

MIXTURE est un laboratoire initié par Charlotte Blin et Julien Mellano, qui propose à d'autres artistes un terrain de rencontre et d'expérimentation collective autour de la place des objets dans les processus d'écriture pour la scène.

MIXTURE est un format à géométrie variable, allant d'un duo à un plus large groupe d'artistes le temps d'une résidence. Cette rencontre est associée à la réalisation d'une édition pour explorer les manières de traduire graphiquement et visuellement une expérience vivante et éphémère.

MIXTURE is a laboratory initiated by Charlotte Blin and Julien Mellano, offering other artists a platform for meeting and collective experimentation on the place of objects in the process of writing for the stage.

MIXTURE is a variable-geometry format, ranging from a duo to a larger group of artists for a short residency. This meeting is combined with the production of an edition to explore ways of graphically and visually translating a living, ephemeral experience.

MIXTURE n°1

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MIXTURE n°1 ne tient absolument pas compte des règles du jeu énoncées dans le MIXTURE n°0, mais comme MIXTURE est un espace de création collective libre, ça tombe bien.
L'édition du présent numéro fait suite à la rencontre qui a eu lieu à Rennes du 17 au 21 juillet 2023.
Avec : Alice May Cooper et Charlotte Blin
Design graphique : Vincent Menu
Dessins : Grimm

MIXTURE n°1 takes absolutely no account of the rules of the game set out in MIXTURE n°0, but as MIXTURE is a space for free collective creation, who cares?
This issue follows on from the meeting residency held in Rennes from 17 to 21 July 2023.
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Drawings : Grimm

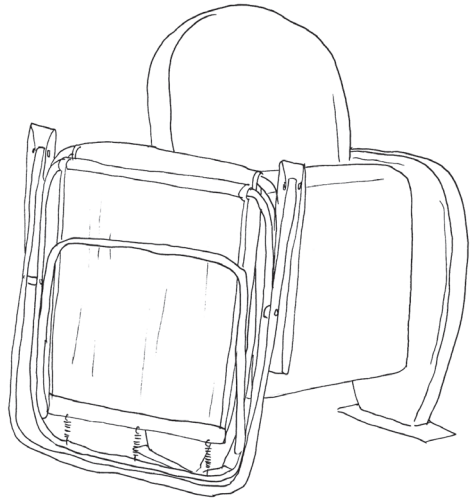
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La résidence d'Alice Mary Cooper à Rennes était soutenue par Playwrights Studio Scotland, dans le cadre de l'aide au projet. La tournée de *The Bush* était soutenue par Creative Scotland.

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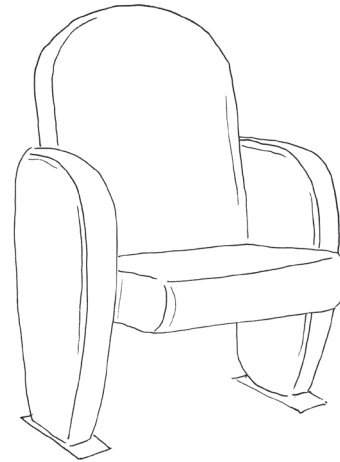
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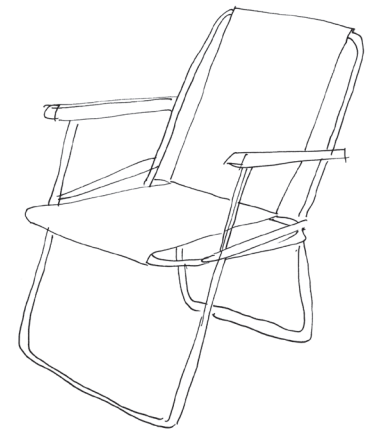
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Wow! You were touring by bike and train around Scotland?



Yes, I did-it! And survived!



