

International Theatre Festival and Meeting

TRANSIT III

Theatre -Women - Generations

Information about Invited Artists and their Performances

Gilly Adams

Biography: Gilly Adams is a director and workshop leader who specialises in the development and performance of new text for theatre. Currently, she edits drama scripts for the BBC. She is also involved in celebratory arts activities with Welfare State International and has been closely associated with the Magdalena Project from its beginning.

Alma Theatre

Performance: *The Arab Room* (25 January). A solo performance exploring the issues of identity, ethnicity and home. Drawn from Rabab Ghazoul's personal experience of having a fragmented sense of 'national identity', *The Arab Room* centres on a room in a Welsh castle, highlighting how political narrative is manufactured and how fictions/myths are constructed about what it is to be 'Arab'.

Director/Performer: Rabab Ghazoul

Company Info: Formed and based in Cardiff since 1993, Alma Theatre is a leading exponent of experimental and physical theatre within Wales and works with a wide range of Welsh and international theatre practitioners and artists of other disciplines.

Josefina Báez

Biography: Born in La Romana (Dominican Republic) and now living in New York, Josefina Báez is an actor, poet, storyteller, performance artist, educator and cultural worker. Her work focuses on the cultural complexities of being Latin in the USA. Since 1966, she has presented her texts in private homes and apartments in a theatre project called 'Apartarte/Casarte'. These performances have allowed her to develop a dialogue, which has now been published in a book entitled *Dominicanish*. This is the name also given to her performances that use the Indian Kuchipudi dance form as a physical structure in the dramaturgy.

María Cánepa

Performance: *The Voice of Poems* (25 January). A reading, in Spanish, of the poems of Gabriela Mistral, Pablo Neruda and Nicanor Parra.

Biography: María Cánepa is one of Chile's most distinguished actresses. Since 1942, she has worked in theatre and television in both South and North America, taught theatre worldwide and received many cultural awards and nominations.

Roberta Carreri

Performance: *Traces in the Snow* (26 January). A work demonstration to explain Roberta Carreri's personal process of work as an actor in building a character and creating a performance.

Biography: Roberta Carreri is an actress and pedagogue at Odin Teatret. Since 1974, she has toured internationally with most of the group's productions and with *Traces in the Snow*. She conducts workshops worldwide and organises the Odin Week in Holstebro twice a year.

Gilla Cremer

Performance: *Vater Hat Lager* (25 January). Based on Carl Friedman's novel *Nightfather*, *Vater Hat Lager* focuses on the experience of the Holocaust and its aftermath. The daughter of a

survivor recounts the efforts she and her two brothers make to bridge the gulf between themselves and their father, a gulf caused by his concentration camp experiences. Unlike many of his generation who remain silent, their father is compelled to repeat the details of his ordeal. What are the children to make of these stories of humiliation and murder? Where do the stories stop and reality begin?

Director: Michael Heicks

Biography: Based in Hamburg, Gilla Cremer has been developing and performing one-woman shows since 1978. Among her most recent works are *The Bitch of Buchenwald*, *Morrison Hotel* and *m.e.d.e.a.*

DanzAbierta

Performance: *Blanche Dubois* (27 January). Blanche is based on Tennessee Williams's play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*. For many years, Marianela Boán admired the character of Blanche Dubois and identified with her from the perspective of a Cuban woman. This Cuban Blanche, who stays on the island while her sister emigrates, holds on to her revolutionary dreams, just as the original Blanche never loses her aristocratic spirit.

Direction, Dramaturgy and Choreography: Raúl Martín and Marianela Boán

Performer: Marianela Boán

Biography/Company Info: Marianela Boán is one of Cuba's most distinguished dancers and choreographers, having created a number of works that have toured internationally as well as having been presented with many awards. In 1988, Marianela Boán founded DanzAbierta with the aim of exploring different theatre myths and harsh contemporary conflicts. She has labelled her style: 'polluted dance'.

Jill Greenhalgh

Performance Process: *Waterwars* (Process: 19-23 January, Presentation: 24 January). Under the direction of Jill Greenhalgh, a small group of young performers will create a single short ensemble piece for presentation to all Transit Festival participants. The theme of the work is embedded in the working title and it will be left open to individual interpretation.

Biography: Since 1986, Jill Greenhalgh has been the Artistic Director of the Magdalena Project, an organisation she founded in order to bring greater focus to an under-represented area of original work by independent women theatre-makers. Consequently, she has produced a wide spectrum of international theatre projects, allowing her an unique perspective on the diversity of contemporary practice and the privilege of collaborating with hundreds of independent theatre-makers from many different cultural and political contexts.

