



BE WELL (working title)

A MUSIC-THEATRE PLAY

CLAUDINE SIMON

TEAM

PRODUCTION

Production AURIS - sound and stage production

Artistic Claudine Simon

Administration Cléo Michiels

Production : Marine Termes

PARTNERS

RECHERCHE DE PARTENAIRES EN COURS

co-production in progress :

Malraux Scène Nationale de Chambéry, Théâtre des 4 saisons à Gradignan

Residence partners : Les Subsistances (Lyon), le Théâtre des 4 saisons à Gradignan, Malraux Scène Nationale, Zef Scène Nationale Marseille

Supports : DRAC Auvergne Rhône Alpes, Ville de Lyon, production en cours

ARTISTIC TEAM

Concept, writing, composer : Claudine Simon

Performer : Vincent Dupuy, Agathe Peyrat, Claudine Simon, Manon Xardel

Texts : Marik Froidefond

Set design : in progress

Son et RIM : Max bruckert

Light design : Antoine Traver

Outside perspective : Halory Goerger

Stage management : Alix Reynier

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

IIN 2025-26

5-17 January: 2-week workshop at Les Subsistances in Lyon.

(musical device research and sound system)

Week of 15 June: Workshop with performers

19 october to 6 november : residency at Gare Franche, ZEF Scène Nationale de Marseille

In 2027:

1 week art residency February 2027 T4S Gradignan

1 week art residency april 2027 T4S Gradignan

3 weeks autumn 2027 (to be confirmed)

PREMIERE end of November 2027 or December 2027

SUMMARY

A musical theatre play for four actor-musicians and a talking piano.

Several stories intertwine as if in a dream.

The memory of a record placed in a supermarket trolley that a child listens to obsessively.

The suffering of a composer who can no longer write, but who manages to compose his second concerto thanks to hypnosis.

A piano that speaks four languages, receives strange messages, plays Rachmaninov and more.

The actions of four characters, sound effects, visual effects, plastic effects, and an omniscient 'talking' piano thwart and replay these memories.

A dream is a theatre in which the dreamer is the stage, the actor, the prompter, the producer, the author, the audience and the critic.

Carl Jung



A piano abandoned at the back of a car park.

A machine that talks, sending messages from elsewhere.

A hypnotherapy practice, a listening booth.

A hypnotist.

A supermarket trolley.

An old, cobbled-together phonograph.

Machines that serve no purpose.

Rolling loudspeakers, like walking frames.

Pipes, smoke, shadows.

Walls that move and rumble, as if traversed by underground activity.

The piano smokes, talks, makes noises: a ghost piano, a broken but desiring machine.

Four enigmatic, interchangeable characters.

Voices, languages that coexist.

Footsteps.

Ghosts, presences.

Rachmaninov.

A concerto that we shoot down with darts.

We dismantle.

We recycle.

The spirit of the play

The audience is placed in the position of a **investigator**.

They search for clues and make connections.

They navigate between incomplete stories, transforming spaces and unstable situations.

They experience moments of waiting, of silence and low action, in contact with objects, machines and bodies.

A form of **joyful melancholy** sets in.

The play is **absurd, illogical, funny**, sometimes frustrating.

It plays with misdirections, twists and turns, dead ends.

Decomposing, recomposing, reinventing.

Composing from almost nothing: the elements of the stage, a few minimal objects, sound, light.

Sound events are at the heart of this ecosystem.

They provide clues, but also red herrings.

Sounds shift the space, partitions move, the spectator moves from one place to another through listening.

A low action permeated by expectation.

A light-hearted form, where **serious questions are asked without seriousness**.

At the starting point, a childhood memory

A disc picked at random from the shelves of a supermarket, placed in a shopping trolley, listened to on repeat for a whole year.

It is Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto.

For the child, this repeated immersion in music is decisive.

To be those fingers on the piano, those hands that run, leap, grasp or touch lightly.

To be that great wave of sound that lifts, carries away, exhilarates or consoles, and never stops repeating itself.

To take refuge in it.

Les Subs, january 2026



Talking piano

The talking piano is a so-called 'Disklavier' piano, capable of playing on its own. Here, it has been designed and developed as an instrument with expanded potential thanks to computer music technology, which allows it to be controlled and pushed beyond the limits of human performance.

