

BRUSSELS, JANUARY 2012

Dear Friends,

1. At the farewell celebration for Dirk Pauwels, the formidable driving force behind Victoria and Campo, a young artist asked me: 'What does life mean to you? What is your struggle?' The question delighted me. A young man who speaks the words struggle and life in a single breath. There is still hope. I replied: 'I'm occupied with the classic questions of how, what and why we have to communicate at the present time. That is my life. Society has driven stories out of the heart of our lives. I want to put them back there. That is my struggle.' The young man looked at me rather disappointedly and said: 'That doesn't seem enough to me. To change the world one needs a lot more than telling a story.' I answered: 'So you are assuming that the world has to be changed. I am assuming that the world changes itself.' 'When I hear you say that I think you are very naïve; bankers lie and we believe them. Politicians lie and we believe them...' I in-

terrupted with: 'The truth has little of interest to offer the artist. It is as Dirk Pauwels said in his farewell speech: 'If a solution is found to a problem, the problem wasn't interesting enough. There's not a single banker or politician today who understands this. What bankers consider criminal is for artists a state of mind'. 'Precisely,' he said, 'that's what makes these extremely interesting times for artists. That's because artists are never concerned with money, have long since stopped painting gods, and should not obey any commandments.' 'Is that what you really think?' I replied. 'It seems to me you are a hundred years old.' 'No,' said the young man, 'I'm a thousand years old. All young artists have to be a thousand years old if they want to make a difference.' 'But our high priest of the arts has only just decreed that no museum should buy any more work by artists over forty! That way you'll never have a chance.' 'Your high

priest has been dead for years but he doesn't know it yet. We young artists have learnt from the terrorists of despair and the lies of democratorship. We shall be making the real art.' 'You said, democratorship, but it's democracy.' You really don't get it at all, do you?' he said, 'Your generation didn't make much of it, did they? And we'll have to clear up the mess. There have to be big new ideas. In every sphere. In art too. We must no longer let ourselves be browbeaten by collectors, intendants, subsidies, politicians and bankers. We have to dematerialise and reclaim our place at the top of the pyramid.' I didn't understand the rest, as he was already on his way out through the glass door of the opera house into the street. I looked in the mirror in the entrance hall and saw an old man smiling. 'At last,' I saw him thinking, 'let battle commence.'

2. If the world has to undergo radical revision, why not start in our own back yard? After almost twenty years of utter dedication and skilful leadership, Christel S. will be leaving the group. To many of us and to me in particular, this woman has been of inestimable worth and has put Needcompany on the world map. Inge C., the woman who for years has been efficiently selling NC and had with great insight taken responsibility for the day-to-day running of the company, is also moving on. But that's not all; our tour manager Frank V. is also sailing into new waters. We wish them all the very best and hope still to see plenty of them in the future, because they are all wonderfully nice people whom we shall miss. And then there are the new people who will be arriving. The born performers Emmanuel Schwartz and Catherine Travelletti will be joining the ensemble.

3. 'I can be your fantasy, but I don't want to fake'.

This line from the new play by Anna Sophia Bonnema seems to me a good slogan for this new year. Needcompany will carrying on with what it has already been doing for years. Without faking but with more fantasy. And fantasy is what I wish everyone. Especially the indignant, so that we may understand better why we are indignant.

JL

AGENDA

MARKETPLACE 76

Jan Lauwers

With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Romy Louise Lauwers, Maarten Seghers, Emmanuel Schwartz, Catherine Travelletti

A Needcompany production | Coproduction: Ruhrtriennial and Burgtheater (Vienna)

7, 8, 13, 14, 15 September 2012

Ruhrtriennial 2012, Bochum

NEEDLAPB 18

Jan Lauwers

With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Romy Louise Lauwers, Maarten Seghers, Emmanuel Schwartz, Catherine Travelletti, Jan Lauwers, Elke Janssens

A Needcompany production | Coproduction: Ruhrtriennial and Burgtheater (Vienna)

16 January 2012

Akademietheater (Burgtheater), Vienna
+43 51 444 4145

CALIGULA

Jan Lauwers

With: Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Maria Happel, André Meyer, Cornelius Obonya, Falk Rockstroh, Herman Scheidleder, Nicolas Field

A Burgtheater production | In collaboration with Needcompany

17, 18, 19 May 2012

Kasino (Burgtheater), Vienna
+43 51 444 4145

THE ART OF ENTERTAINMENT

NEEDCOMPANY PLAYS THE DEATH OF DIRK ROOFTHOOF

Jan Lauwers

With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Viviane De Muynck, Dirk Roofthoof, Eléonore Valère

