

The Waltz of Hommelettes

Directed by Patrick Sims

Loosely based on the Elves by the Brothers Grimm

Puppets Show
Young audience from 6 years old



Production/ Les Antliacastes
The Antliacastes is helped by the DRAC Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

« If you want that your children are intelligent, read them fairy tales.
If you want that they are more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.”
Albert Einstein

K'SAMKA Production : Karinne Meraud tel : +33(0)6 11 71 57 06
email : karinne@ksamka.com
www.ksamka.com



Patrick Sims

Direction, design, puppets, performance and puppets manipulation

Josephine Biereye

Masks, costumes, puppets

Richard Penny

Puppets, designer, performance and puppets manipulation

Karine Dumont

Sound creation, designer,

Sophie Barraud

Lighting creation

Voice Over

Monique Brun/Olivier Francfort

With

Joséphine Biereye,

Patrick Sims,

Richard Penny.

Stage Manager : Sophie Barraud

Before the spectator hangs a giant cuckoo clock from the black forest. Like all fairytales, this one is told like clockwork, literally through a special clock-ferrique, crazy, maybe even broken. Hijacked by a band of elves.

The clock displays all of the typical features of the clocks from this mythical region with the exception of a few noteworthy differences.

This clock has an extra hour!

In this frozen time elves can tinker with the affairs of humans in ambivalent ways.

Typically, these clocks house numerous automata and mechanical figurines that depict traditional daily routines from of the people from this region.

In one window is a cobbler's workshop which sets the scene for the tale of The Shoemaker and the Elves.

On the other side, a factory.

There is a servant girl who sweeps out of the house the ordures of the day. She sweeps and sweeps not knowing one day she will become an elf's Godmother...

A mother bird spins her wool into a nest as the story unwinds...

A rabbit outfitted with horns lurks curiously the clock, he is hunting cuckoo birds.

This clock strikes thirteen.

The elves dance.



Interview with Patrick Simes realized by Claudine Bocher.

In this show, you leave to the exploration of three tales of Grimm. you can explain us this choice?

Since a very young age I found the Grimm's Fairy Tales to have a force within them that are unlike others. They can be fantastical, logical, absurd, comic, cruel all at the same time. I love their folkloric imagery, their mixture of Christian and pagan themes, and their alchemical symbolism. Their matter-of-fact tone and their simplicity in language speak of morality as well as basic codes of everyday society and its taboos. These tales contain a logic close to that of the child, a rationale which can function to expose the hypocrisy of adult logic. The tales cut straight to the bone. Life for the people in the times of these tales was brutal. Starvation was everywhere and often an extra mouth to feed became a matter of life and death for the rest of the family. These tales, often told alongside spinning and other chores were far more than entertainment. The way Disney portrays the Grimm Tales could not be further from the way in which the Grimm's attract me. These tales also teach basic survival skills!

I chose the Grimms « Elves. » to perform. There are three short stories within this chapter, all relating to the exploits of a band of elves who interact in different ways with mankind, and who are themselves from nature. Mankind and nature here are treated as opposite forces. The dialogue between dominant religion and folk wisdom, called superstition by the latter, is at the heart of these tales. For me these tales both open up the mind to dreaming but also teach show how to live with a clean conscience, helpful for dreaming.



In both tales, elves come to disturb the order of the things... as often in yours shows. Isn't it the central theme of the waltz of the hommelettes?

The central theme within this show is the Elves behaviour. The Waltz of the Hommlettes is an Elf Dance performed by a band of elves who live inside a giant cuckoo clock. The elves are born from the eggs ejected by the baby cuckoo. If you want to make an Hommelette, you have to break a few eggs. LACAN

Substitutions and kidnappings frequently occur within the clock, which becomes a kind of zone of exchange EGGSCHANGE.

A cuckoo bird parasites another mother bird's nest

The elves steal a healthy baby and replace it with a stump

The cobbler and his wife exchanges with the elves in a healthy way.

The elves exchange with nature in a healthy way, and sometimes with man in a diabolical fashion.

You must be correct with them or else....

The castelet of the show is like a giant cuckoo clock , the mother bird uses a spindle to spin the wool, so many elements which belong to a world which the children don't know any more. A source of imagination for you? For the children?

The cuckoo clock, as well as being a site of exchange, also represents time itself, to which the elves can manipulate time. They can speed it up, slow it down, go backwards, stop it or even make it go side where and nowhere. The horned rabbit is a cuckoo hunter who tries to kill the time, an oppressive time.

This clock goes up to 13, the hour in which the elves can interact with the terrestrial sphere without being noticed. This clock becomes a portal for the elves into the world of mankind.

The clock moves on mechanically, like the tale- long silences are broken with eruptions from within the clock. The cuckoo reveals himself and disappears. Windows and doors flash open and closed, revealing and taking away scenes from everyday life and fantasy lore... mixing the dream realm with the waking.

The clock is modeled on black forest cuckoo clocks from Germany, near the birthplace of the brothers grimm. The scene depicts a cozy home in a dark forest. Acorns, walnuts, pine cones scatter about alongside hunting trophies, bee hives and bird's nests.

On one side of the clock there is a shoemaker's shop, on the other side there is a brewery.

A kind mother bird has made her home here. She is spinning wool for her nest, the trademark chore within all Grimm's tales.