Charlotte Blin

Co-directrice artistique du collectif AÏE AÏE AÏE depuis 2006, elle crée à quatre mains avec Julien Mellano les spectacles *Beastie Queen*, *Ma Biche et Mon Lapin*. Ils collaborent depuis régulièrement ensemble sur leurs projets respectifs, où l'écriture et la scénographie sont étroitement liés. Elle commence à mettre en scène des projets plus personnels avec *Soufre* (2012), une libre adaptation de *La petite marchande d'allumettes* d'Andersen, puis propose une version miniature de la guerre de Troie avec *Fulmine* (créé au Quai, CDN d'Angers Pays de la Loire) et vient de réaliser *Muesli*, (FMTM, Charleville-Mézières). À travers l'écriture et la manipulation d'objets simples, Charlotte Blin pose un regard amusé et émouvant sur la relation des êtres humains à leur environnement. Ses spectacles sont diffusés sur de nombreuses scènes en France et en Europe. On a pu les voir récemment entre autres dans le cadre du Festival Mythos à Rennes (FR), Manipulate Festival à Edimbourg (UK), Festival de Otoño à Madrid (ES), OperaEstate Festival Veneto à Bassano del Grappa (IT)).

Co-artistic director of the collectif AÏE AÏE AÏE since 2006, she creates at four hands with Julien Mellano the productions *Beastie Queen*, *Ma Biche et Mon Lapin*. Since then, they have worked together regularly on their respective projects, in which writing and set designing are closely linked. She starts directing more personal projects with *Soufre* (2012), a free adaptation of Andersen's *The little match girl*, followed by a miniature version of the Trojan War with *Fulmine* (premiered at Le Quai, CDN d'Angers Pays de la Loire) and has just directed *Muesli* (FMTM à Charleville-Mezieres). Through writing and manipulation of simple objects, Charlotte Blin takes an amusing and moving look at the relationship between human beings and their environment. Her shows have been performed on a number of stages in France and Europe (most recently, among others, to Mythos Festival in Rennes (FR), Manipulate Festival in Edinburgh (UK), Festival de Otoño in Madrid (ES), OperaEstate Festival Veneto in Bassano del Grappa (IT)).

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Yes exactly. This collective experience, of how the show is designed for example, with a producer, director, designer, stage manager, production manager... brings a lot of discussion with the team about the environment - not as a general concept but in very specific ways, that forces us to consider how we do things, our process. You bring people along with you. But yeah, at the end of the day, it's funny, one of the things I've discovered doing this project is that despite the effort to carry stuff, I really like things.
The great contradiction. I like stuff. Hahaha!

Do you think you will do another project by bike?

Yeah, I do. I really hope to. I think now it's more of my, my 'go to', my reference point to travel, to tour that way, rather than to begin with the van and tour the way that you know, most companies tour, so yeah, I think I will, definitely.

Not to my knowledge. We did meet a few cyclists along the way and told them about the show. But I don't know if they came. Except one man who I met on the Isle of Mull. But I did have quite a few nice conversations with other cyclists. You feel a bit like "Oh, I'm now in the gang!". I didn't, I didn't think I was really in the cycling gang. Like I didn't know enough.

By having those experiences, *Waves* by train and *The Bush* by train and bike, you are exploring what is essential in theatre. Like saying "Wow, in fact, I love 'effects' in theatre. So I can't just perform by myself with my voice and my body, I like objects and sound". Is it like you are experiencing what is the minimum to make theatre for you?

Yeah. Yeah, I mean, definitely.

As Peter Brooke said, roughly, "Someone walks through an empty space while someone else watches, and that's all it takes for theatre to begin."

Yeah. Well, this answer might not be very satisfying, but I think it really depends on the context. How and where we meet people.

The space is never empty, but there is also, fundamentally, a poetic dimension in the meeting.

