

# NEEDCOMPANY

Hooikaal 35,  
1000 Brussel

# NEEDCOMPANY

Brussels, December 2010

Dear Friend,

There are two statues in Brussels. One is of a man on horseback, a tribute to Leopold II, Belgian king and mass-murderer. The other is a concrete truck designed by the artist Wim Delvoye.

No questions are raised about the statue of the mass-murderer and it is hard to explain to foreigners why it has never been taken down. The other statue is new, but I guess it will be only a matter of weeks before it is damaged or even cut into pieces one night. (The people who already hated the work before it was unveiled are probably also the same people who one night dismantled the basketball pitch on the same square because they thought too many immigrants came to play sport there. The fearful people).

Why, on the one hand, is there this aversion to contemporary art and on the other an equestrian statue of Leopold, representing an utter denial of a 19th-century

genocide? Is this the result of a complete dumbing-down of a culture that is on its last legs? Do we no longer know with which weights and measures we should be gauging things?

It's too easy to put the blame on the artists for the negative relationship contemporary art has with the community it's created in. It's true that artists have made experimentation too much of an end in itself rather than a means, and have lost sight of their public. But it's a fact that artists have to ask questions that the community does not want to hear. (It has nothing to do with the loss of skill, because the skills are improving every day. And if the aim is virtuosity, art would be more at home in the circus).

The problem lies more in the showbiz society we have ended up with. And how it reclaims and disarms this art. The art of entertainment for some, and the entertainment of art for others.

If one travels to Venice and looks at Pinault's private collection,

all those powerful and even enigmatic works have become meaningless. As pathetic as a caged panther in a zoo staring into space all day long.

In his 'Lives of the Artists', Vasari wrote, in 1550: 'The moderns are just as good as the ancients and there is no greater vanity than those who take more notice of a name than the facts: one comes across them in all eras, this sort of person who pays more attention to appearance than to reality.' He wrote this after he had learnt that Michelangelo had hidden one of his sculptures in the ground for some time so as to be able to sell it as ancient, which would earn him much more. It's the 'reality' in this quote that everything revolves around. But unfortunately in an entertainment culture it is only the appearance that counts. And the troublesome questions asked by artists, whose primary aim is not to entertain, do not go down well in this world of appearances.

Wim Delvoye is an artist who knows better than anyone how to

perpetuate the sublime catholic art tradition. His centrifuged sculptures of Christ are just as meaningful as a sculpture of Christ from the Renaissance. Putting a concrete truck like this on a square in Brussels as a public monument is a good thing for a society that denies its past. And also for art, because in this way it is able to revalidate its public role, which is not possible in a private collection. All we have to do now is take down that other statue and we will have taken a step in the right direction. Perhaps, with the money she wants to keep from the arts sector, the present minister of culture can buy an angle grinder and slice through the legs of that ugly horse. She would make herself immortal.

And in the name of all the staff at Needcompany I wish all people of good will much love, and to the Flemish people I say, as always: stop whining, there really isn't anything wrong!

All the best,  
JL

The next few months at  
NEEDCOMPANY

After the successful appearance of **The Tragedy of the Applause - Strombeek** by OHNO COOPERATION (Maarten Seghers and Jan Lauwers) at Strombeek cultural centre, for the next few months Needcompany will be concentrating entirely on Jan Lauwers' new play, **The Art of Entertainment**. This work is the next step in the intense cooperation with the Burgtheater in Vienna. Actors from the Burgtheater and Needcompany will be

joining forces in a black, almost cynical comedy about a famous actor who decides to put an end to his life because he feels that his memory, the home of the soul, is gradually deteriorating.

In the run-up to *The Art of Entertainment*, Needcompany would like to invite you to two **Needlapbs** in the Kaaistudios. You will have the chance to sample the work leading up to

this new production. The *Needlapbs* also offer the first opportunity to see the Burgtheater actors at work.

After an outstanding tour of Flanders, Grace Ellen Barkey's production **This door is too small (for a bear)** will be back on the international and even intercontinental stage. In December it will be at PACT Zollverein in Essen (D) and in January it will be on in Santiago de Chile together

# Agenda

## THE ART OF ENTERTAINMENT

Jan Lauwers

With: Silvie Rohrer, Yohanna Schwertfeger, Viviane De Muynck, Grace Ellen Barkey, Julien Faure, Benoît Gob, Misha Downey, Yumiko Funaya and Eléonore Valère

Produced by Needcompany and Burgtheater.

5,6,7,9,10 March and 23,24,25 April 2011

Akademietheater, Wenen  
Tickets + 43 51 444 4145

21, 22 April 2011  
Teatre Lliure, Barcelona  
Tickets + 34 932 289 747

## NEEDLAPB 17

Written by Jan Lauwers

With the Needcompany ensemble and special guests from the Burgtheater

Produced by Needcompany and Burgtheater.

22, 23 December 2010  
Kaaithheater, Brussels  
Tickets +32 201 59 59

## THIS DOOR IS TOO SMALL (FOR A BEAR)

Grace Ellen Barkey

Concept: Lemm&Barkey

Created with/performed by: Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Maarten Seghers

A Needcompany production.  
Coproducers: ImPulsTanz (Vienna), PACT Zollverein (Essen), Künstlerhaus Mousonturm (Frankfurt).  
In association with Kaaithheater (Brussels).