Production: Needcompany / Burgtheater (Vienna)

11, 12, 13, 14 April 2012

Espoo City Theater, Espoo
+358 9 439 3388

23, 24, 25 May 2012

deSingel, Antwerp
+32 3 248 28 28

THIS DOOR IS TOO SMALL (FOR A BEAR)

Grace Ellen Barkey

Concept: Lemm&Barkey | Created with and performed by: Misha Downey, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Maarten Seghers

A Needcompany production | Coproduction: ImPulsTanz (Vienna), PACT Zollverein (Essen), künstlerhaus mousonturm (Frankfurt). In cooperation with Kaaitheater (Brussels).

17, 18 February 2012

Bora Bora Dans og visuelt teater, Aarhus
+45 861 900 79

THE BALLAD OF RICKY AND RONNY – A POP OPERA

MaisonDahlBonnema

With: Hans Petter Dahl and Anna Sophia Bonnema

Production: MaisonDahlBonnema, Needcompany | In collaboration with Kaaitheater (Brussels), ImPulsTanz (Vienna International Dance Festival)

1 April 2012

33th Stage Songs Review Festival, Teatr Współczesny, Wrocław
+48 22 825 07 25

SAD FACE | HAPPY FACE A TRILOGY

THREE STORIES ON HUMAN NATURE

FIRST PART: ISABELLA'S ROOM (THE PAST)

SECOND PART: THE LOBSTER SHOP (THE FUTURE)

THIRD PART: 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

A Needcompany production | coproduction: Salzburger Festspiele, Festival d'Avignon, Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Schauspielhaus Zürich, Théâtre Garonne (Toulouse), La Rose des Vents (Scène Nationale de Villeneuve d'Ascq), PACT Zollverein (Essen), Brooklyn Academy of Music (New York), welt in basel theaterfestival, Cankarjev Dom (Ljubljana), Automne en Normandie (Le Havre), La Filature (Scène Nationale de Mulhouse),Kaaitheater (Brussels), deSingel (Antwerp) | With the support of the Culture 2000 Programme of the European Union

27, 28 May 2012

SIBFest 2012, Radu Stanca National Theater of Sibiu / Sibiu International Festival Theater
+40 269 21 00 92

DE KAMER VAN ISABELLA

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: le 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 Kaaitheater (Brussels)

21 January 2012

CSS Teatro stabile di innovazione del FVG, Udine
+39 432 504765

27 January 2012

Festival Art Danse, Opéra de Dijon, Grand Théâtre, Dijon
+33 3 80 48 82 82

3 February 2012

Le Parvis Scène Nationale, Tarbes
+33 5 62 90 08 55

8, 9 February 2012

Le trident, Scène Nationale de Cherbourg-Octeville, Cherbourg
+33 2 33 88 55 55

SUPERBODIES TRIENNIAL

3th Triennial for contemporary art, fashion and design of Hasselt

With visual art by Lemm&Barkey

From 3 February to 27 May 2012

Modemuseum Hasselt
+32 11 23 96 21

THE PORCELAIN PROJECT / INSTALLATION

Lemm&Barkey

With: Grace Ellen Barkey and Lot Lemm

Production: Needcompany | Coproduction: Le Théâtre Le Quai (Angers), La Rose des Vents (Scène Nationale de Villeneuve d'Ascq), PACT Zollverein (Essen), Kaaitheater (Brussels)

4 February and 21 April 2012

SuperBodies, 3th Triennial for contemporary art, fashion and design of Hasselt, Modemuseum, Hasselt
+ 32 11 23 96 21

THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AT NEEDCOMPANY

Needcompany will be dashing into the new year, the 25th in its existence: 2012 will be a year both for the familiar and for wild, new and dazzling directions. This is accompanied by the great news that Jan Lauwers' **Marketplace 76** will have its world premiere at the Ruhrtriennial.

Marketplace 76 is the story of villagers startled by an explosion in which 24 people lose their lives, including 7 children. The tragedy of the dead children weighs heavily on the surviving villagers. Too much grief dominates their lives. Until one day a lifeboat falls from the sky...

Jan Lauwers has written **Marketplace 76**, a kaleidoscopic epic story composed of four seasons. It reconciles such dark themes as mourning and sorrow, incest and abduction, paedophilia and suicide with excessive love, friendship, happiness and survival.

