2023-24-25 Productions

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A theatre factory in full swing

In the autumn of 2020, Comédie de Genève moved into its new theatre, built in the Eaux-Vives district. A genuine theatre factory located in the heart of the city, the venue is equipped with a 500-seat auditorium and a 200-seat modular hall, two rehearsal studios as well as set construction and costume workshops within the building.

Comédie de Genève features a multidisciplinary and eclectic programme, inviting local and international companies such as Ivo van Hove, La Ribot, Simon McBurney, Yan Duyvendak, Gisèle Vienne, La Veronal, Marco Berrettini, Dimitris Papaioannou, Alexander Zeldin, Peeping Tom, Cindy Van Acker, Sylvain Creuzevault, Joël Pommerat, Sharon Eyal and Alain Platel. Open to all audiences, Comédie also offers a wide range of cultural activities which make the theatre a thriving place in the heart of the city.

For the past four years, the production department has been working with numerous European partners on ambitious projects focused on contemporary creation. Comédie has become a European production hub as well as an open and supportive home for artists. Invitations have been extended to international artists to work and create together at Comédie with local and international artistic and technical teams. The first of these fellow artists have been Tiago Rodrigues, Christiane Jatahy, Amir Reza Koohestani, Pascal Rambert and Krystian Lupa.

On 1st July 2023, Séverine Chavrier will take over the direction of Comédie de Genève and build on the momentum, bringing together local and international creation, favouring auteur theatre and focusing on integrating young people in all the theatre professions.

Listed below are Comédie 2023-24 creations that will be touring in 2024-25, as well as the projects that were created in 2021-22-23. We look forward to welcoming you in Geneva, to meeting you on tour and to discussing possible collaborations with you.

Comédie de Genève team

To follow our news and receive our newsletter for professionals, please register with Elyse Blanquet: eblanquet@comedie.ch / +41 22 708 49 03.
Absalon, Absalon!

SÉVERINE CHAVRIER
(Switzerland - France)
Based on the novel by William Faulkner

After *Les Palmiers Sauvages*, Séverine Chavrier returns to the words of William Faulkner with one of his most masterful novels. Inspired by a biblical episode, this text, which is closer to an ancient tragedy, unfolds a multitude of stories.

*Absalon, Absalon!* is the story of a white man who is sent away by an Afro-American slave when he rings his doorbell at the age of twelve: “Go through the back door”. The young man feels utterly humiliated. He then seeks to take revenge, in a quest for absolute social recognition. Alone, he leaves everything, becomes a man and builds a house and a would-be dynasty.

This is the story of a world and an American South that no longer exist. It is the story of Mississippi, of planters, of Jefferson, of Blacks and Whites, of lineages and the atavisms that go with them, of the Civil War, of defeat and bitterness, of the tragedy of this almost mythological “South”.

To tell this story, several voices intermingle, answering each other to grasp the design of this man who finally fails in incest and fratricide to establish a lineage.

This puzzle lends *Absalon, Absalon!* a form of suspense, not narrative suspense, but a spiral, immersive, perhaps more anxiety-provoking form of suspense, as if the heat and humidity of the South had descended upon us.
It is late autumn. The trees are already bare. It has rained. A man walks through a cemetery, reads the epitaphs, sits on a bench. He has been crying, perhaps. A woman enters, he and she have no names, they are The Man and The Woman. A man and a woman who meet or meet again in a cemetery. They will love each other, or they have loved each other and broken up, or they still love each other as if they had in the past.

We know little or nothing about these characters and yet, from remembrance to unanswered questions, from commonplaces to unfinished sentences, from doubts to uncertainties, we feel that we are getting to the heart of the matter, to the core of what constitutes them.

As in a memory or a dream, time condenses and cancels itself out, bringing together the living and ghosts in one and the same place. For the main character of this play seems to be time itself. The time that passes inexorably in an endless spiral with no other resolution than death.

A master of dialogue where unspoken words and silence predominate, Jon Fosse has a talent for writing between words and building his work on the edge of emptiness, the better to touch our existential impasses. Delicately, Fosse pencils his timeless characters, fostering a feeling of undying tenderness for these beings.