This machine produces gestures, sounds and rhythms that are impossible for a pianist to achieve, but above all, it is capable of speaking. The lighting design further enriches this presence: the piano becomes a noisy, talking, luminous entity, an almost living machine.

The characters interact with the talking piano through experimentation. They carry out mechanical tests, statistics and measurements that produce noise, sound and situations. Adjustments follow malfunctions; the machine is examined, calculations are made, tinkering takes place, and micromechanics visible to all are manipulated. Functions are prescribed, tested, and sometimes abandoned. Everything is done in full view, in a spirit of resourcefulness and DIY. The actors consult the piano: a relationship of dependence develops a form of compulsion.

Little by little, the play slips into a dreamlike world. Bodies are transformed and augmented: prostheses, stilts and giant hands equip the actor-dancer, whose physiology and abilities seem to be multiplied tenfold.

At the same time, the machine asserts its power. The voice that comes out of the talking piano is undoubtedly the most disturbing: at first hesitant, made up of stutters and onomatopoeia, it learns quickly. It begins to speak several languages, English, German, Russian, French, and delivers messages that are more or less comprehensible. The keys of the keyboard undulate, the pedals move on their own, a heart seems to beat.

Spirit, are you there?

The composer lies motionless, while a ghost seems to have taken over the place.

Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto

Perhaps that is what it is first and foremost: an intense, immediate, almost excessive musical power.

Music that galvanises, that provokes heightened pleasure, but which also soothes and comforts, lodging itself in a specific place in the body, a place that feels good.

How is such a machine of desire possible, when this work is said to have been written by a composer who had been dry, lacking inspiration for three years?

This contradiction opens up a space of confusion, fascination and projection.

It calls for dreams, fiction and investigation.

A work written under hypnosis

December 1900.

In his office, Dr Dahl, a Russian neurologist trained in hypnotherapy by Charcot, receives a suffering artist.

The creation of Rachmaninov's Symphony No. 1 was a failure.

Anxiety and depression set in.

For three years, he was unable to compose.

How to start writing again? How to rediscover the desire?

Should he adopt an iron discipline, as Tolstoy advises him, whose works alone continue to inspire him?

After a failed meeting with the writer, which further aggravates his catalepsy, Rachmaninov turns to hypnosis.

Session after session, accompanied by Dr Dahl, he gradually returns to composing.

Note after note, under hypnosis he writes Concerto No. 2, now considered as a masterpiece.

Beyond the biographical anecdote, the enigma remains intact and ready to inspire dreams.

What could have been said in the secrecy of that hypnosis room?

How did the doctor go about it – coach, hypnotist, medium adept at spiritualism, micro-mechanic of the soul – to understand what was wrong and get the machine running again?

Alongside the doctor's voice, what other voices echoed, conversed, and no doubt also clashed in the artist's inner chamber?



Voices

Because perhaps it is primarily a matter of voices.

Those we hear and that float through the air, those we emit, those we guess at, those we keep inside ourselves. Voices that are spoken, sung, stammered, whispered or amplified.

Voices that come out of actors' mouths, but also from pipes, traffic cones, a mobile loudspeaker with a beating heart, a homemade device, and even a piano that starts to talk on its own.

These voices encourage, exhort, whisper, soothe, sometimes admonish and berate. They speak for good or bad reasons.

Sometimes they manipulate, they speak for the sake of speaking. Sometimes they remain silent.

We don't always know who is speaking through them, or what they really want.

The set design, lighting, music and dramaturgy are all part of the same artistic gesture. The visual concept is inseparable from the dramaturgy: the space does not accompany the narrative, it produces it.

Designed in collaboration with a visual artist (discussions ongoing!), the set design is conceived as an instrument — almost a musical machine. It is less a set than a scenography-composition, where each element actively participates in the sound and temporal dramaturgy of the play.

The space is deliberately minimal: visible objects, simple materials, deliberate acoustic devices. The stage will become an autonomous ecosystem, traversed by phenomena of resonance, vibration and silence. The work will explore states of slow time, suspension and strangeness. The spectator passes through zones of emptiness, darkness and waiting.

The scenography is not illustrative, but considers space as a dramatic material in its own right. Simple but highly significant devices will allow atmospheres, tensions and narratives to emerge, without ever freezing the meaning.

Light

Light does not seek to illuminate but to reveal : shadows, uncertain presences, ghosts, altered states of perception.

A dreamlike, shifting space where one never quite sees everything, where forms emerge and then disappear, as in an altered state of consciousness. Shadows, halos and fog compose an unstable, almost breathing matter.

