

THE LOBSTER SHOP

Festival Automne en Normandie, Le Grand Volcan, Le Havre

18, 19 October 06 – Tickets + 33 2 32 10 87 07

PACT Zollverein, Essen

27, 28 October 06 – Tickets +49 201 812 22 00

deSingel, Antwerp (**Belgian premiere**)

10, 11, 12 January 07 – Tickets +32 3 248 28 28

Kaaithheater, Brussels

18, 19, 20, 23, 24 January 07 – Tickets +32 2 201 59 59

Théâtre de la Ville, Paris

31 January, 01, 02, 03, 04 February 07 – Tickets +33 1

42 74 22 77

ALL IS VANITY

Festival Automne en Normandie, Le Grand Volcan, Le Havre

21 October 06 – Tickets + 33 2 32 10 87 07

Kaaithheater, Brussels (**Belgian premiere**)

16, 17, 18 November 06 – Tickets +32 2 201 59 59

Le Lieu Unique, Nantes

28, 29 November 06 – Tickets +33 2 40 12 14 34

Théâtre Garonne, Toulouse

5, 6, 7, 8, 9 December 06 – Tickets +33 5 62 48 56 56

Cultuurcentrum Brugge, Stadsschouwburg, Bruges

12 December 06 – Tickets +32 50 44 30 60

STUK, Stadsschouwburg, Leuven

10 January 07 – Tickets +32 16 320 320

Centre Dramatique de Bretagne, Théâtre de Lorient, Le Grand Théâtre

17, 18 January 07 – Tickets +33 2 97 83 01 01

CHUNKING

Centre Dramatique National de Normandie, Comédie de Caen

17, 18 November 06 – Tickets +33 2 31 46 27 29

Théâtre Garonne, Toulouse

30 November, 1 December 06 – Tickets +33 5 62 48 56 56

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Théâtre de l'Agora, Evry

9 December 06 – Tickets +33 1 60 91 65 65

ISABELLA'S ROOM

Tramway, Glasgow

9, 10, 11 November 06 – Tickets + 44 845 330 3501

Centre Dramatique National de Normandie, Comédie de Caen

21, 22 November 06 – Tickets +33 2 31 46 27 29

Hebbel Am Ufer – HAU 1, Berlin

14, 15, 16 December 06 – Tickets +43 30 259004 27

Centre Dramatique de Bretagne, Théâtre de Lorient, Merville

20, 21 December 06 – Tickets +33 2 97 83 01 01

Brussels, October 2006

Dear friends,

When I visited Paul McCarthy's pirate exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in London several months ago, I saw a hyperrealistic wax figure of the artist lying on an unsteady camp bed, dressed only in a vest, his genitals exposed, eyes shut, very peaceful and very dead. Two metres away lay a broken plaster woman on a wooden table with her legs spread. From the back of her head grew a sort of gigantic fool's head. The woman was smiling.

This installation displayed tremendous beauty and a love of life and art. I was amazed and happy. I am always happy when I see a powerful work of art. And relieved too. Because this is one image I no longer have to create myself. I am someone who always identifies with a good work of art and its creator. I actually become this Paul McCarthy with his bare buttocks. In the Velázquez room at the Prado I become Velázquez and understand all his problems. I am a chameleon. As an artist I am everyone. And I am not afraid to be so. I am everyone and an artist who is only himself is a coward.

I rarely see this sort of shattering happiness in the theatre.

But when it does appear, it is proportionally

more powerful. I am thinking, for example, of certain scenes by Jan Fabre, Castelluci's falling cars, and The Wooster Group's LSD trip. These are borderline images that freeze time. Why are they so rare? Because they are difficult to make, of course, but also because in the theatre the accent is still too much on performance or presentation.

There are two sorts of theatre:

Performers' theatre and authors' theatre.

These two actually have very little to do with each other except at the moment of their presentation. Despite this, reviewers use the same criteria to assess them. But authors' theatre is something completely different.

This summer I made two sorts of theatre. Claire Goll's **All is Vanity** and **The Lobster Shop**, which is the play I wrote most recently. The reason for making the first one is actually of no interest to the outside world: it was intended as a gift to Viviane De Muynck for her sixtieth year and because she is a marvellous actress. *All is Vanity* is an example of performers' theatre and actually has little significance to me as an artist. The reasons for making *The Lobster Shop* (my way of staying out of prison/my love of life/the need to redefine theatre/my hopeless attempts to control the hysteria, etc.) are not really important to outsiders either, but are of

vital importance to me as an artist.

At every festival and theatre tournament we see that performers' theatre is always put forward as the best and most interesting.

This is unfortunate, because this sort of theatre is almost always less interesting than the original work of art from which it arose. Van Hove and Versweyveld and their group of excellent actors can, in the theatre medium, never add anything to John Cassavetes' film *Opening Night*. Never ever. Johan Simons and his marvellous ensemble of performing artists cannot add anything to Houellebecq's *Platform*. The Claire Goll play Viviane De Muynck performs is phenomenal, and for that reason I sincerely love performers' theatre. I have a great deal of respect for it. But even so, as an artist it is safe sex.

More and more people call for a lucid, well-made Shakespeare, but in this respect I would like to continue to defend authors' theatre with all my heart. I am willing to put up with the failed attempts.

So come and watch Viviane and understand why she was proclaimed the queen of the Avignon Festival. But make sure you drop in at *The Lobster Shop* too. I hope it gives you gooseflesh.

Regards, JL.

It is impossible to describe all the parts that make up the surprising, captivating and singular patchwork of *The Lobster Shop*. Nor will anyone be able to answer the question that constantly recurs and with which the play also ends: 'what does a lobster mean?' ... Dream, nightmare, sequence of metaphors, this is a darker and more melancholy piece than *Isabella's Room*. But we see in it the same life instinct, the same need to live in spite of everything, even when the worst possibility, the death of a child, tears a couple apart. ... *The Lobster Shop*, darker than *Isabella's Room*, probes our instinct for life. Moving.

