

AN ADDITIONAL COUNTRY

CLAUDINE SIMON

SOUND THEATRE

**CREATION NOVEMBER 2025
PREMIERE AT OPERA DE ROUEN 29 NOV
ALL AUDIENCES AGED 6 AND OVER**

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ARTISTIC TEAM

Concept, composer Claudine Simon

Performer Claudine Simon, Max Bruckert, Alix Reynier

Set design AnneSophie Bérard

Sound and computer development Max Bruckert

Artist design Maeva Prigent

Light design and train development Antoine Traver

Outside view Vincent Dupuy

Stage and general management Alix Reynier

PRODUCTION

Production AURIS - sound and stage production

Artistic Claudine Simon

Administration Cléo Michiels ; **Production** Marine Termes

PARTNERS

Co-production : GRAME-CNCM Lyon , la POP (Paris)

Musical composition commission Ici l'onde - CNCM Dijon

Support and funding: DRAC Auvergne-Rhône Alpes, Région Auvergne-Rhône Alpes, SACEM, CNM, MMC, Spedidam **Residency**

support: MC2 Grenoble, la Pop, Grame-CNCM, Malraux Scène Nationale Chambéry, Théâtre de Vanves, l'Assemblée Artistique





CREATION SCHEDULE

21 au 23 novembre 2024 : Espace Malraux Scène Nationale Chambéry Savoie

23 au 24 janvier 2025 : Grame-CNCM Lyon

3 au 7 mars : La Pop, Résidence de recherche scénographique

7 au 10 avril : Malraux Scène Nationale de Chambéry

1 au 4 juillet : Grame-CNCM Lyon

Juillet-aout : Claudine Simon Résidence composition musicale

25 aout au 29 aout : Théâtre de Vanves

8 au 12 septembre : MC2 Grenoble

10 au 17 octobre : L'assemblée artistique, Lyon

CREATION AND TOUR

29-30 novembre : **Opéra de Rouen, BIG BANG Festival - CREATION**

3 decembre, **Annecy, festival artbox**

12-13 december, **la Pop, Paris**

27 mars 2026 : **Saint-Nazaire Athénor-CNCM**

9-10 avril **Theatre de vanves**

12-13 avril : **Philharmonie de Paris, Festival Explore**

21 avril : **Théâtre de la Renaissance, Oullins**, Festival les fabricants avec Grame-CNCM Lyon

25-26 avril : **Opéra de Rennes, BIG BANG Festival**

6-7 mai : **La Criée, Marseille**, Festival Propagation du GMEM-CNCM

AN ADDITIONAL COUNTRY

Sound and visual composition

50 minutes - For all audiences aged 7 and over

VIDEO TEASER : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4P-arj1LCs>

PRESENTATION

This creation is intended for children and the child within us all.

I wanted to write this play to try to answer the question:

‘Do children still tell each other stories?’

I also wanted to offer this play to my own daughters.

The show presents a visual and audio narrative that unfolds through the journey of a little train. During this journey, we encounter objects, sounds, characters and situations.

The objects are projected onto large walls using light effects. This encourages the evocation of shapes and places, supported and reinforced by concrete sounds, both real and created. The characters draw us into their world, which is both familiar and dreamlike.

This journey becomes a kind of escape. Rather than recognising reality, it is the viewer's imagination that is called upon.

The shapes that appear change in size and intensity, escaping the criteria of “realism” (phantasmagoria) depending on the viewpoint, and with them the sensations.

The places and sounds are sites of metamorphosis inhabited in different ways.

Scenes are presented without any real narrative, but as a succession of events that encourage play, where the viewer is led to conduct their own investigation and invent their own story. It is this experience of play that the viewer has, an experience that appeals to their vitality and encourages them to look at things in a different way.

BREAKING DOWN PIANOS

The piano is the starting point for this project, and my favourite playground for my sound explorations.

Piano parts (black and white keys, hammers, strings, cast iron structures, etc.) were taken apart and then reassembled into poetic sculptures by designer Maéva Prigent.

The objects scattered on the floor take the form of rosettes, characters and urban landscapes. These figures stand out on the walls as suggestions that appeal to everyone's imagination.

Every sound heard in the soundtrack comes from the piano (prepared or deconstructed), or from reworked 'concrete' or realistic sound recordings: sounds of a (real) train, a city (the Budapest metro), a construction site, frogs, a storm, etc. so that these sound contexts are quickly identifiable by the viewer, who can construct their own story.