“'I'd like us to see, feel, hear and almost touch desire. Just desire. The desire for desire. The desire to express desire.’” (Denis Maillefer, May 2023)
Ils nous ont oubliés

SÉVERINE CHAVRIER
(France)
Based on The Lime Works (La Plâtrière) by Thomas Bernhard

After Nous sommes repus mais pas repentis, a play that was presented at Odéon-Théâtre de l’Europe in 2016, Séverine Chavrier has tackled another work by Thomas Bernhard, which is still somewhat influenced by his past as a court reporter. With devastating humour, the master of exaggeration addresses some of his major obsessions in The Lime Works.

Vast yet cramped, empty yet cluttered, the Lime Works is a building that is as white as a barren room and as black as the surrounding forest. A couple have locked themselves in after “barricading all the doors and locking all the windows”. Indeed, Konrad needs absolute peace to write his Essay on Hearing—something which is seemingly impossible. His wife is disabled and totally dependent on him. Konrad has to do all the housework himself. Unbeknownst to his wife, he has to sell off the furniture bit by bit to ensure their subsistence. He also has to guarantee their safety by hiding weapons in almost every room, because isolation attracts prowlers... A contribution in the form of a desperate farce to the “study of what controls the catastrophes of intelligence”, The Lime Works is a magnificent ode to sterility.

Based on The Lime Works (La Plâtrière) by Thomas Bernhard
Translation Louise Servicen
Direction & sound design Séverine Chavrier
Set design & props Louise Sari
Props Rodolphe Horet
Light design Germain Fourvel
Sound design Simon d’Anselme de Puisaye
Video design Quentin Vigier
Costumes Andrea Matweber
Bird training Tristan Plot
Intervention IRCAM Augustin Mullier
Forest design Hervé Mayon – La Licorne Verte
Director assistant Ferdinand Flame
Set design assistant Amandine Riffaud
Set construction Julien Fleureau, Olivier Berthel

On tour 2023-2024

Featuring Aurélia Arto/Adèle Joulin, Laurent Papot, Marijke Pinoy, and Floran Satche (musician)
Video manager Typhaine Steiner
Stage manager and set Corto Tremorin

Acknowledgements Rachel de Dardel, Marion Stenton, Marie Fortuit, Antoine Girard, Pascal Frey and Romuald Lateau Ligo

Production for creation CDN Orléans / Centre-Val de Loire
Production from 2024 Comédie de Genève

Coproduction Théâtre de Liège - Tax Shelter, Théâtre National de Strasbourg, ThéâtrèdeliaCité - CDN Toulouse Occitanie, Tandem Scène nationale Arras-Douai, Teatre Nacional de Catalunya - Barcelona
With the support of Région Centre - Val de Loire

Duration 3h45 (2 intermissions) / Show in french

La Plâtrière by Thomas Bernhard, translated by Louise Servicen, is published by Editions Gallimard. Thomas Bernhard is represented by L’Arche, Agence théâtrale www.arche-editeur.com

Created on 12th March 2022 at Teatre Nacional de Catalunya - Barcelona

Tour 2023-2024
12-14 September 2023 CDN Orléans / Centre-Val de Loire (FR)
7-13 October 2023 TNP - Théâtre National Populaire (FR)
30 November - 2 December 2023 Comédie de Genève (CH)
16 January - 10 February 2024 La Colline - Théâtre National (FR)

Available on tour on demand
The son of a doctor mother and a journalist father, Tiago Rodrigues has often wondered why he chose to tell the story of the world rather than to save it by taking more concrete action. Should we rescue the world or speak about it? Should we try to act directly on reality or talk about it?

To write Dans la Mesure de l’Impossible, he immersed himself in international Geneva and met those who work in humanitarian organisations. He met people who work at the International Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders, and the need to write a text through the prism of intimacy was born. Inspired by their accounts, this show exposes the dilemmas of these committed men and women who come and go between troubled areas of intervention and a peaceful “home”. Dans la Mesure de l’Impossible is made up of stories of men and women who fight every day for a better world, knowing that they will not change it. They continue to work to stall for time before the worst happens.

Production Comédie de Genève

With the help of the ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross and MSF – Doctors Without Borders

Duration 2h/Recommended age 14+

Show in French, English and Portuguese/Surtitled in English and French

The text has been published by Les Solitaires Intempestifs.