Grenland Friteater

Performance: *From Blue to Red – MO: DIY* (24 January). A 'stunt' performance about the wisdom of old Chinese poetry, the longing for a good life, the noble art of relaxing, unpopular things (e.g. friendship instead of love, age instead of youth, war instead of peace, thinking instead of feeling). A small little talk with dramatic potential! Created with the help of many invisible assistants.

Concept/Performer: Geddy Aniksdal

Company Info: Grenland Friteater is a company situated in Porsgrunn, Norway. Founded in 1976, Grenland Friteater has its own theatre, makes performances, organises festivals and workshops, as well as publishes books on its own work. Grenland Friteater tours extensively with its productions within Norway and abroad.

Biography: 1) Geddy Aniksdal is an actor and director at Grenland Friteater and a teacher of actors' methods of creating their own material. She has been active with the Magdalena Project from the beginning. She is also on the editorial board of the Magdalena Project journal, *The Open Page*.

2) The younger generation of Grenland Friteater will be represented by Nina Ossavy Mathiesen and Anders Restad.

Birgitte Grimstad

Performance: *Missa Mama* (24 January). A music-theatre performance with impulses from Samé, North American Indian, Sumerian and Nordic mythologies about the great Mother Earth Goddess.

Director/Script: Åsa Simma

Music/Script: Birgitte Grimstad

Biography: Born in Denmark and now living in Norway, Birgitte Grimstad has been a professional folksinger since the mid-sixties. She has had an extensive career of national and international concert touring, recordings and radio/television appearances. Since the mid-eighties, she has taught singing and voice training for vocalists and experimental theatre groups. In 1986, she wanted to work with more visual artistic expression and found her way back to the theatre via work with costumes and masks, and performance art projects for installations by other artists.

Deborah Hunt

Performance: 1) *Thief: A Reclamation*, or *Las Mirillas* (23 January). A mask-video performance originally mounted in the display windows and entrance of a store in Puerto Rico, the piece comments on the glimmers and illusions of six masked characters that share a strange private space together.

2) *Burqa* (26 January). The masks from Deborah Hunt and Marie-Josée Ordener's workshop go to town in Holstebro.

Biography: For the last twenty-five years, Deborah Hunt has worked with masks, puppets and shadows. To create *Thief: A Reclamation*, she collaborated with multimedia artist, Tony González Walker. She is joined in this Danish performance by Sally Rodwell and Alan Brunton (Red Mole Enterprises).

Maria Mänty

Biography: Maria Mänty (Finland) has studied classical ballet since she was seven years old, and later trained at several modern dance schools. After three years of study, she graduated from the Theatre Laboratory Group of Kerava, directed by Carita Rindell and Sebastian Kaairasalok. Since 1999, she has been a member of the pedagogical project, 'Wind Dancers', led by Iben Nagel Rasmussen of Odin Teatret.

Birute Marcinkeviciute

Performance: 1) *The Lover* (23 January). A mono-performance, based on Marguerite Duras' novel, that reflects on time, memories and love. Birute Marcinkeviciute exploits the monodrama genre to explore private thoughts and feelings that in real life it is forbidden to reveal.

Director: Luis Raposo Da Cruz

2) *Antigone* (24 January). A video-theatre performance based on Sophocles' classic text using different means of expression: voice, music, video images and movement. The exploration of the story of Antigone offers Birute Marcinkeviciute an opportunity to reflect upon her own life.

Biography: Since 1994, Birute Marcinkeviciute has worked as an actress of the Lithuanian National Drama Theatre, performing many theatre-dance productions in Europe and Japan. In 1999, she was nominated Best Lithuanian Young Theatre Artist. Much of her solo work has been inspired by the desire to make a kind of theatre where other forms of art can be closely related to each other.

Hisako Miura

Biography: Hisako Miura is an actor who studied at Odin Teatret from 1990 to 1992. She returned to Japan to study Okinawa dance. She is currently living in Denmark and is preparing a solo performance for children.

Marie-Josée Ordener

Performance: *Burqa* (26 January). The masks from Deborah Hunt and Marie-Josée Ordener's workshop go to town in Holstebro.

Biography: Marie-Josée Ordener lives in Marseilles, France. Since 1983, she has been working with puppet theatre. Since 1996, she has directed the project *Guignol dans les squares* with Théâtre Massalia. From 1993 to 1996, she collaborated with Théâtre des Cuisines and Compagnie Sanvic.

Jo Randerson/Bats Theatre

Performance: *The Legacy of the Soul* – a work-in-progress (28 January). Jo Randerson delves into her Danish ancestry (Randerson is a form of Randersen, a family from Randers) to explore what is left for a younger generation and what a person is to make of the world and survive.

Biography: Jo Randerson is a young award-winning writer, performer and comedian from New Zealand. She has travelled extensively in Europe and has worked/trained with Jill Greenhalgh and Geddy Aniksdal.