Needlapb 18 will be devoted to the very first reading of this play in the Akademietheater in Vienna.

In Vienna, Jan Lauwers will also take on the task of directing **Caligula** as artist-in-residence at the Burgtheater. In this project he will work with actors from the Burgtheater ensemble, as well as with Anneke Bonnema and Hans Petter Dahl from the Needcompany ensemble and with the musician and composer Nicolas Field, who was previously involved in projects by the **OHNO COOPERATION**. This gives Lauwers the opportunity to tackle a classic play again and to immerse himself in the absurd world of Albert Camus by way of the Roman emperor's outsized actions in his struggle for the impossible.

'What use is the amazing power that's mine, if I can't have the sun set in the cast, if I can't reduce the sum of suffering and make an end of death?'

– Caligula, A. Camus

The curator Pieter T'Jonck has invited Lemm&Barkey to take part in the **SuperBodies Triennial**. The triennial 'explores the fascination of many artists and designers for the way in which our body secretly moulds and shapes our experiences'. Lot Lemm and Grace Ellen Barkey have accepted this invitation by creating a grotesque and poetic world, based on the various materials they used in their performances **Chunking** (2005), **The Porcelain Project** (2007) and **This door is too small (for a bear)** (2010).

At the exhibition they will also present **The Porcelain Project / Installation**, in which porcelain objects are brought to life using the principles of the marionette.

Other artists taking part in the Triennial include Louise Bourgeois, Trisha Brown, Ivo Dimchev, Ann Veronica Janssens, Franz West and many more.

After the Belgian premiere of **The Art of Entertainment** in Brussels, this play toured to Rotterdam and Ghent. In spring this production will be on in Espoon (FI) and at deSingel (Antwerp).

'Jan Lauwers' The Art of Entertainment is a funny yet cynical reflection on the end of the theatre. A madcap performance, which discusses the coup of entertainment in art.

(...) Everything is centred around a funny but caustic notion of our society which is characterized by spectacle and the difficulties that the theatre and the actor experience in sharing their art in this environment. It is almost as if Jan Lauwers has given us his testament.'

– La Libre Belgique, September 2011

The world premiere of **Analysis – the Whole Song**, the final part of **Tokyo, Paris, New York – a Pop Opera Trilogy** by MaisonDahlBonnema, took place in Bergen (NO) and met with a warm response. It then went on to CC Maasmechelen and brought the year to an explosive end at the Kaaistudios in Brussel. Brussels was also the location for the launch of the book of **Analysis – the Whole Song**, which is published by De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek. The tour will continue in 2012.

'Successful existential crisis among everyday matters and pop cultural references.' – Bergens Tidende, October 2011

'This trilogy is one of the most remarkable works of recent years.' – De Morgen, December 2011

The first part of the trilogy will be on in Wrocław in april.

Isabella's room was a great success at the 41st Venice Biennale.

'Just as Kantor Lauwers spins around the stage setting and plays the role of the deafmute orchestrator among performers that turn into musicians and actors who interfere with dancers. (...) The truth is an artisan, theatrical work of total art of very high quality.' – L'Ottavo Peccato, October 2011

In January the production will be on in Udine (IT) and Dijon, and in February in Tarbes and Cherbourg.

The **Sad Face | Happy Face** trilogy will be performed in Sibiu at the end of May.

After the spectacular success of Grace Ellen Barkey's **This door is too small (for a bear)** in Montpellier and Toulouse, in February it will raising the roof in Aarhus too.

'The perfectly composed stage direction and the comic potential of the dancers-actors really take you by the throat. The hat scene is reminiscent of the masked theatre from Bali which Artaud evoked in his quest for the theatre of dreams. The last scene in which the half-visible dancers move passionately is one of unearthly beauty. This performance confirms its originality from beginning to end.'

– L'Herault du jour, October 2011

November saw publication of John Freeman's book **The Greatest Shows on Earth**. It covers 14 theatre experiences in 12 countries, ranging from Peter Brook's King Lear to Jan Lauwers' Isabella's Room, as seen through the eyes of the actors, dramaturges, authors, researchers, dancers and performing artists who saw them.

We welcome Yannick Roman to the administrative team, and also Catherine Travelletti, Emmanuel Schwartz and Romy Louise Lauwers, who are joining the artistic team for **Marketplace 76**.

And of course Needcompany's sweet newborn baby: Alma, Misha's daughter.