Yeah. Exactly. And yes, this artistic experience is also really nice to share with a team of people. I mean, touring by bike and train, you really need people who 'get it' and are onboard with the challenge - and not quickly defeated by systems or whatever - because it's frustrating sometimes, touring this way, cos it's not yet the common way... but then I think, or I hope by doing it - and others too - we can push and change the systems too. I like collaborating with people and learning from them and sharing ideas.

Oui, to make things collectively.

Comédienne, écrivaine, clown et metteuse en scène de théâtre, Alice Mary Cooper est née en Angleterre, a grandi en Australie et vit en Écosse. Alice Mary Cooper crée des œuvres pour tous les âges, souvent axées sur des histoires de femmes. Elle se passionne pour la prise en compte des enjeux environnementaux dans sa pratique, afin de créer un avenir plus juste et durable, idéalement en faisant sourire les gens au passage. Ses spectacles en solo, *Waves*, *The Bean Counter* et *The Bush*, ont été largement présentés, notamment au Festival international des enfants d'Édimbourg (UK) et au Festival des arts d'Auckland (NZ). Elle a récemment conçu et réalisé *Experts Radio Lab*, une émission de radio en direct où les jeunes sont les experts interrogés. Cette émission a été commandée par Imagineate et présentée au Festival Fringe d'Édimbourg, dans le cadre de Made in Scotland. Alice Mary Cooper développe actuellement un nouveau spectacle sur son amour pour Charles Aznavour. Elle est artiste associée au Magnetic North Theatre Compagny. *The Bush* se situe sur les terres traditionnelles du peuple Wallumedegal de la nation Eora. Nous reconnaissons leur lien permanent avec cette terre et ces eaux et nous rendons hommage aux anciens d'hier et d'aujourd'hui.

Actor, writer, clown and theatre maker, Alice Mary Cooper is an English born, Australian raised, Scottish based artist. Alice makes work for all ages, often with a focus on women's stories, and is passionate about using her practice to create a more just and sustainable future, ideally making people smile in the process. Her solo shows, *Waves*, *The Bean Counter* and *The Bush*, have been extensively presented, including to Edinburgh International Children's Festival (UK) and Auckland Arts Festival (NZ). Alice recently developed *Experts Radio Lab*, a live radio show where young people are the expert interviewees. It was commissioned by Imagineate and presented at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, as part of Made in Scotland. Alice is currently developing a new show about her love for Charles Aznavour. She is the Artist Employee at Magnetic North Theatre Company. *The Bush* is set on the traditional lands of the Wallumedegal People of the Eora Nation. We recognise their continuing connection to this land and waters, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Charlotte

Alice

Sure, we call it 'écriture de plateau', 'writing on stage'.

Exactly. Yeah. So and I knew that the designer I chose was someone who was fine with that way of working.

So, how are things Alice?

More than fine: excited by the challenge to conceive a set that can be transported by bike, I guess.

Oui ça va Charlotte et toi ?
Je peux garer mon vélo ?

Yeah. I think initially maybe she was less excited.

Oui ! Tu peux le mettre là. Here in the corner.

Hahaha!

Super. Yeah, well, as you know, for ages, I wanted to make this show, *The Bush*, about The Battlers for Kelly's Bush; this incredible group of Australian women who helped save a bushland where I grew up. This is them
(showing a photo)

She was definitely happy to be involved. But I think she was... it was a bit daunting, initially, to design this way, while the parameters were moving a lot. For example, I didn't quite know how to work out the rough weight that we could carry. So we had to figure that out.

When was that?

Well this was taken in the 90's but they were 'active', campaigning, trying to save the bush in the 70's. And so yes, I wanted to tour this show by bike and public transport, to echo the environmental themes of the 'story'.
Attempt a 'carbon light' production.

So the weight is very important, I guess, in this kind of touring?

Yeah, the weight is important.

And, I mean, have you done it?

Yes, I developed this project in Scotland.

And so how many kilos are you able to carry? With your own personal clothes and things. Because of course you had to carry the sets and your own luggage. This kind of question is quite standard, I guess? It has been studied, calculated already.