The talking piano is a point of condensation: it emits smoke, triggers light, speech and sound in a single gesture. The instrument becomes a source of apparitions, the driving force behind a scenic writing in which the visible and the audible contaminate each other.

IINSPIRATIONS SCENO

Director and set designer Thom
Luz



Photos from Thom Luz's shows

A minimalist stage, objects and music in balance, a scenic landscape like a living musical score

Appearances of familiar objects, repurposed or reinvented

Smoke and silhouettes, sound structures the space as much as the actors do



Photos from Philippe Quesne's shows

handcrafted reveries

poetic assemblages of objects that sculpt space



INSPIRATIONS SCENO
the director - set designer
Philippe Quesne



Photos from Miet Warlop's shows

energetic performance, incongruous objects, wild presence

Theatrical installation where objects become actors
visual narrative



TEAM

Les créations précédentes : Anatomia | Pianomachine | Un pays supplémentaire - **Site :** claudinesimon.com

CLAUDINE SIMON

CONCEPT,
CREATION SONORE

Claudine Simon is a pianist, artist and composer, developing a sound work that experiments with the lutherie and capabilities of her instrument. As a versatile musician, she has a taste for writing at the frontiers of music, dance, theatre and visual works. She trained at the CNSMD in Paris with Jean-François Heisser and Pierre-Laurent Aimard.

Her creative work focuses on the conception of performances that allows her to question her relationship with the instrument. In 2021, she created Pianomachine, a choreographed solo in which the musician-instrument relationship is replayed with a piano hybridised by machines. In 2023, at the Musica festival (Strasbourg), she created Anatomia, a sound and visual piece in which a piano and a scene from a romantic recital are decomposed.

She received support from the Fondation Beaumarchais SACD and was a prizewinner of the 'Mondes Nouveaux' programme awarded by the Ministry of Culture. Her creations are performed at the Bouffes du Nord theatre, Opera houses (Lyon, Reims, Dijon, Rouen), the Musica festival, the Printemps des Arts festival (Monte-Carlo), CNCM centres and multidisciplinary stages. In 2024, she collaborated with Jeanne Candel to create and perform Fusées, a musical theatre piece for young people and all audiences.



TEAM

AGATHE PEYRAT

ACTRESS
SINGER

Soprano Agathe Peyrat trained in classical and contemporary music from a very young age at the Maîtrise de Radio-France, then at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

Her interest in interdisciplinarity led her to projects combining theatre, opera and song. She created *Peuplements*, a choreographic piece by Flora Detraz for four opera singers, *Tarquin*, a lyrical drama for singers, actors and ball orchestra by Jeanne Candel, Aram Kebabdjian and Florent Hubert, *Où je vais la nuit*, a rewriting of Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice* and Georges Bizet's *Carmen* by Jeanne Desoubieux, *La Vallée de l'étonnement*, a contemporary opera by Alexandros Markeas directed by Sylvain Maurice, and *Sans Tambour*, a collective musical theatre creation based on Schumann's *Lieder* by Samuel Achache.

In the field of song, she accompanies herself on the ukulele, an instrument she took up in 2008, which has taken her from the streets of the Avignon Festival to the stage of the Francofolies de La Rochelle.



TEAM

MANON XARDEL

Manon Xardel is an actress.

She grew up between the corridors of the music theory classrooms at the Maîtrise de Radio France and those of the Paris metro, where she used to sing.

She continued with music whilst discovering drama at the conservatoire, then went on to train at the MC93 (Maison de la Culture de la Seine-Saint-Denis) and at the Strasbourg National Theatre School.

She co-founded the Collectif FASP, performs with the Groupe Caute and under the direction of Sylvain Creuzevault and Lorraine de Sagazan.

She has an unbridled devotion to Brittany, Pina Bausch and Heiner Müller. She would have liked to have been a clown-acrobat.



TEAM

VINCENT DUPUY

DANSEUR
COMEDIEN

Vincent Dupuy is a dancer and choreographer who trained at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. He was a 2016 Talents ADAMI laureate and participated in the revival of May B with the Maguy Marin company.

He collaborated for five years as a director and choreographer with the Arthésic company, a young contemporary theatre collective.

Since 2017, Vincent has been a dancer-performer for Hervé ROBBE, Gisèle VIENNE, and Dominique BAGOUET.