Created on 1st February 2022 at Comédie de Genève (Main Auditorium).

Tour 2023-2024
23 - 24 June 2023 Sibiu International Theatre Festival (RO)
13-22 July 2023 Festival d’Avignon (FR)
11 - 14 August 2023 Edinburgh International Festival (UK)
10-11 January 2024 MAC, Créteil (FR)
18-20 January 2024 Théâtre-Sénart, Scène nationale (FR)
24-25 January 2024 Château Rouge, Scène conventionnée Annemasse (FR)
21-22 February 2024 Le Rive Gauche, Scène nationale de Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray (FR)
1 March 2024 Théâtre Le Reflet, Vevey (CH)
12-15 March 2024 Grand T de Nantes (FR)
4-5 April 2024 Châteauvallon-Liberté, Scène nationale (FR)
17-25 April 2024 Culturgest, Lisbon (PT)

Available on request 2024-2025
Available for touring

Entre chien et loup

Based on the film Dogville by
LARS VON TRIER

CHRISTIANE JATAHY
(Switzerland – Brazil)

With each project, Christiane Jatahy invents original stage sets that address issues of boundaries, whether intimate, formal or geographical. The interweaving of Brazilian current events and Lars von Trier’s Dogville augurs a fertile playground for this artist whom Comédie de Genève has been following for three seasons.

Entre chien et loup tells the story of young Graça who flees modern-day Brazil in search of a better place. A small community, all “good” people, welcomes her with open arms. But the intruder quickly polarises the group’s desires, jealousies and frustrations, and an unhealthy chain of events is set in motion which everyone becomes a part of.

Life on the stage, which blends theatre with cinema, turns into a relentless human laboratory. The sly seeds of identity and behavioural deviances that oppress the hunted individual then begin to emerge. Looking away is a form of cowardice, but repeating history is not a fatality. Graça runs away from fascism and, without realising it, throws herself into its arms, like a being who journeys, determined, towards her tragic destiny. It could happen anywhere in the world, but it is happening here and now in this fictional place that looks awfully like our own reality.
"It’s back to the beginning. A text, an actress. An actress in the centre. So there’s an actress in the centre of a circle. About thirty/forty chairs arranged in a circle. A closed room. Light in the room. Like one of those talking groups. The audience enters and sits down. She’s among them/us. And she’ll speak first and tell a story. Without stopping. There’s nothing but an ordinary room, just her own accessory, a telescopic broom for cleaning windows, her working tool. Which is placed against a wall, and which she’ll point to on a few occasions. She speaks, sometimes apologising for her tiredness, like a ‘live’ confession that blurs reality a little. As if the actress was stopping and apologising for her tiredness as an actress. This set-up highlights the character’s asperities and contradictions. She gets mixed up, goes back, asks – indirectly – for our help and empathy. We’re with her because we’re naturally – and truly – with her in everything she says. Everything she says is aimed at the end. Careful, she says at the end, as if to warn us that what’s happening to her – the social exclusion, the extreme confusion – could also happen to us.” (Denis Maillefer, October 2021)

In September 2019, *Perdre son Sac* was presented at Comédie de Genève in a sophisticated set design by Laurent Junod and Marie Bürgisser-Jacquier. More than two years later, Denis Maillefer has brought the project back to life by imagining it in a new circular set design.

The show can be presented in any closed space in which there are forty or so round chairs. It can be performed in the public spaces of a theatre as well as in unconventional venues for cultural outreach projects.
Following the model of the great lyric songs and authors who have marked her life, such as Duras and Eluard, Rébecca Balestra sought to write words that would speak to the broken hearted. These words have become poems, and *Olympia* compiles eleven of them, accompanied by a Steinway and orchestral music.

These texts are apologies for banality, the common denominator of all our lives. The director/writer seeks to enhance the everyday, to find the funny, the tragic, and the beautiful. To find the big in the small. Moths in flour, works on the main road: these things in life become huge because in the end they are all we have and they are all that counts, because they bring us together.

Like a pop concert, the words and stories in each tune shine and are brought to the fore. Balestra seeks a cathartic virtue in her writing and on the stage. The same virtue that can be found in Dalida’s *Je Suis Malade*, which almost helps us to purge sadness and to find light again by plunging into the shadows.