PROUST'S SMALL ROOM

In *In Search of Lost Time*, Marcel Proust mentions the presence of a magic lantern (a still image illuminated and projected by a lamp). A whole period of his childhood is linked to this small piece of machinery. By watching these shadows that transform everything, objects and decor (fabrics, wallpaper) take on different stories.

From this space presented to his imagination, he plays, including scaring himself with disturbing shapes. What is important is the question of artifice and play; all of 'this' is playing out.

Proust brings the little lantern back at various other moments, including when it is viewed among adults, giving rise to sensations, emotions, remembered stories and overlapping times by the narrator.

This device—this game in which the viewer is invited to 'take a chance' and inhabit in different ways its places of metamorphosis and non-figurative forms—has greatly inspired our own. The projected images of the little train make us experience mundane scenes in a jubilant and particularly vivid way.

The magic lantern becomes at once an optical device, a metaphor for dreams, the illuminating power of literature, a model of our psyche...



MUSIC AS A COUNTRY

An additional country refers to an expression coined by film critic Serge Daney. This phrase sounds like a message and arouses curiosity in children's minds.

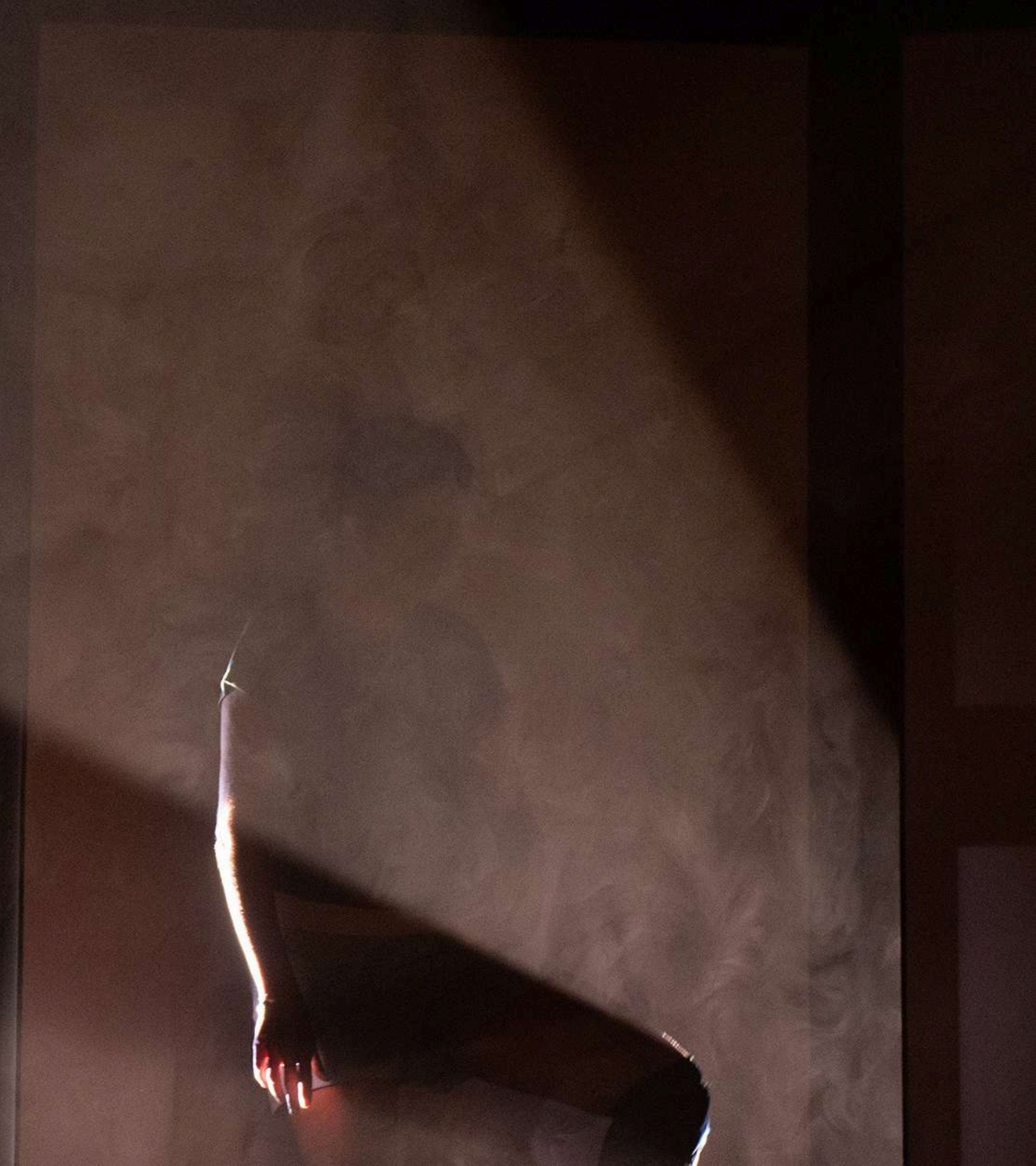
Having music in your life is like having an extra world, a whole realm of emotions and perceptions. It is also a way of living, seeing, listening and feeling that you can make your own, and which creates a world. A world that is both very special and exceptional, and which becomes familiar to us.