LE SOIR, Jean-Marie Wijnants, 'Keep On Living', 13/7/2006

With at the forefront the unrivalled Viviane De Muynck, an exceptional actress with whom the broad theatre-going public became acquainted as Isabella in the play by Jan Lauwers. Portly, with a deep voice, carrying her age with dignity, a virtuoso in every language, she is an immediate presence when she enters the stage entirely alone at the Théâtre municipal in Avignon. ... She is marvellous in this part. And Jan Lauwers has devised an effective stage setting for her.

LA LIBRE BELGIQUE, Guy Duplat, 14/7/2006

NEEDCOMPANY

With the support of the Flemish authorities.

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Culture 2000

With the support of the Culture 2000

Programme of the

European Union

JUST FOR TOULOUSE

Théâtre Garonne, Toulouse

2 December 06 – Tickets +33 5 62 48 56 56

GOLDFISH GAME

Festival Automne en Normandie, Cinéma l'Eden, Le Havre

21 October 06 – Tickets + 33 2 32 10 87 07

PACT Zollverein, Essen

28 oktober 06 – Info +49 201 812 22 00

(With the support of the Culture 2000 Programme of the European Union.)

Kaaithheater, Brussels

26 January 07 – Tickets +32 2 201 59 59

THE UNAUTHORIZED PORTRAIT

Festival Automne en Normandie, Cinéma L'Eden, Le Havre

17 October 06 – Info : +33 2 32 10 87 00

L'école supérieure de théâtre, Université du Québec à Montréal, (colloquium)

24, 25 November 06 – Info: +1 514 987 3000

COLLOQUIA

Festival Automne en Normandie, Le Grand Volcan, Le Havre

19 October 06 – Info : +33 2 32 10 87 00

PACT Zollverein, Essen

27 October 06 – Info : +49 201 289 47 00

WORKSHOPS

Centre Développements Chorégraphique, Toulouse

1, 2, 3 December 06 – Info : + 33 5 61 59 98 78

deSingel, Antwerp

11, 12, 13 January 07 – Info : +32 3 248 28 28

JUST FOR TOULOUSE

With Lemm&Barkey, Maison Dahl-Bonnema, O.H.N.O. Cooperation, Cobblersson Incorporated and others.

GOLDFISH GAME

A film by Jan Lauwers

With Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Timothy Couchman, Dick Crane, Gonzalo Cunill, Hans Petter Dahl, Viviane De Muynck, Misha Downey, Victor Lauwers, Tijen Lawton, Carlotta Sagna, Simon Versnel. A production by Needcompany and De Filmfabriek. With the support of Fonds Film in Vlaanderen, Canvas, Canal+ and Brugge 2002.

THE UNAUTHORIZED PORTRAIT

A film by Nico Leunen.

With Jan Lauwers
Cobblersson Incorporated in association with Needcompany and Senstudio.

COLLOQUIA

No beauty there where human life
is rare

A reflection room on beauty and truth in the
theatre

With the support of the Culture 2000 Programme
of the European Union.

Le Havre: with Nicolas Truong, Drs. Frederik Le Roy, Primoz Jesenko and as moderator Geneviève Vincent.

Essen: with Prof. Dr. Hans-Thies Lehmann, Prof. Luk Van den Dries, Audronis Liuga and as moderator Dr. Nikolaus Müller-Schöll.

WORKSHOPS

Viviane De Muynck

With the support of the Culture 2000 Programme
of the European Union.

NEEDCOMPANY

THE LOBSTER SHOP

Jan Lauwers

With Hans Petter Dahl, Grace Ellen Barkey, Tijen Lawton, Anneke Bonnema, Benoît Gob, Inge Van Bruystegem, Julien Faure, Maarten Seghers, Lot Lemm

A Needcompany production, coproduced by Festival d'Avignon, Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Théâtre Garonne (Toulouse), PACT Zollverein (Essen), Cankarjev Dom (Ljubljana), La Rose des Vents (Scène Nationale de Villeneuve d'Ascq), Automne en Normandie, La Filature (Scène Nationale de Mulhouse), Kaaitheater (Brussels), deSingel (Antwerp).

With the support of the Culture 2000 Programme of the European Union.

ALL IS VANITY

After Claire Goll

Adapted and performed by Viviane De Muynck

Lighting and directing: Jan Lauwers

A Needcompany production, coproduced by Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Festival d'Avignon and Théâtre Garonne (Toulouse).

With the cooperation of the Kaaitheater (Brussels) and deSingel (Antwerp).

CHUNKING

Grace Ellen Barkey

With Julien Faure, Benoît Gob, Tijen Lawton, Inge Van Bruysteghem/Louise Peterhoff, Maarten Seghers and Lot Lemm

A Needcompany production, coproduced by PACT Zollverein (Essen), Festival de Marseille and La Rose des Vents (Scène Nationale de Villeneuve d'Ascq).

ISABELLA'S ROOM

Jan Lauwers

With Viviane De Muynck, Tijen Lawton, Hans Petter Dahl, Anneke Bonnema, Benoît Gob, Julien Faure, Maarten Seghers, Misha Downey, Louise Peterhoff, Jan Lauwers, Elke Janssens, Lemm&Barkey

A Needcompany production, coproduced by Festival d'Avignon, Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Théâtre Garonne (Toulouse), La Rose des Vents (Scène Nationale de Villeneuve d'Ascq), Brooklyn Academy of Music (New York) and welt *in* basel theaterfestival. With the cooperation of the Kaaitheater (Brussels).