Wow! You were touring by bike and train around Scotland?

Yes, hahaha, though it was like an epiphany to discover we can find so much information about bike touring on the internet! We realised that we can use it, we just had to convert it into theatre touring.

Yes, I did-it! And survived!

Cycling is a whole world.

So, so how did you start it... Did you have an idea of how it would go, the design and things like that ?

It is a whole world. Yeah.

Well... ummm... where to begin... the idea wasn't just that things had to fit on the bike, I also wanted everything to be secondhand - and in the end that was true for maybe 90% of what we took.

You discover a new community. And did you meet some audience who are themselves traveling by bikes for their holidays? Did you make a show in front of that kind of audience?

Not with theatre as such, but travelling by bike, with quite a big group of people.

Ha Yes. And did you?

No.

No?

No! I mean, I cycle a lot in Edinburgh, but no, I've never had my taken my bike on holiday. No, I'd always been quite... like, like a bit afraid of needing to be really fit, how do you do it, having all the right stuff... and I think in a way, this was a way of challenging myself: "Well, if I get the funding, I will do it!"

Sure!

So it's kind of a nice... almost like you're placing a bet on yourself.

It is a very physical experience to cross Scotland by bike.

Totally, it's your body you're using as the main energy source.

So, you didn't choose this way to travel because you just love to travel by bike.

No. It was much more... I was excited by the prospect. I wanted to see if it could work. And I mean, I knew it could work based on other people's experience. Other companies who tour are like this, but -

It was a real experiment for you.

It really was. Yeah, in every way. But yeah, I think in a way, because the show was devised, it was written but also devised - you understand devised? - it is when you improvise au début après tu écrire. Oui c'est un peu comme ça on dit 'new writing'. It's a sort of evolving process. It's not like you arrive with the text déjà tout fait.

Qu'y a-t-il dans les 10% restants ? Quelles sont les choses que tu ne pouvais pas acheter d'occasion ?

Oui dans les 10% c'est le... c'est le, l'équipement pour le son, par exemple les speakers... Les petits trucs par exemple the screws -

Ha oui les vis

Les vis Oui. Ou... oui. Glue and... that's and... Yeah, often things to fix things.

Yeah like tape. Secondhand tape wouldn't work so well!

...And yes, in theatre you have to balance things with safety considerations... so 'old is good', but it also has to function well, you know, like a seat still has to be a seat you can sit on...

Oui

Yeah it was just a little, little things like tea towels... a fly SWAT

Fly Swat?

Pour la...
(mimant le fait de taper dans l'air)

Ha oui oui oui une tapette à mouche.

Oui tapette à mouche.

A brand new tapette à mouche.

But yeah, we got most things secondhand... but it takes much longer to go to the secondhand shops, to search for a specific prop or wait on an online auction, than buy new. You're also constrained by the design: the colour palette or the aesthetic. I was lucky, because the things I needed, the world we wanted to create, was 70's... so we needed Tupperware, dans orange ou brune, jaune, choses comme ça. And that was relatively easy to buy on eBay. That whole aesthetic, actually, paradoxically, has lasted since

the 70's. You know, like 'Tupperware will never die'.

In object theatre or street shows, the use of secondhand objects is also kind of an aesthetic of, like, we could say that there is a slightly artistic 'brocante' style. We try to be aware of it, and explore how to make it differently, maybe move that aesthetic in a different way. And so, how do you manage to work on this?

Yes. Yes. I think it's a lot about 'less is more' like a selection. Val, the designer, was strict about the colours. It wasn't random, every single prop was used for, for multiple things. It had to contribute to the story. It's always a question of why do you have this? Why do you have that? I remember talking with Val a lot about the aesthetic, how it had these 'pop' elements... it was generally kind of orange and brown, but then there were little 'pops' of other colors. Val has a contemporary sensibility which is great because I also didn't want it to look folksy folk like folk, folk, folk folk. Folk.

