

NEEDCOMPANY

Hooikaai 35,
1000 Brussel

NEEDCOMPANY

Brussels, May 09

Dear Friends,

Beauty is a comforting weapon in times of crisis.

I have recently been fortunate enough to witness a great deal of beauty. The portraits by Gerhard Richter at the National Portrait Gallery in London: it is a lesson in humility, when beauty appears to be so horribly simple.

The highly engaging director of the superb Wiels art centre in Brussels, Dirk Snauwaert, is exhibiting a series of new paintings by Luc Tuymans. Fortunately, the crisis in the art market has come in time for Tuymans too. This is because art needs to go slowly. And a work such as 'iPod' is a slow painting, which is rare at a time when too many people in the overpowered

art world are running around 'with butter on their heads'.

(Like the pharaohs, who sat in the sun with a lump of fat on their head. It melted slowly and made them gleam like gods. How do you gleam like a god?)

In the theatre I have seen 'Cement' by the JAN company and 'Naar Medea' by Inne Goris. Two gems. 'Plays for the young' that show a lot more daring than the superficial politically correct nonsense I have recently witnessed from more than one 'adult' dance group here in Flanders.

In a recent current affairs programme on TV I saw a report on a song contest called 'Afghanstar' in Afghanistan, based on the Western TV show 'Idols', in which the whole nation votes for amateur singers and the winners are given the chance

to go professional. It appears that the tremendous success of this programme occasionally led to hysterical situations. There were 2000 male entries for 'Afghanstar' and three female. The women were allowed to take part if they did not move and wore a headscarf. One woman ended up seventh and was allowed to sing her song one more time. In front of the camera and millions of Afghans she started to dance and let her headscarf gradually slip off. Just like Salomé's seventh veil, but with a different purpose. She had to make her getaway and it is quite likely that by now she has been murdered.

This is quite a different matter from gleaming like a god. And what does it have to do with beauty? Everything.

All the best,
JL

Agenda

THE DEER HOUSE

Jan Lauwers

With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Viviane De Muynck, Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Tijen Lawton, Maarten Seghers, Inge Van Bruystegem

Produced by Needcompany and Salzburger Festspiele. Coproducers: Schauspielhaus Zürich, PACT Zollverein (Essen). With the cooperation of deSingel (Antwerp) and Kaaithheater (Brussels).

6 May 2009
Stadsschouwburg Leuven
Tickets +32 16 320 320

26, 27 May 2009
Deutsches Nationaltheater und Staatskapelle Weimar
Tickets +49 3643 755 334

6 June 2009
Stadsschouwburg Groningen
Tickets +31 50 368 0 368

13, 16, 17 July 2009
Avignon Festival
Tickets +33 490 14 14 14

SAD FACE | HAPPY FACE

Three stories on Human Nature

A TRILOGY

Part 1: Isabella's room (the past)

Part 2: The Lobster Shop (the future)

Part 3: The Deer House (the present)

Jan Lauwers

With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Viviane De Muynck, Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Tijen Lawton, Maarten Seghers, Inge Van Bruystegem

12, 14, 18 July 2009
Avignon Festival
Tickets +33 490 14 14 14

THE PORCELAIN PROJECT

Grace Ellen Barkey

With: Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya (replacing Taka Shamoto), Benoît Gob, Tijen Lawton, Maarten Seghers, Lemm&Barkey

A Needcompany production, coproduced by Théâtre Le Quai (Angers), La Rose des Vents (Scène Nationale de Villeneuve d'Ascq), PACT Zollverein (Essen) and Kaaithheater (Brussels).

23 May 2009
Figuren Theater Festival, Erlangen
Tickets +49 9131 22195

NEEDLAPB 15

With the whole company

20 May 2009
STUK, Leuven
Tickets +32 16 320 320

CURATED BY _ VIENNA 09

Jérôme Sans presents work by Jan Lauwers at Galerie Bleich-Rossi.

6 May to 6 June 2009
Dominikanerbastei 19,
1010 Vienna, Austria.
Information +43 15120915

The next few months at NEEDCOMPANY

Jan Lauwers & Needcompany are heading for a wild summer with two French premieres at the Avignon Festival, **The Deer House** and the **Sad Face | Happy Face** trilogy. **The Deer House** was written in response to a tragic event in the intimacy of the Needcompany circle. The death of a relative provides the starting point for a play about a group of theatre-makers who are increasingly faced with

the harsh reality of the world they travel around in. **The Deer House** is also the third and final part of the **Sad Face | Happy Face** trilogy. This trilogy tells three stories about being human. The other two are **Isabella's room** (2004) and **The Lobster Shop** (2006), and the full version of the trilogy was first performed at the Salzburger Festspiele.

The text of **The Deer House** has been translated into French (*La maison des cerfs*, Actes Sud), and this publication will also be launched at the Avignon festival.

On **The Deer House**:

Grace occupies a unique position in The Deer House. She is ... a go-between for the antitheses around which this latest Flemish masterpiece by Jan Lauwers and Needcompany revolves: life and death, and appearance and reality. The Deer House is a genuine fairytale. As a result of the various interwoven realities, the schizophrenia of war and the idiocy of 'the story' (which is non-existent) become sharply tangible.

De Volkskrant, MvdL

Before it goes to Avignon, **The Deer House** will also be on in Weimar and Groningen.

On **Sad Face | Happy Face**:

An ode to life and art from the point of view of suffering and death. This will not suit strict TV-traditionalists who want psychological realism, but it's a real pleasure for anyone able to appreciate theatre as an all-embracing work of art – drama, music, performance, dance and art.

Each of the three pieces stands on its own, but the

full performance offers something more; it builds a bridge between the past and the fear of the future, and then back to the present again, with the loss of loved ones at its core, all linked to an individual quest.

Suddeutsche Zeitung, CD

On 20th May, STUK in Leuven is hosting a **Needlapb**, which as always is a once-only event. This evening promises to provide an exceptional glimpse into a brand-new Jan Lauwers project, with added musical interludes.

Grace Ellen Barkey & Needcompany let themselves go completely in **The Porcelain Project** at the SPILL festival in London. In May it can still be seen at the Internationales Figurentheater-Festival in Erlangen.

Jan Lauwers is exhibiting new work at '**curated by vienna 09**', for which five internationally renowned curators were asked to fill 18 contemporary art galleries. Jérôme Sans selected Jan Lauwers for the Galerie Bleich-Rossi.

June sees the start of rehearsals for new productions by Grace Ellen Barkey and MaisonDahlBonnema, both of which premiere in February 2010. More about this in a later newsletter.

NEEDCOMPANY

With the support of the Flemish authorities.

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