Foreign languages have a fascinating quality that makes us see and feel what we say in our own language in a slightly different, strange way. They bring up cultural, visual and auditory references, allowing us to discover new ways of thinking and seeing, a whole host of curious equivalents and surprising false friends – in short, another world.

The project leads children to discover something special, unusual music that is somewhat experimental. This encounter will be brought about by a stratagem! It involves a little train that can be followed with the eye.

Along the way, through the wonder and amusement they feel at the events that punctuate the journey, children, always eager for new experiences, are put in a receptive frame of mind. Their attention span and desire grow, and their field of perception broadens. They are invited to engage in a type of listening, not as a requirement but as an invitation.





LE FIGURAL

The show was conceived without the use of words, in a space between figuralism and abstraction. It is an open space for children's imaginations and a more metaphorical and allegorical space for adults.

The concept of the figural is a notion that was developed by **Lyotard** and then by **Deleuze**. Figurative logic tends to reduce reality to a certain framework, the narrative framework. Figuralism aims to bring out meaning outside of narration and its codes. These codes involve a set of adjustments to “sheathe” reality in order to obtain “the right form”, the “recognisable”, the identifiable, a story with twists, turns and dénouements.

In *An additional Country*, there is something to be seen and understood that cannot be expressed in words but only shown through sound, images, staging, atmosphere, and the poetic and dreamlike nature of the situations. As with **Proust and his magic lantern**, which is pure figural, the narrator, and therefore the viewer, can imagine whatever they want and create their own story.

SOUND DESIGN

I am interested here in sound territories: the boundaries between notes and sounds, music and noise, instrumental gestures and movement, what is standardised and what is not, in a spatial composition that resembles cinema for the ear.

Situations arise where sound plays tricks on us, contradicting what we see and sometimes provoking burlesque scenes. The sound material is sculpted in depth, with an infinity of timbres, textures, materials and sound events emerging and proliferating.

Thanks to a six-speaker sound system, the music plays with space and movement, and is also present on stage thanks to an amplified platform device that allows concrete objects to be heard, sounds to be played with, diverted, and tested against reality and imagination.

RAVEL, CHILDHOOD AND MAGIC SPELLS

An excerpt from the slow movement of Maurice Ravel's Concerto in G appears at the end of the piece, before fading away.

For Ravel, childhood is never a naive age but a realm of sensations, dreams and mystery. Childhood is an autonomous world populated by objects, animals and sounds that come to life. In *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, he makes cups, clocks and cats talk, revealing a childhood where anything can come to life.

These metamorphoses are not mere games: they reflect the power of a child's imagination, capable of transforming reality.



SET DESIGN AS CHILD'S PLAY

The scenography is inspired by childhood games that stimulate the imagination through simple actions such as manipulation, movement, diversion or transformation.

On stage, five partitions and five wooden slabs, all white and rectangular, are arranged randomly. Around them are a series of sculptural objects made from dismantled pianos, as well as a small illuminated vehicle that will transform this reality into a wonderful world...

Inspired by **the Arte Povera and Minimal Art movement**, the deliberately understated scenography becomes a dreamlike playground through the use of lighting and movement. As the show progresses, the movement of the scenographic elements allows a narrative to emerge in five successive scenes: first the appearance of a city, then the acceleration of a world in motion, followed by the evocation of borders and the discovery of cultures, before finally the landscape fades away to make way for the wind and childhood memories, the very ones that are at the origin of all our desires.

MUSIC, A LAND OF EMOTIONS

An additional country is a reference to a phrase coined by film critic Serge Daney. The phrase sounds like a message and awakens curiosity in the minds of children.