He founded Cie Atlas in September 2021 to develop his own choreographic work and staged his first creation, Infra (2024).

He continues his scientific studies alongside his training in contemporary dance and is training in Body Mind Centering, which allows him to combine scientific research and the body in motion.



TEAM

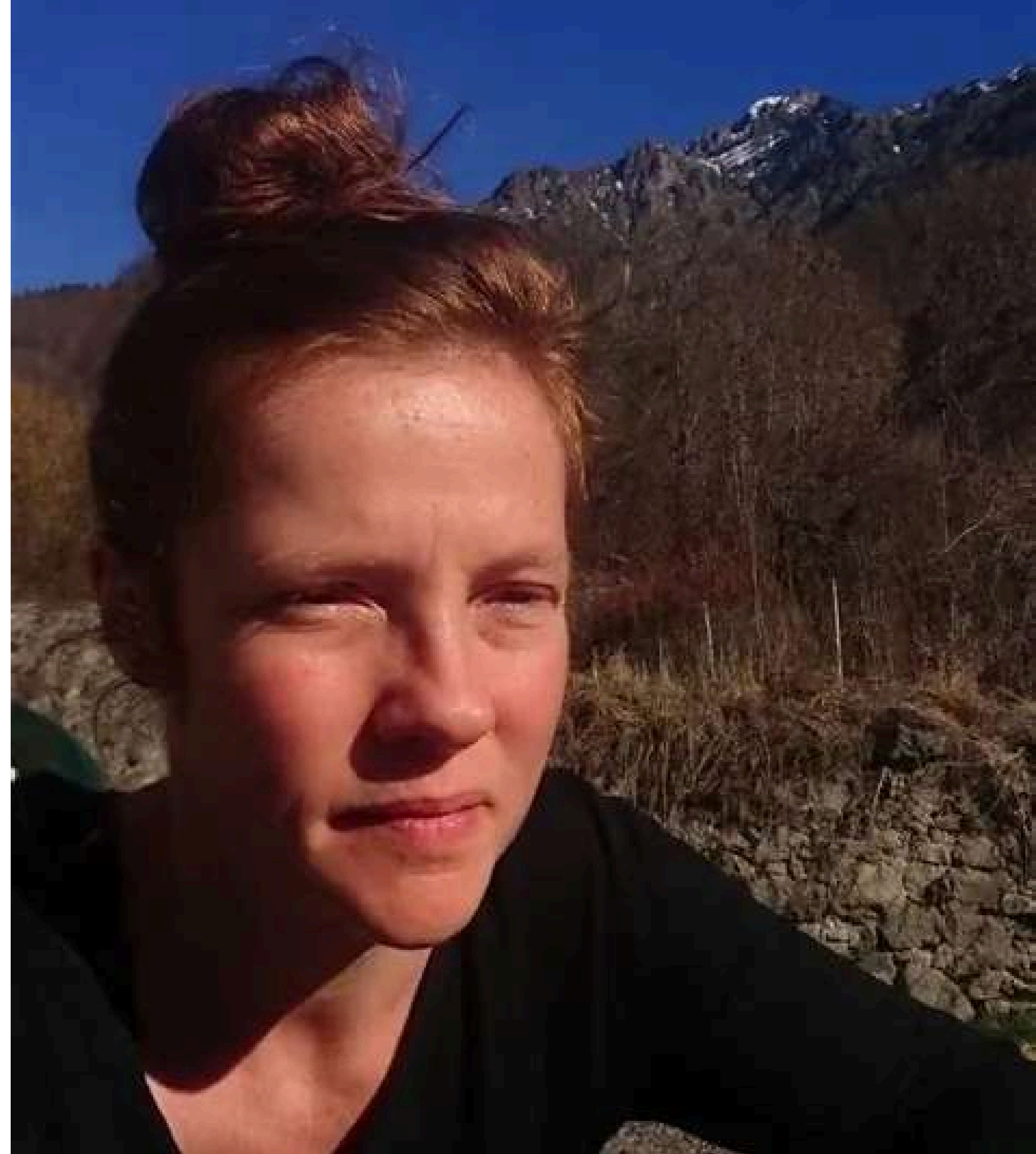
MARIK FROIDEFOND

AUTHOR

Marik Froidefond is a poet and lecturer in comparative literature at Paris Cité University, where she heads the research group 'Décentrement lyriques' (Lyrical Decentring). She is the author of a doctoral thesis entitled *Images de la suite baroque au XXe siècle. Comment les poètes partagent les fantasmes des musiciens* (Images of the Baroque Suite in the 20th Century: How Poets Share the Fantasies of Musicians).