We feel a particular attention in the realization of the masks of the characters. Of real hairs for the father rabbit, the real feathers for the mother bird, the faces of another time....



I wanted the masks of the shoemaker and his wife to be kind, noble, poor and a little batshit crazy. Their overly large heads make them seem elfish and childlike as well. Given the small size of the stage, when they appear from inside they arrive as giants, upsetting proportions. The mother bird and the jackalope (a rabbit with antlers) are very realistic. I wanted there to be an animal presence holding the story together. The play of the animal heads with human bodies illustrates this dichotomy of nature or animal with the human, sometimes seeming more animal othertimes more « civilized. » The masks are made of natural materials such as bone, antler and fur- permitting them to set well within the nests, the taxidermy and hunting trophies gathered around the clock. The animal personalities are easily identifiable and are on the side of the child.

Not a lot of texts in the show but a very rich sound track. Can you speak to us about your musical choices?

The main music was composed by Moondog for the elf dance. Moondog was a roaming, mystic and blind poet who lived in the streets of New York. He was dressed in Viking, in the angle of the two busy streets of Manhattan. We discovered very late that he was in fact a fantastic composer. I choose his music to support the elves because it evokes faithfully their dance into the forest -at the same time cheerful and malefic, misleading and believer, innocent and nevertheless carrier of a wisdom which transcend ages. For me the music of Moondog represents these heathen epics of the Scandinavian mythology. Another music theme of "The Waltz of Hommelettes" comes from Adolf Wolfi, an artist who lives the largest part of his life in a psychiatric hospital of Bern, between the 19th and the 20th century. He hid the partitions of the music that he composed inside his paintings which he ordered accurately -as the small nests inside a Swiss Clock - by suturing them of details, in

the point to see the illustration of the « *horror vacui* », the fear of leaving an empty space on the canvas.



The soundtrack arranged by Karine Dumont, mixes these pieces with tricks-taps of clock, singings of birds, noises of elves busy, crackles of eggshells, glass ringings... The sound atmosphere of elvish times!

Patrick Sims / Les Antliaclasses

Les Antliaclasses are a puppet theatre company based in Maillet, France. The company is under the direction of Patrick Sims, founder and former creative director of Buchinger's Boot Marionettes. Les Antliaclasses use a unique blend of puppetry techniques and styles, masks, machines, and original organic soundtracks. The primarily wordless performance moves ahead fluidly through its countless surprises and often violently contrasting images. In Hilum, there are many references to classical, popular, hermetic and contemporary-visual and performing arts, music, cinema and literature. They are all delicately balanced in a highly original way that often eludes verbal interpretation.

Patrick Sims (b.1975, Vermont USA) has been a practicing puppeteer for the past 16 years. He first became involved with puppets whilst studying film and animation at Middlebury College, USA. He has worked with Bread and Puppet Theatre, studied shadow puppetry in Java, and pursued a Phd at Trinity College Dublin with a thesis on the 'Pataphysics of the Puppet, Alfred Jarry and the inhuman performer. For 5 years he was the artistic director, writer, puppet-maker and puppeteer for Buchinger's Boot Marionettes. He is currently artistic director of Les Antliaclasses with whom he is engaged with several projects, including film, theatre, installations, music, and a multimedia electronic opera. His next project is being researched and developed with the support of La Chartreuse, Le Centre National d'Ecriture des Spectacles, Villeneuve lez Avignon.

Antliaclasses Creations

Hilum - 2010

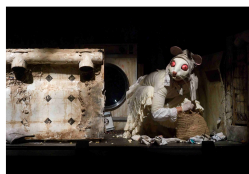


Photo Jean-Pierre Estournet

The old Man and the Mountain - 2012

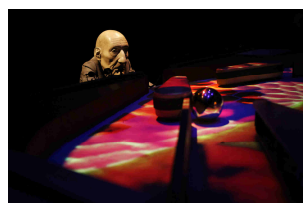


Photo Mario del Curto

Acting Bug - 2013

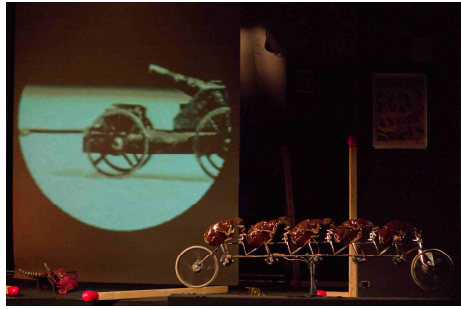


Photo Jean-Pierre Estournet

Here lies Shakespeare - 2015



Photo Jean-Pierre Estournet

The Waltz of Hommelettes - 2016



Photo Jean-Pierre Estournet

Technical Rider

Audience capacity : 100

1 hour

Sale cost (Possibility of 2 performances/day)



Photos : Jean-Pierre Estournet

Dimensions : 6m * 6m * 3,70 m

Food and accommodation Per Diem: 4 persons on tour.

Set transport: mileage allowance for vehicle.

Transportation of persons: train 2nd class

Company will arrive 1 days before performance (evening).

Setting up: Following day, on the morning.

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Contact Production : Karinne Méraud

Tél. +33 (0)5 53 29 47 42 - Mobil +33 (0)6 11 71 57 06

kmeraud@sfr.fr - www.ksamka.com