In *Olympia* we are in a theatre, in a dream, in the night. A night that one would go through to the very end in order to see more clearly, as when the eyes get used to the dark. Like after a drunken evening that has become night and then morning, a morning of staying together and watching the sun rise over us while the rubbish trucks pass by.
Program season 2023-2024

One Song - Histoire(s) du Théâtre IV
MIET WARLOP / IRENE WOOL & NTGENT
Co-produced with La Bâtie – Festival de Genève
● 31.08 – 02.09.2023

Mitten wir im Leben sind / Bach6Cellosuiten
ANNE TERESA DE KEERSMAEKER & JEAN-GUIHEN QUEYRAS / ROSAS
Co-produced with La Bâtie – Festival de Genève
● 05 – 07.09.2023

The Romeo
TRAJAL HARRELL
Co-produced with La Bâtie – Festival de Genève
● 15 – 16.09.2023

Chœur des amants
TIAGO RODRIGUES
● 04 – 15.10.2023

Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead (Sur les ossements des morts)
SIMON MCBURNEY
Based on Olga Tokarczuk
● 12 – 21.10.2023

Un ennemi du peuple
ERIC DEVANTHÉRY
By Henrik Ibsen
● 02 – 11.11.2023
Coproduction

The Confessions
ALEXANDER ZELDIN
● 08 – 12.11.2023
Coproduction

La Belle et la bête
LUDOVIC CHAZAUD
Co-produced with Théâtre Am Stram Gram
● 17 – 25.11.2023
Coproduction

Out of Context - for Pina
ALAIN PLATEL
● 21 – 23.11.2023
Coproduction

Il s nous ont oubliés
SÉVERINE CHAVRIER
Based on Thomas Bernhard
30.11 – 02.12.2023
Coproduction

Nous ne sommes plus...
TATIANA FROLLOVA / KNAM THÉÂTRE
● 07 – 16.12.2023
Coproduction

The Game of Nibelungen
LAURA GAMBARINI & MANU MOSER
● 09 – 17.01.2024
Coproduction

Monster Truckiller
ISUMI GRICHTING & CHRISTIAN CORDONIER / CIE
YOU SHOULD MEET MY COUSINS FROM TCHERNOBYL
● 17 – 20.01.2024
Coproduction

Ça tombera pas plus bas
ALENKA CHENU & AMÉLIE VIDON / CIE
ALORS VOILÀ
● 24 – 27.01.2024
Coproduction

Rêve d’automne
DENIS MAILLEFER
By Jon Fosse
● 18 – 28.01.2024
Coproduction

Chapter 3: The Brutal Journey of the Heart
SHARON EYAL & GAL BEHAR / L-E-V
● 02 – 03.02.2024
Coproduction

Andromaque
STÉPHANE BRAUNSCHWEIG
By Jean Racine
● 08 – 14.02.2024
Coproduction

Foucault en Californie
LIONEL BAIER
Based on Simeon Wade
● 08 – 16.02.2024
Coproduction

EXTRA LIFE
GISÈLE VIENNE
With Festival Antigel – Genève
● 21 – 24.02.2024
Coproduction

Welfare
JULIE DELIQUET
Based on Frederick Wiseman
● 06 – 09.03.2024
Coproduction

Violence Forest
NINA NEGRI
● 19 – 23.03.2024
Coproduction

Dominique A & L’OCG
DOMINIQUE A & L’ORCHESTRE DE CHAMBRE DE GENÈVE
With the collaboration of the OCG
● 26 – 28.03.2024
Coproduction

Pile ou face
COLLECTIF CLAR
Based on Catherine Colomb
● 19 – 20.04.2024
Coproduction

Kantik
PERRINE VALLI
With Migros Culture Percentage Dance Festival Steps
● 25 – 28.04.2024
Coproduction

Territoires
MATHILDE MONNIER
With the Fête nationale de la danse
● 05.05.2024

Neandertal
DAVID GESELSON
● 22 – 26.05.2024
Coproduction

Il n’y a que les chansons de variété qui disent la vérité (nouvelle génération)
ALEXANDRE DOUBLET
● 29.05 – 08.06.2024
Coproduction
COMÉDIE DE GENÈVE

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