She explores the links between modern and contemporary poetry, music and painting. This journey has given rise to several forms of writing and publications: collective academic works, including *Tombeaux poétiques et artistiques. Fortunes d'un genre* (2020), *Que reste-t-il de la beauté ?* (2015), *La Musique de Hans Zender* (2015), *Le modèle végétal dans l'imaginaire contemporain* (2014), writings on art, notably on the work of the painter Gérard Titus-Carmel: *Allées, Contre-allées* (2018), *Ecarts tracés* (2013), *Chemins ouvrant* (2014) poems and texts set to music: *Oyats* (Editions l'Atelier contemporain, 2019) is her first book of poetry.

She regularly collaborates with composers: she wrote the lyrics for Benjamin Attahir's *Nigra Sum* (2023), Yves Balmer's *Pollens. Musique d'exils* (2024) and Claudine Simon's *Fragments de piano...sur les traces d'Empédocle* (2025).



TEAM

MAX BRUCKERT

SOUND ENGINEER
RIM

Electronic musician / Computer music producer / Sound engineer

Trained as a guitarist and bassist, he alternated for a time between jazz, rock, industrial, and experimental music. He explored different modes of improvisation related to his instrument, amplified or combined with electroacoustic means. He studied instrumental and acousmatic composition at the CNR in Lyon from 1999 onwards. There, he co-founded the Kolektif Undata, which offers forms of improvised and spatialized electroacoustic music.

Since 2012, he has divided his time between sound creation, computer music production, and sound engineering for various musical ensembles and contemporary dance, theater, and circus companies.



TEAM

ANTOINE TRAVERT

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Fascinated since childhood by the technical side of performance, he trained as an apprentice technician at La Brèche, the National Centre for Circus Arts in Cherbourg.

He worked with Thomas Jolly on Henry VI at the Avignon Festival (La FabricA). He was one of the first to use automatic projectors in the theatre, which were usually used for concerts.

With Thomas Jolly, he went on to create Shakespeare's Richard III at the TNB, Le Radeau de la Méduse at the Avignon Festival, Fantasio at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, Seneca's Thyeste for the opening of the Avignon Festival, MacBeth at La Monnaie in Brussels, Romeo and Juliet at the Opéra Bastille...



TEAM

HALORY GOERGER

OUTSIDE
PERSPECTIVE

More influenced by sound poetry and non-dance than by yes-theatre, he wrote and performed his first evolving play, *Métrage variable* (2004-2011), which combines performance and augmented cinema. and *Germinal* (2012) with A. Defoort, which opened up his work to an international audience.

In 2010–2012, with France Distraction, he designed a series of installations, notably *Les Thermes*, a ball pool for adults in which he gave talks on stoicism.

In 2015, he wrote and directed a comedy about depression in space, *Corps Diplomatique*. He co-wrote a circus show, *Il est trop tôt pour un titre* (*Sujet à vif* 2016). In 2019, he ventured into musical theatre with a tribute to Morton Feldman, entitled *Four For*. He then wrote the libretto and directed an opera, *Au cœur de l'océan* (composition: Frédéric Blondy / Arthur Lavandier, direction: Le Balcon), which premiered in 2021 at the Opéra de Lille.

He now develops his projects in his company Bravo Zoulou, and collaborates extensively as a playwright, librettist and performer in various fields (theatre, music, visual arts).



TEAM

ALIX REYNIER

STAGE AND GENERAL
MANAGEMENT

Trained at ENSATT in Lyon, Alix Reynier obtained a Master's degree in Technical Direction in 2021, where she deepened her knowledge of stage, sound, and lighting languages.

An engineer by training, with a degree in vibrations and acoustics from ENSIM in Le Mans, she combines scientific rigor with theatrical intuition. Her first experiences were forged through contact with music when she accompanied groups of musicians in concert at festivals in Auvergne.

Today, as a stage manager, she pursues sensitive research into sound art, in multidisciplinary forms where the boundaries between theater, music, and space are blurred to make way for listening, gesture, and vibration.



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Sound and stage productions

AURIS is approved by the DRAC Auvergne Rhône-Alpes