d'Avignon in 2016. Afterwards, she designed the lightning in "Ce que je reproche le plus résolument à l'architecture française, c'est son manque de tendresse" (Cie Légendes Urbaines) presented at Le Festival Impatiences (Paris), "Funny birds" (Cie Rive Ulérieure) and "Shakespeare-nocturnes", opera highlights performed by students from l'académie de l'Opéra Bastille (m.e.s Maëlle Dequiedt) during the 2016-2017 season. Finally, she designed the lightning "La mort de Tintagiles" by Maurice Maeterlinck, directed by Géraldine Martineau at le Théâtre de la Tempête (Paris) and "Noire" by the collective F71, which creation is planned for spring 2018 at le Val de Marne CDN.



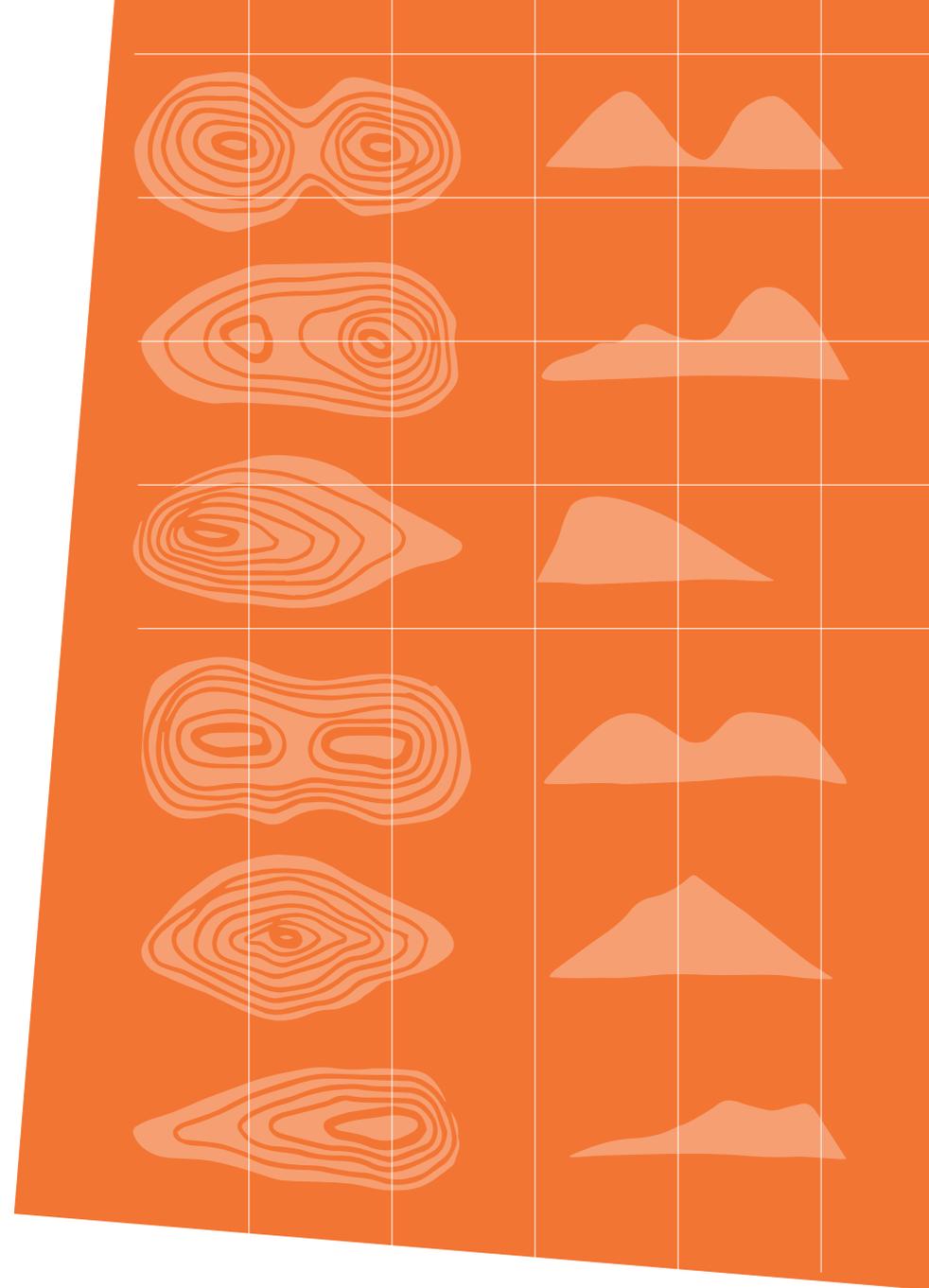
CAROLINE GODART, *dramaturgy*

Caroline Godart (PhD in Comparative Literature, Rutgers University, USA) is a philosopher, dramatist and professor. Her first book, *The Dimensions of Difference: Space, Time, and Bodies in Women's Cinema and Continental Philosophy* was published in 2016 by Rowman and Littlefield. Moreover, she is currently working on a new book about gardens and our relation to nature. She works as an Assistant Professor at IHECS, collaborates with several artists as a dramatist and is frequently invited as a mentor at A. Pass (Advanced Performance and Scenography Studies, Bruxelles).



JENNIFER COUSIN, *sound designer*

Jennifer Cousin was born in Normandy in 1987. After studying at the Conservatoire de Rennes as an actress, she enters l'INSAS in 2013 to study stage directing. Where she discovers the sound universe with Brice Cannavo and then creates « Trésor de ma vie », a documentary that portrays an intriguing neighbour called Armand, living with his canary in his old family home. Then she creates « Mode Majeur de la fugue » presented at the Festival Outsas in 2016. Thanks to that documentary, she benefits from a scholarship fund: Découverte Pierre Schaeffer, on the occasion of the Phonurgia Nova Awards as well as the Prix du Fonds Marie-Paule Delvaux-Godenne. She then benefits from a scholarship fund from the Empreinte de l'ACSR to make an experimental sonorous documentary based on the « Mode Majeur de la fugue » testimony. At the end of 2016, she enters a sound training program, La Coquille (ACSR) and also creates the sound design on « Barbe-Bleue » by Hugo Favier. On the occasion of the 2017 Festival Courants d'Air, she performs as a comedian in « Orphelins » by Dennis Kelly, directed by Elsa Chêne. Finally, she works on her own new sonorous creation for Empreinte and also designs the sound on « MUR/MER », a performance by Elsa Chêne.



2018

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NEXT RESIDENCY

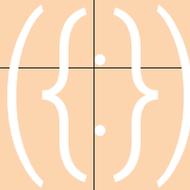
9 > 15/06/2018 at Théâtre de la Montagne Magique (Brussels)

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CALENDAR

Résidencies • Spring 2018 & Winter 2019
Première • April 2019 / Festival Emulation / Théâtre de Liège



2018

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