Ha oui.

Voilà.

Yeah It looks minimal, there aren't so many objects, for example, a figure with one object like the a coloured ball on the green grass.

Yeah, everything was very specifically selected.

I remember the siège pliant (folding deck chair?): it looks like a sculpture.

And also I mean, Tupperware is also quite sculptural, you know, these big, orange or yellow, tubs in different shapes. The Designer, Val, like Julien and you, has a fine art and graphic design background, so she's interested in things that blur installation and theatre.

And it was designed for the context, to be performed outdoors. So again, it had to 'pop' in an outdoor space. And we were quite determined, even though we didn't have a lot of space or weight capacity, that it didn't look like a show that had come out of a bag... Like it had to

bikes. Two different costumes. And bike clothes, padded shorts and things like water bottles, and a thermos, toiletries, things for cleaning the bike, fixing the bike, spare inner tubes. Electrolytes. My laptop, which weighs quite a lot. And snacks. Always had quite a lot of snacks.

And then for our own personal. Oh and then the props. So many props! We had the Tupperware in lots of different sizes including, you know like a cake box and an ice tub -

Sounds like kind of camping or caravanning in comfort -

Exactly! I remember a funny old man in Glasgow, he shouted out something like, "Ah, ladies, where you're going on vacation?". Because it, it did look a bit like we were, as you say, like very fancy campers. Like stupidly prepared luxurious campers,

...With very heavy equipment for holidays by bike!

(*laugh both*)

Because *The Bush* was also the story of women who were living a very equipped life?

The thing we wanted to show was a difference between the domestic world and the more natural world of the bushland. A big part of the story was that they were 'housewives' who did this amazing thing that no one expected them to do. So yeah, I think we did want to show the material world they lived in as well. Yeah, and again, Val, the designer also really liked the idea of putting all this clearly 'manmade' stuff into an outdoor setting.

One of the biggest questions was whether or not we would use a bike trailer. Because if you have a trailer, you can take more, potentially... but the limitation of having a trailer was we would have to cycle everywhere because you can't take a trailer on a train.

Hahahaha!

And also, the Stage Manager had done some bike touring before. And she felt less safe with a trailer than having things piled up.

She had experience touring by bike?

system, but it was just me arriving on public transport with some props and a laptop.

Was it satisfying?

Yeah, I think so. It's a less carbon intensive way of doing things, but it takes more time and costs money too, to source things each time and discuss them with the team at each theatre.

And did you use lighting in *The Bush*? I understand you were performing outside during the day... What I meant is, is it like a rule "we won't bring lighting so we will perform in the day"? And it changes how you meet an audience, maybe you meet a different audience depending on the time of day you perform?

Well, I mean, that was quite a big part of it, scheduling the tour. Dates had to fit our timeframe, but also, our schedule was based on the audience availability, really. So, we performed in the morning, or the afternoon, or the early evening. I mean, in summer, it's light at midnight, almost. We performed on such or such date because that was the day that the place we were performing already, basically, had an audience, because there was a lunch club or a gardening club or a volunteer session. And so that kind of already got some people there. We were really guided by the venue's team, because they knew their audience best.

Back to packing for *The Bush*: you were two, you and the Stage Manager. Could you describe your bags, how many, what weight, how it was organized...?

So we had electric bikes. We had back panniers, two of those. And then we had two front panniers. I couldn't have proper panniers because they didn't fit my bike but I had these waterproof bags that were attached with a kind funny cage thing. So, yeah. And then in the middle of the back, on the rack, we had... lots of things.