Iben Nagel Rasmussen

Performance: *White as Jasmin* (23 January). Iben Nagel Rasmussen evokes Odin Teatret's performances from 1966 until today. She illustrates the changes her voice has undergone, from the closed room (which allows the actors to reveal their inner world) and the street performances (the meeting with the exterior world), to the space which words create through their meanings and sounds.

Biography: Iben Nagel Rasmussen was the first actor to join Odin Teatret after its arrival in Holstebro in 1966. Her main pedagogical project is a yearly gathering of actors from different countries who share their artistic experiences as well as create a performance which takes the name of the group 'Vindenes Bro' (The Bridge of Winds).

Sally Rodwell/Red Mole

Video Presentation: *A Crazy Voyage* (25 January). In 1994, Sally Rodwell and other New Zealand women took part in the International Magdalena Project Festival in Cardiff, Wales. They then decided to organise a similar event in New Zealand, leading to the creation of Magdalena Aotearoa, Magdalena Maori Aotearoa and a Newsletter as well as the organisation of the Magdalena Aotearoa International Festival in 1999 and various ongoing activities.

Company Info: In 1975, Sally Rodwell, Alan Brunton and Deborah Hunt founded Red Mole, New Zealand's longest established contemporary performance group, working in theatre, poetry, film and video, and currently based in Island Bay, Wellington.

Sagliocco Ensemble

Performance: *Salome* (27 January). A solo performance based on Oscar Wilde's 1891 text, *Salome*. This will be the premiere of the English version of *Salome*.

Performer: Guandaline Sagliocco

Director: Anne-Sophie Erichsen

Biography: 1) Guandaline Sagliocco is a French performer who lives and works in Norway. She has created several solo performances which have toured extensively and won a Fringe First at the Edinburgh Festival for *The Fallen Hero*. She is a close collaborator of Grenland Friteater.
2) Anne-Sophie Erichsen has been an actress and pedagogue at Grenland Friteater since 1983.

She has been involved in the Magdalena Project since 1986, and organised together with Geddy Aniksdal, *A Room of One's Own – Magdalena 89*.

Verena Tay

Performance: *Cotton & Jade* (28 January). A multimedia solo performance that creatively recounts the stories of the women in Verena Tay's family spanning the 20th century, and explores the issues of identity, family relationships and the role of women.

Performer/Devisor: Verena Tay

Director/Devisor: Brian Seward

Biography: Verena Tay has acted, directed and written for modern, English-language theatre in Singapore since 1986.

Teatro delle Radici

Performance: *Umbral* (27 January). Part of a wider project called *Voyage Notes*, *Umbral* is Teatro delle Radici's active and spare reflection on the steps that, during many years of work, have determined a way of conceiving theatre creation and the profession of the actor. It is a physical and verbal narration using theatre to reclaim two or three quivers of the soul that give shape and sense to our personal history.

Performer/Director: Cristina Castrillo

Company Info: Teatro delle Radici, directed by Cristina Castrillo was founded in Italian Switzerland in 1980. It focuses on actor training, combined with the creation of performances. Annually, it organises a session of the International Laboratory School for actors of different cultural and linguistic origins. It has also presented many performances and workshops worldwide.

Biography: Cristina Castrillo is an actor, teacher and director. Before directing Teatro delle Radici, she was co-founder of the Libre Teatro Libre in Argentina in the 1970s. She has edited *Attore-Autore* with texts about the work of the Teatro delle Radici.

Topeng Shakti

Performance: *Topeng* (26 January). In Topeng, the 500-year old masked dance drama of Bali (using full masks for royal characters and half-masks for comic characters) stories revolve around Javanese and Balinese kings and their accompanying political/religious problems. The story presented is about one of Prince Panji's adventures: An evil demoness convinces Prince Panji that she is his bride-to-be, Candra Kirana. While Panji prepares for the wedding festival, the true Candra Kirana is alone in the forest. Responding to her lamentations, the gods tell Candra Kirana that she must return to Panji's palace disguised as a man in order to be reunited with her true love. When she does so, she cannot bear how attentive Panji is to his false bride. She writes him a letter about the real situation and vanishes again. In despair, Panji searches for his true beloved, while his people kill the imposter.

Performers: Ni Nyoman Chandri, Cokorda Isteri Agung, Cristina Wistari

Musicians: Desak Nyoman Suarti, Desak Made Bratiani, Gusti Putu Astiti, Ni Wayan Mustini, Ni Ketut Masriani, Ni Wayan Mudiari

Company Info: Mekar Ayu, the women's gamelan group which accompanies this Topeng performance, was created in 1990 by Desak Nyoman Suanti. Traditionally, Topeng dance dramas, filled with male characters, are performed only by men and accompanied by male musicians. In 1998, Cristina Wistari Formaggia decided to start an all women's Topeng troupe to give Balinese women an opportunity to speak about their own experiences as women through a form which is recognisable to all members of society – a society that is patriarchal and male-dominated. Ni Nyoman Chandri and Cokorda Isteri Agung, two experienced singers and performers, joined her in this adventure.

