

Illustration: Laurence Sahliat - jylbun@yahoo.fr

Via Verde Company presents

# The Tree

A musical and visual show with puppets  
For everybody from 3 years  
and older

[cieviaverde.wordpress.com](http://cieviaverde.wordpress.com)

With the support of Theater Ici&Là Mancieulles and the city of Thionville

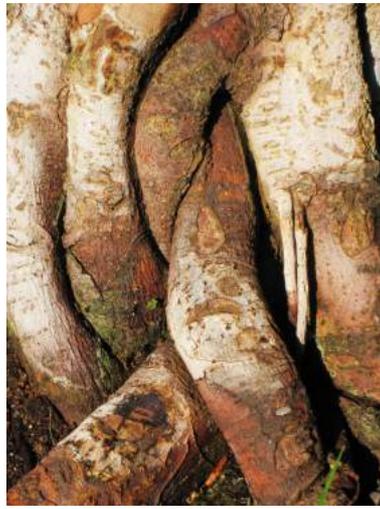
# The Tree

This new creation from the company Via Verde addresses a young audience as well as adults who still like dreaming, climbing trees and building huts. A bubble where it would be nice just to sit, breathe, feel the wind on the cheeks, sleep outside under the moonlight. An invitation to travel to a place where everyone likes to withdraw and escape the nonsense and agitation. Visual theater, sensations, intuitive understanding, where children and adults let their imaginations escape.

Organic and dreamlike  
an ephemeral story  
at the foot of  
a millennium tree



# The origins of the project



It begins  
In a greenhouse  
One thousand plant species  
The rhythm of the seasons  
The first daffodils  
Heather Season  
Taking care of the living  
Heat and water  
Real thrills  
Childhood memories  
A possible branching  
Between the plant and the spectacular  
Cultures mingle



Forgotten bonsais  
Puppet trees  
A second life  
**Out of scale**

...

At the bottom of a greenhouse / **At the edge of a continent**  
A miniature tree / **A tree monument**  
between 10 and 15 years old / **between 1000 and 1500 years**  
**old**  
80cm / **8 m high**

dreamed scenography  
unusual puppetry setting  
a musical fable  
without speech  
finding narrative sensations  
and musical images



Bonsai : Noun. Origin: japanese. Meaning "tree in a pot"  
Plant becomes a natural sculpture over time,  
refined, the delicate architecture, modeled by  
the hand of man in homage to nature.

# Synopsis

A calm sea.  
A sleeping child in a boat adrift  
stranded on a strange island, where there stand a gigantic tree,  
as a reassuring presence, serene and unchanging. A millennium tree.  
The child smells things, climbs, plays so much that he doesn't see his boat  
drifting away.  
And soon the wind picks up, the sun vanishes and the dream island becomes  
an enigma.  
What journey must he take to allow him to return?

On stage:  
a puppeteer  
a child  
an island  
a tree  
a boat  
soft and green  
foam  
stars  
silhouettes  
roots  
dragonflies  
buds  
wind  
Melodies, arpeggios  
and silences.



# Directing & Musical work

The staging of the show was developed parallel to the musical creation.  
The journey of the character is completely set in music  
as a symphonic tale.

A puppeteer moves around the tree.  
The child's puppet is handled "directly".  
Aesthetically refined, it measures about 15 cm.

The entire scenery was built around the tree, looking for areas to play  
according to its different levels: roots, trunk, branches, tops and beyond.

Darkness is required to operate different lighting effects (shadow puppet  
silhouettes, reflections ...)

The performance space integrates the technical elements (sound and light  
scattering)  
so as to be independent. A technically simple form, so that it can be played in  
non-equipped spaces.

The duration of the show is 30 minutes.  
This is a creation triad: two puppeteers and a composer worked together from  
the first improvisations. The sound style came step by step, in tune with  
what was drawn on stage.



# About the music

by Marc Bernay Di Clemente  
Composer and performer

## The function of music in the show

No character, no storyteller speaks in *"The Tree"*: the music becomes the narrator of the story. A show without words, addressing the intuitive and sensitive understanding of the spectator. Constantly interacting with what is shown in the scene, the music opens as well as prolongs the emotion generated by the various moments of the plot, and strongly contributes to the rhythm of the story. Depending on the location, the compositions foreshadow an event; or accompany its eclipse, chant the movements and the actions of the characters, are colors that complement the visual with the piano, and suggest what is not shown. The show is based strongly on the suggestive power of music.

## The choice of instrumentation

Throughout *"The Tree"*, the only instrument that is heard is piano. Considered for some time, for its variety of colors, the orchestra was found to be inadequate for the aesthetic of the show, in all its simplicity and economy; therefore it was disinclined to be embodied in lush or heavy sounds. The choice of piano is associated with a certain ideal of diagram; its use in the vast majority of compositions promotes velvety or crystalline tones and marries the intimate dimension of the show. One sole instrument to suggest subtle emotions, not to grossly highlight and illustrate; to express the loneliness of a child no human presence, surrounds or comforts. The piano as a world itself; polyphonic resources appearing together with the landscape and the beings who inhabit it.