All props, a picnic basket, si ge pliant, stools, a foldable drinks trolley that had three trays, big trays, and an extra tray, two speakers, that were light but bulky. Batteries and charging cables and the charging cable for our electric

have more than just a few things. So it actually looked like a set. So for example we had a lot of discussion about taking a drinks trolley. The trolley was integral to the show, and made it look more like a set, but it's not ideal for touring on a bike... But taking a show into spaces where there aren't usually shows (community gardens for example), I was very aware of - and wanted to - 'bring the circus to town'. It's something about giving people something exciting, or something that looks like a show, not just me standing doing a speech on grass. So yeah, I suppose 'theatrical' maybe is the word... things had to be theatrical.

And as you arrived by bike, was that part of the performance too? Taking things from your bike? Or were things already set up? I was wondering, because it could be part of the performance, included in the dramaturgy?

Oui, I knew that I didn't want it to look like a 'bike show'. I'm not against bikes, obviously! There are some companies who do that, everything in the show is from the bike. But that's not what I wanted to do. I also wasn't hiding the fact that we rode there... you can see the bikes to the side of the performance space. And when I entered the 'stage', I was wearing my cycling jacket and my bike shorts. It was like "Oh yeah, I've just come off the bike". And then underneath I had my dress. That was fun, the reveal, you know, to take that off and then uncover my dress and put on my earrings, so I was 'there' (in the 70's). But I think that's the only thing... Oh and there's a line in the show where I say, it's a joke, something about what I didn't bring because "we rode here" and gesture to the bikes. So... But we were taking a show to audiences, to their (community) spaces, they were gardens and things like that... so I wanted to 'bring the theatre' with us, to this non-theatrical place. And in my head, out of some sort of respect for the audience and their space, I felt the need to bring something 'proper', something that looked and felt like theatre. I don't know if that makes sense...

You wanted to welcome them.

Yeah. Yeah. Completely.

But on the other hand, you could say they welcomed you, because you arrived somewhere, and they welcomed a show. Performing outside is always a question of what public space you are arriving in, it's somewhere people already are.

Yeah. And it was a big part of the thinking of where I went... that it was a community space, and I was being invited into that community's space. They were inviting me rather than -

Because it wasn't in the street.

Non. It was mostly in public spaces, but specifically spaces run or saved by a community, rather than a council or something private. So audiences often had some ownership over that space. It wasn't just a random park. In this way it echoes the story of *The Bush* and that was very important to me.

Mmmm.

And just on the design, it was the same story with the costume. It also had to be secondhand or vintage but also fit the story, and 'pop' outdoors, and be practical... I was also lucky with the 70's, as they were like 'plastic is fantastic': for touring this was great because everything was synthetic and easy to wash, quick to dry, lightweight, durable...

And do you refer to this in your show? This irony, that you use a lot of plastic to talk about a sustainable way to work and live?

Yeah. We put the irony in the overall design of the show, in the sense that, first I established that the playing space is bushland... and then during the show, after I use something, a prop or whatever, I throw it onto the ground... into the bush.

It's also for me a way to make pictures to open the imagination through listening, not only what you see. Also as I use a very light set, quite abstract set, sound and music play a big part.

Definitely. Definitely. Yeah. I think now you say that, I think, that was maybe one of the considerations in having more sound we didn't have a lot of stuff. Physical stuff. And so it's a kind of shorthand to, as you say, create images.

That... that, that's a real question for me, you could say "well, we want to make a sustainable show, so we will travel light weight, and so we won't use a sound system because it's too heavy to carry or because it's using energy". But sometimes I wonder whether I'd be able to work without using a sound system to consume less energy. I love so much playing with sound recordings, creating landscapes. I'm not ready to abandonner, to give up.

It's funny when you said that, I was thinking about the inverse, the opposite, to only travel with a sound system and no props, to really use the sound as much as you can, very detailed, to create the different moods. Rooms, atmospheres, so yeah maybe that's another way, in a way, to use things.

With what kind of energy? Wind up mechanisms?
Solar energy?

Yeah, again, it's always this balance between having something more sustainable and the theatrical things. I like sound and set and costume. It's not the only type of theatre but that's the theatre I like.

The perspective to make a happening with just 'you and your guitar' doesn't make sense to you.