17, 18 December 2010  
PACT Zollverein, Essen (D)  
Tickets + 49 201 812 22 00

11, 12, 13 January 2011  
Festival Theatro a Mil, Santiago de Chile  
Tickets <http://www.fitam.cl/>

18, 19 March 2011  
Teatro Central, Sevilla  
Tickets +34 955 03 72 00

23 March 2011  
Teatro Alhambra, Granada  
Tickets +34 958 028 000

6, 7 April 2011  
Vooruit, Gent  
Tickets +32 09 267 28 28

27 April 2011  
De Warande, Turnhout  
Tickets +32 14 41 94 94

## RICKY AND RONNY AND HUNDRED STARS – A SADO COUNTRY OPERA

MaisonDahlBonnema

With: Anna Sophia Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl and Louise Peterhoff

A MaisonDahlBonnema / Needcompany production.  
Coproducers: Theater aan het Vrijthof, Euregionaal Opera- en Muziektheaterfestival (Maastricht), BIT Teatergarasjen (Bergen) and Noorderzon / Grand Théâtre (Groningen).  
In association with Kaaithheater (Brussels) and Konstnärsmännen (Stockholm).  
With the support of the Norsk kulturråd.

29 January 2011  
De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam  
Tickets + 31 20 626 68 66

23, 24 February 2011  
STUK, Leuven  
Tickets +32 16 320 300

## 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, Maarten Seghers, Eléonore Valère, Inge Van Bruystegem

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

7, 8, 9 January 2011  
Festival Theatro a Mil, Santiago de Chile  
Tickets <http://www.fitam.cl/>

1 April 2011  
REPUBLIQUE, Kopenhagen  
Tickets +45 70 20 10 31

14, 15 April 2011  
Scène Nationale de Sète et du Bassin de Thau  
Tickets + 33 4 67 74 66 97

13 May 2011  
La Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand  
Tickets +33 4 73 290 814

17, 18 May 2011  
Le Carré des Jalles, Saint-Medard-en-Jalles  
Tickets +33 5 57 93 18 80

## THE LOBSTER SHOP

Jan Lauwers

With: Hans Petter Dahl, Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Inge Van Bruystegem, Julien Faure, Maarten Seghers

A Needcompany production.  
Coproduction: 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 (Le Havre), La Filature (Scène Nationale de Mulhouse), Kaaithheater (Brussels), deSingel (Antwerp).  
With the support of the European Union Culture 2000 programme.

31 March 2011  
REPUBLIQUE, Kopenhagen  
Tickets +45 70 20 10 31

12 May 2011  
La Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand  
Tickets +33 4 73 290 814

## ISABELLA'S ROOM

Jan Lauwers

With: Viviane De Muynck, Hans Petter Dahl, Anneke Bonnema, Benoît Gob, Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Sung-Im Her, Maarten Seghers, Jan Lauwers, Elke Janssens, Lemm&Barkey

A Needcompany production.  
Coproduction: 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.  
In association with Kaaithheater (Brussels).

30 March 2011  
REPUBLIQUE, Kopenhagen  
Tickets +45 70 20 10 31

11 May 2011  
La Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand  
Tickets +33 4 73 290 814

## 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, Sung-Im Her, Maarten Seghers, Eléonore Valère, Inge Van Bruystegem

3 April 2011  
REPUBLIQUE, Kopenhagen  
Tickets +45 70 20 10 31

with **The Deer House**. After that it will also go to Seville, Granada, Ghent and Turnhout.

*As powerful as a bear.*  
(Kulturuniversum)

*Give yourself a treat: go and see this production.*  
(ELLE)

After a successful appearance at the BITEF Festival in Belgrade, Jan Lauwers was by a sizeable majority awarded the 'Politika' Prize

for the best director for **Isabella's Room** and *The Deer House*. After the much appreciated performance of both pieces, Jan Lauwers was commended as follows:

*Lauwers's productions represent a unique dedication to story, imagination and theatrical expression. In a detuned but clearly conceived and strictly controlled form, Lauwers manages to reveal the value of theatre language, its truth*

*and purity.*  
*Jury 44th BITEF 2010*

Nor did *The Deer House* pass unnoticed at the Next Wave Festival in the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York. The production went down a bomb there. As evidenced by the rather unusual comment from the eccentric artistic duo AndrewAndrew:

*As if Ibsen wrote a snuff film on acid and had sex with Shakespeare.*  
(<http://www.papermag.com>)

*/2010/10/andrew\_andrew\_phone\_it\_in\_the.php)*

There will be numerous performances of Jan Lauwers' productions *Isabella's Room*, **The Lobster Shop** and *The Deer House* over the coming months. Venues include Santiago de Chile, Copenhagen, Sète, Clermont-Ferrand and Saint-Medard-en-Jalles.

MaisonDahlBonnema put in a notable appearance in

Calgary in **The Ballad of Ricky and Ronny – a Pop Opera**. This production will also be on in Trondheim in December.

*The Ballad of Ricky and Ronny - A Pop Opera will keep you stimulated and engaged from start to finish, and will likely have you talking about it the next day as well.*

*Stage Review, Kristiana Barber, 15/10/2010*

The second part of MaisonDahlBonnema's

opera cycle, **Ricky and Ronny and Hundred Stars – a Sado Country Opera**, will be performed in Amsterdam and Leuven in early 2011.

We also welcome the Needcompany's latest scion: Louis!

# NEEDCOMPANY

With the support of the Flemish authorities.

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