Having music in your life is like having an extra world, a whole realm of emotions and perceptions. It's also a way of living, seeing, listening and feeling that you can make your own, and that creates a world. A world that is both very special and exceptional, and which becomes familiar to us.

Foreign languages have a fascinating way of making us see and feel differently, strangely, what we say in our own language. It brings up cultural, visual and audio references, discovering new ways of thinking and seeing, a whole baggage of curious equivalences and surprising false friends - in short, another world.

The project involves children discovering something special, an unusual, slightly experimental form of music. This discovery, this encounter, will be brought about by a stratagem! It's a little train that you can follow with your eyes. It emits sound and cast shadows.

Along the way, the child, always on the lookout for new events, is put in a receptive mood by the amazement and amusement he shows at the events along the way. Their field of attention and desire grows, their perceptive field opens up, and they are offered a way of listening, as an invitation rather than a prescription.

MEDIATION

Workshops featuring listening and polyphonic games

20 children maximum per workshop

The little train is an opportunity to develop auditory perception and the movement of sound through space, and to explore the theme of travel with children.

The scenography allows children to take ownership of the elements and manipulate the sound objects, triggering the recorded sounds (via a sampler).

The idea is to allow the children to enter into the grammar of sound in the show, to name the sounds we hear (typology, concrete sounds, instrument sounds) and to play with this grammar by experimenting.

I'll get them to invent simple little musical sequences, playing with superimpositions (speed, timbre), polyphony (harmony, disharmony), mixing and rubbing together sounds.

Creation of 4 groups for a large choral composition.

TEACHING TOOL

A hearing game will be created.

It takes the form of a large card game and enables children to expand their sound vocabulary and experiment with musical sequences more easily using instruction cards.

Invitation to collective debate with the children:

Before the performances and workshops, I'll be suggesting readings to the teachers. These will be little philosophy books adapted for children, like Jean-Luc Nancy's little lectures on 'listening' and 'beauty'.

Through all these games of appropriating sound, the aim is to develop synaesthetic, multi-sensitive listening, full of sounds, gestures, sensations and images. From the Greek syn, 'with' and aesthesis, 'sensation', synaesthesia is a sensation that occurs when information intended to stimulate one of the senses stimulates another. Several senses can also collide.



TEAM

Previous creations : Anatomia | Pianomachine

Website : claudinesimon.com

CLAUDINE SIMON CONCEPT, COMPOSER
PERFORMER

Claudine Simon is a pianist, artist and improviser, developing a sound work that experiments with the lutherie and capabilities of her instrument. A versatile musician, she has a taste for writing at the frontiers of music, dance 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 allow 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 has received support from the Fondation Beaumarchais SACD, and a prizewinner in the Ministry of Culture's "Mondes Nouveaux" competition. Her works have been performed at the Bouffes du Nord, Scènes Nationales, Operas (Lyon, Reims, Dijon), CNCMs and festivals...



TEAM

ANNE-SOPHIE BERARD SCENOGRAPH

Anne Sophie Bérard is a curator, author and scenographer. She has been supporting many artistic projects from concept to storytelling, by curating exhibitions, directing concerts, assisting with writing and creating set designs or participatory installations.

Convinced of art's ability to enchant reality, she explores languages imbued with dreamlike and poetic elements, while ensuring that her proposals remain modest and accessible.

She has collaborated with various organizations and institutions, including MAIF Social Club, Good Planet Foundation, Compagnie L est au bois, producer 3Ctour, La Gaîté Lyrique, Tôt ou Tard label and the Scène Nationale La Garance, where she is currently working as an associate curator.



TEAM

MAËVA PRIGENT

ARTIST
DESIGNER

From sculpture to photography, sound and publishing, all mediums are put on an equal footing and apprehended as a source of astonishment, displacement and encounters.

Following a year of preparatory literature studies, she entered the Duperré school, where she obtained a DMA in handmade ceramics (2014), followed by a DSAA (2016).

Once she had completed her studies in applied arts, and in conjunction with her practice, she took up a university course in aesthetics while training in boilermaking.

Occasionally, she takes part in collaborative projects. She has taken part in a number of group exhibitions and created several personal installations, notably for the 4th edition of the Toulon Interior Architecture Design Parade (2019).



TEAM

MAX BRUCKERT

SOUND AND
COMPUTER DEVELOPMENT

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

VINCENT DUPUY

OUTSIDE
VIEW

Vincent Dupouy 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 stage 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

ANTOINE TRAVERT LIGHT 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

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.



AN ADDITIONAL COUNTRY

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AURIS

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GRAME


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