No, no.
When I did *Waves*, in a way, that was a more even 'sustainable' show. Initially, I took public transport as I didn't carry any set. I just asked the venues to source things: a table and a chair, maybe some lights, a sound

anything with it.

Ha oui?

Yeah, but I really enjoy -

But you need materials for that, specific microphone or?

I mean, my phone is fine. I do it quite often actually. Like um, like in France. I'll be in a café and just for the ambience. It's more thinking maybe in the future, I will need the 'sound of a bar in Rennes'. You know, it's almost like just collecting the sounds and maybe in the future I will use them. The sound of being at a swimming pool or the sea side or... Yeah. But maybe it's just a way to hone in to where you are -

Hone In?

Like almost meditate on where you are a bit.

Ah: full consciousness.

Yeah, to be conscious of where you are in aural sense, when you record, you're suddenly aware of the sound in a different way. It's funny. Suddenly it's like "Oh Yeah. There is this. There is that!"

There are 'sounds of noises' in almost all the shows I made. In *Muesli* for the first time, I worked with a sound designer to take original field recordings for the show.

I think it's especially nice or useful if you're a solo performer. Because it gives you, like, something to react to.

A kind of partner.

Yeah, it is, really, really. And that was something I learned doing this other show, *Waves*. I made *Waves* without any sound. Because originally I just made it by myself. And then later, I had a sound designer. And that was quite a revelation. Suddenly, it felt like someone else, as you say, a partner on stage. That's very cool. And yeah, it does feel really nice.

Yeah!

So afterwards, it's a sort of obvious metaphor... the visual language of the dramaturgy, like the throwing away of all the things, is part of it. So yeah, we didn't explicitly talk about it, but 'litter' is everywhere, plastic everywhere.

We say 'jetable'...

Years ago, I met a woman who worked in... she said she worked in "Fast-moving consumer goods". It's an industry for things like toilet paper, serviettes, take away cups, bottles... This idea that you could use a plastic bottle for five minutes. Like it's "Fast-moving", it's got a short life.

1 000 years.

(*laugh both*)

Yeah, it's a huge life! But it's a short life with you... it's kind of terrifying when you realize.

I wrote a piece, a story about people working in a company that built these kind of "Fast-moving consumer goods", they manufactured the papillottes décoratives pour les cocktail, fireworks cocktail sticks.

Hahhh... Cool... I am fascinated by the fact that there is an industry for everything. I know, that's a very, sort of stupid thing to say. But, I often think about people who make things... particularly when I go into the, the, the, what we call them, 'random shops' with like, everything, you know, you can buy, you can buy a mask, you can... everything, everything!

So there is the secondhand solution, and today there are also many artists or people, who are thinking about mass produced objects and trying to produce or consume differently, with handmade objects. Il y a une part de fantasme je pense, mais il y a aussi une part de désir de vivre autrement. Do you intend in your next project, for example, to work without mass produced things? As a way of trying to escape this design obsolescence? I mean, in the last show we made, in *Muesli*, we paid

attention to the materials we used, there was no plastic, or very little, mainly sourced wood. And we also made some hand-crafted objects, instead of using mass produced objects - in french we would say 'objets ready-made' - which is a very different way to approach object theatre. It was interesting, but I also want to continue exploring using mass produced things, because it's a common language we share with the audience.

For me, I think a lot about the durability of objects. I suppose it's a big thing in sustainability, in sustainable design. I'm sure there's many models, like triangles of, like, what lasts a long time? Or what disappears quickly, is it biodegradable? Or, you know, like, how is the thing made? What is the residue of the object? I mean, it's a minefield, just -

But it's not only a set when you use an object in theatre, it is part of the dramaturgy, it's also a sign.

Yes.

Even if I pay attention to sustainable design, I also think about the object as a sign, the language value of things.