Uhan Shii Theatre Group

Company Info: Formed in 1995, Uhan Shii Theatre Group is an oral history theatre group in Taiwan that stages theatre performance with the elderly acting out their life dramas and reflecting on different aspects of old Taiwan. Led by Peng Ya-ling and Yeh Yeh, Uhan Shii has thus far performed in Taiwan and cities like London, New York, Utrecht (Holland) and Köln (Germany).

Julia Varley

Performance: 1) *Doña Musica's Butterflies* (18 January). *Doña Musica's Butterflies* is a performance about identity which the protagonist defines as a tendency to exist. It is the story of a character who has escaped from a performance, *Kaosmos*, and tells of her origins and adventures in terms of entomology, through theories of modern physics and with poems and tales from other times.

Text/Scenography: Julia Varley **Director:** Eugenio Barba

2) *The Echo of Silence* (19 January). *The Echo of Silence* is a performance which describes the vicissitudes of the voice of an actor and the strategies she invents to 'interpret' a text.

3) *The Dead Brother* (20 January). *The Dead Brother* shows how the actor creates his/her own stage presence until the final synthesis in which the text, through the form and precision of the actions, acquires a rhythm and density of meaning.

4) *The Castle of Holstebro* (21 January). In a room we see a woman dressed in white and a cynical old jester with a skull for a head called Mister Peanut. Two characters in one person: 'If they see beard and moustache, they call it man. If they see long hair and breasts, they call it woman. But look! The soul inside is neither man nor woman.'

Text: Julia Varley and Eugenio Barba **Director:** Eugenio Barba

Biography: Julia Varley started as an actor with Odin Teatret in 1976. Her writing has been published in *Mime Journal*, *New Theatre Quarterly*, *Lapis* and *Mascara*. Besides being a founding member of the Magdalena Project, she is the editor of the Magdalena Project journal, *The Open Page*.

Voix Polyphoniques

Performance: 1) *Dissonantes: Musical Theatre* (23 January). On stage, five chairs, five different women and a shared story. Sometimes accomplices, other times adversaries, the women, between fear and irony, lead us with their voices into an imaginary sound and movement universe, filled with laughter, grotesque, possible and impossible situations.

2) *Le Rôti de l'Impératrice* or *The Empress's Roast* (27 January). A vocal concert in several pictures, *Le Rôti de l'Impératrice* weaves texts and songs around a celebration. Four women prepare the mysterious food of a banquet that celebrates a rite of passage, e.g. from life to death, youth to adulthood, adulthood to old age, solitude to being with others. These rites are sometimes accompanied by song and dance, but always by food and drink.

Performers: Brigitte Cirla, Katy Deville, Eeza Guien, Marielle Haurant, Joëlle Driguez

Director: Brigitte Cirla

Biography/Company Info: Brigitte Cirla founded Voix Polyphoniques in 1991, and then Les Dissonantes, a music theatre *a capella* vocal group, in 1996. For the last twenty years, she has been touring the world as a singer, actor and composer, presenting and directing concerts and theatre performances, and giving workshops.

Ana Woolf/Magdalena Segunda Generación

Performance: *Semillas de Memoria* or *Seeds of Memory* (26 January). The performance is about absence: the absence of a father, the absence of a body to bury, and the absence of 30,000 missing people in Argentina during the last military dictatorship. But absence also generates its opposite: resistance, presence and identity. The autobiographical words of a child and the real

pain caused by the recent loss of her father constitute the dramaturgical device that tells the story of a Latin American country hit by military dictatorship.

Director: Julia Varley

Biography: Trained in the Suzuki method, Ana Woolf is an actress and director. In 1997, she founded Magdalena Segunda Generación in Argentina.

Chiara Zamboni

Lecture: *Passing on Knowledge and Questions of Authority* (28 January). Chiara Zamboni explores the nature of the relationship between a woman teacher and pupil which aims to connect women of different generations. The transmission of knowledge here cannot be described in an entirely objective way outside ourselves, because it belongs to a practice that is a moment of transformation for both the teacher and the pupil, and the relationship between them.

Biography: Chiara Zamboni is one of the founders of Diotima, a community of female philosophy, at the University of Verona, Italy. With several other women, she has written three books of philosophy (*Oltre l'uguaglianza; La sapienza di partire da sé; Il profumo della maestra*) published by Liguori (Naples, Italy).