# Musicals inspirations

The choice of the piano can not be detached from its historical heritage. In "*The Tree*", it was the election of a certain design and use of a piano; a pianism inherited by many composers who approached it as a ground to translate their own imaginary exploration of landscapes. In a Romantic like Schumann, the piano was given the task of expressing any extra-musical reality that drew on well in his fantastic reading that in his vision of nature. A highly fecund approach to the music for a show, where the presence of a tree is the source of wonderful scenes. Franz Liszt, meanwhile, is an unsurpassable model when it comes to finding the musical translation of a sound produced by nature. The sea around the island, the drifting of the boat, the lapping sound that is imagined with running aground, were thus evoked by nostalgic harmonies imitative of *water games at the Villa d'Este* by a Hungarian composer - especially in how the water element is simulated with a liquid crystalline and the uses of high register of the piano. Finally, Claude Debussy, whose very titles, *The terrace of moonlight hearings*, *What the west wind has seen*, and *Footprints in the snow*, are invitations to let the sounds crystallize images in our interiority. The evocative power of his 'prints' or his 'Preludes', which combine art of a colorist, taste of mystery, and a keen sense of depiction of characters, are fed in-depth pieces that accompany the child in this discovery of a sometimes worrying, sometimes playful place, and the beings who inhabit it.

Marc Bernay Di Clemente



## Artistic team

### Isabelle Buzac

Actress trained at the Cours Florent in Paris and at the Conservatoire National de Région de Metz, she works with the company Via Verde as a performer, puppeteer and intervener. She has developed a pedagogy adapted for, and a sensitivity towards, a young audience. She co-wrote the stage and is one of two actors in the show, alternating with Pascale Toniazzo.

### Marc Bernay-Di Clemente

Composer and classical guitarist, he was trained, among others, by Frederick Bergeret at the National Conservatory in Metz. He composed some sixty pieces for guitar, some of which were performed at the International Festival of Hondarribia (Spain) in 2005 and currently continues to work towards creating music for the stage. He interprets particular compositions in "Grammar is a sweet song," (Puppet theater show written by Erik Orsenna and "Herakles" (creation 2012 of the Via Verde Co., inspired by Heiner Müller) Mark Bernay-Di Clemente does not write the traditional way. His technique of composition oscillates between intuitive production and systematic review. It seeks to exploit the potent of polyphonic guitar and imagine complex developments, while interweaving harmonic droughts and softer melodic lines. In addition to his writing for the guitar, he is interested in the expressive possibilities of electronic music composed entirely from samples.

# Pascale Toniazzo

Trained at the INSAS (Institut National Supérieur of Performing Arts) in Brussels Theatre Layout section scene, she began in 2003 as an actress-puppeteer with the Karromato company from Prague (Czech Republic). Fascinated by the narrative possibilities of puppetry in dialogue with other artistic disciplines, she participated in various projects as a designer, puppeteer and director. Having graduated with a Master Expertise and Cultural Mediation, she is also interested in issues of mediation and artistic transmission.



# Via Verde company

Artistic project

When inanimate seizes life

The performance of humanity by the puppet moves us. Strange identification and a distance perspective that tells of the man. The illusion of a breath, and our imagination gets carried away. Other perceptions are made through a new prism. A movement that brings about something unexpected, beyond words. The gesture is obvious.



*"Learning to be touched by beauty, a gesture, a breath, not only by what is said and in what language. Immediately perceive what we know. Must be judged without knowing"*

Pina Bausch

Speaking without words. Another language in the art of puppet dialogue with sound spaces, and a visual and plastic style. A sensitive exploration in which the puppet has the ability to all suggest.

Feel and make sense

*"Every impulse of my mind starts in my blood"*

Rainer Maria Rilke

Emotions are the basis of our thinking, they are the compass of our perceptions. Emotion and reason are intimately linked. Feel, in order to understand, an experience that provides performances that question contemporary issues. The puppet allows a thought-provoking distance. But it also causes a universal emotion, as we let go to animism. A fascinating alchemy of intuition and intellect. And a place of endless exploration.

# Support

This show has been supported by the Theatre Ici&Là of Mancieulles (France), on the occasion of a residency for three weeks in May 2013.  
It has been shown more than 100 times in primary schools, festivals, theater...

## Datasheet

A show without words for all public, from 3 years old

Public: up to 40 people in an unequipped place  
Maximum 100 people if terraced

Duration: 30 min

Minimum space required: 4m width minimum  
3m depth minimum  
2,5m height minimum

### Technical requirements

2 grips 16A 220V independents  
Autonomous technical installation light and sound  
Obscurity required

Installation time: 2:00

Dismantling time: 1 hour

Time required between two performances: 1h

### Estimation of the costs:

Round trip transport from Thionville (France)  
+ Meals and accommodation for two person

Musical compositions of the show are filed with SACEM. Operating costs are the responsibility of the organizer.

Workshops and meetings with the audience before and after the show are possible. Contact us.

### Mentions:

Created and Directed by: Isabelle Bernay and Pascale Toniazzo  
Interpretation (alternating): Isabelle Bernay and Pascale Toniazzo  
Composition and Music Performance: Marc Bernay Di Clemente  
Lighting creation: Thomas Brouchier  
Technical device: Damien Camus  
Photo credits: Via Verde Co.

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La compagnie Via Verde bénéficie du dispositif régional de Résidence de Recherche au Théâtre Gérard Philipe de Frouard- Scène conventionnée pour la marionnette et les arts associés- pendant 3 ans (2017-2018) puis au Jardin Parallèle de Reims (2019-2020)

#### Partners

Théâtre Ici & Là – Action Culturelle du Pays de Briey – Mancieulles (54) // Théâtre Gérard Philipe – scène conventionnée pour les arts de la marionnette et les formes animées – Frouard (54) // Espace Culturel Pablo Picasso – Homécourt (54) // Bords 2 Scènes à Vitry le François (51) // Trois-CL Centre de Création Chorégraphique du Luxembourg (Luxembourg) // Région Grand Est // Conseil Général de Meurthe-et-Moselle (54) // Établissement Régional d'Enseignement Adapté Hubert Martin (Briey – 54) // Ville de Thionville// Le jardin parallèle – Reims.