Yeah, completely. And, yeah, like, I don't think I would be against 'a show about plastic bags'. Sounds like a strange thing to say. But yeah, I know exactly what you mean. I think, you want to say something about society or that thing, or whatever. And if you're not using 'the thing', it's, you have to create or find like a representation of the thing. And it's different. It's not 'the' thing.

Yes, it's beginning to be an artisanal sculpture. And why not? But it's a very different way to go somewhere. And I feel I make a big, un grand détour. In *Muesli*, we are using plywood panels, it's a very iconic object in itself; the labourious manipulating of this object reminds us of the working world, and also a basic construction material. And I like this huge thin and flexible rectangle that it draws in space. It is tangible, both physical and evocative. In *Muesli* the panels become, among other things, fields, like slices of landscape...

That reminds me of the chat we had with the sound designers while making *The Bush*, that maybe there would be very little sound, or like, even no sound. This is the whole question of performing outside, you have sounds from everywhere. Sounds on the street, other people using the space... and I really wanted to have some moments of kind of quiet contemplation. We almost had to underscore those parts, like music on - not music but sounds of the Bush - or something to define the theatrical space, rather than just like if you stood outside; you're not hearing or 'seeing' silence, because there's the sounds of cars and all that: so how do you, how do you contain a space within a space that's already quite noisy, or potentially noisy?

This is also the question of choice about the material you should carry with you, a sound system with a computer, which also needs technical material, energy... What is the sound we can hear in your show? What did you decide in the end?

Yes we decided to bring a sound system. So you could hear the Australian bush environment. Little birds and rustling of trees and things. And then there was more pop poppy 70's sound... none of the sounds had words but sort of yeah, cheesy music. Cheesy, easy listening. You know? And some effects, like the background chatter of a dinner party. We very much used sound to create different scenes -

Situate.

Situate exactly.

And did you record the bush sound by yourself?

I did, originally, but then the sound designers actually found some sounds that were better, not something that they recorded. I think it was an existing recording they found.

It's a great experience to make landscape recordings.

Yeah. Yeah, I do it a lot. I love I love recording. I rarely do

All those people drawing, copying and sharing them in zines, it's something so great. I like the idea of making zines and sharing them for free. The desire to experiment, share. It's beautiful, but I don't always manage to get into them, into the details. What gives me the desire to open a zine and read it? It's in the details. The shape and the colors, typography, balance with emptiness, space... its a bit like silence. Some zines are very noisy, filled with drawing, texts, pictures... There's not much space left for the reader.

Mmmmmm Yeah. It's the same in theatre, isn't it?

Yeah.

You have to leave space for the audience. I find it hard sometimes. Again, this "really wanting to share something I feel very strongly about".

Yes, it's like you have to believe in what you are doing but not bang people over the head with it... leaving space and silence for the audience. Inviting... while allowing others to simply contemplate. Without them feeling obliged to respond immediately, to provide 'feedback'. Make space for someone to be more contemplative.

It's almost quite radical in some ways...
To give people a space to -

digest.

Yeah. And to absorb and make links for themselves. Which is quite hard to do - as a maker, sometimes - you want to give all the answers!

(laugh both)

Yes, on the otherhand I can feel worried about the fact that what I am doing is so obvious. You also have to move on "Okay, I got it, move on". That's the other side of the coin: take the time, but not all the time. It's all about rhythm.

(a car horn is heard in the distance)

Yeah, that's nice.

So it can also be different things.

Yes. I really enjoy seeing recognizable objects in shows used in different ways. I suppose I mean, using secondhand stuff is not a perfect - there is no perfect solution or way of doing things sustainably - but it's, it's maybe one of the easier ways.

We can't escape the fact that we live in mass media culture, where mass produced objects have an aura. Am I able to talk about the society we are living in, with all these significant everyday objects, if I don't use them?

Bonne question.

We have to deal with these things we don't want anymore. Hahahaha. We can no longer use objects innocently.

(both sigh)

I suggest a break?

