

BRUSSELS, FEBRUARY 2013

Dear friends all over the world who appreciate our work,

Do you too find the extravagances of those presently in power so bothersome when they express an opinion about art? In the Netherlands they call art a hobby for lefties. In Canada they call it that depressive hippy art. In France the previous president just rearranged everything and made sure that places in that country that enjoyed particular international esteem will in the near future have no significance at all. In Belgium those in power in the most powerful and very right-wing separatist N-VA party say that Flemish art should equate to a low threshold. Thresholds in Flanders are already so low that they are starting to stink of the cess pit. And that is precisely what the unsurpassable Stef Lernous and his Abattoir Fermé have demonstrated in their evocation of Bruegel's native country in their production 'Apocalypso': that it stinks here in Flanders. Stef Lernous for president! Another artist who has analysed Flanders incisively is

Fien Troch in her latest film 'KID'. When you see this film you realise more than ever what it means to be Flemish. Fien Troch for president!

For all these so-called nationalist Flemings: if we had followed your way of thinking, Bruegel, Van der Weyden, Van Eyck, Rubens, Jordaens and all the rest would never have existed and nor, consequently, would Flanders. Let's be quite clear about this: this applies to any country and any era. Good art cannot be nationalist because that is simply a contradiction in terms. Your damned artists are the real Flemings because they would never say this themselves. I can assure you I have done more for Flemish culture than all the 'powerful' N-VA politicians put together. My 'Flemish' plays have been translated into dozens of languages, are performed all over the world and I am pretty certain that it is because of my work that for the very first time in history a play was performed

in Flemish in a New York theatre. Afterwards Harvey Keitel asked me: "What cute language was that?" That's how things go in the real world. In the sham world the N-VA wants to create you had better put on rubber boots because we're going to sink deep into the mud.

But anyway, this struggle between artists and those in power has always existed:

1623: Rubens is in his studio painting the knockers of a whore he picked up in Pocket Street. A messenger comes running in with the news that he has to leave for England double quick. "Bloody hell," he says in broad Antwerp dialect, "that sourpuss of a Queen Elizabeth! I can never paint without her interrupting me." He travels duty-bound to London to prevent a war. As a Flemish citizen he speaks six languages fluently and will have to do all the interpreting as usual. "As if it

weren't enough of a bother already," he sighs. As is his habit, once in England he first goes for a good beer in the pub next to The Globe in the hope of bumping into his old friend Shakespeare. And he's in luck; the old poet is sitting staring at his beer as drunk as a lord. "Hey Billy," says Peter Paul, "you don't look too good, old pal. Having trouble with your sonnets?"

"No," his friend answers, "England is doomed. My Queen has gone mad."

"How do you mean?"

"Our Queen has decreed that from now on people have to pay admission. Theatre will no longer receive any subsidy! I refuse to write for the elite, Peter Paul! I am a servant of the people."

"Come on now, Billy, don't be so moralistic. I don't sell my paintings to just anybody either. They are much too expensive for that!" Shakespeare looks at the world-famous painter dumbfounded. "You don't understand at all, my old friend." He gets up, throws his beer at the wall with a tremendous crash and runs outside, leaving Rubens watching in astonishment. The barman says: "Rubens, old chap, I hope your diplomatic talents will have more effect on the queen!".

After the introduction of the 'ticket system', Shakespeare did indeed stop writing plays. At the same time Rubens' paintings were being sold at record prices and he was also an esteemed diplomat whose opinion was valued by all those in power.

That's all for now,

JL

PS: And to all those Flemish artists who have suddenly become monarchists, I continue to repeat: you should feel ashamed as long as there is still one statue of Leopold II left standing in Belgium.

AGENDA

MUSH-ROOM Grace Ellen Barkey

Visual concept: Lemm&Barkey
Created with/performed by: Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Maarten Seghers, Mohamed Toukabri, Catherine Travelletti

Production: Needcompany | Coproduction: PACT Zollverein (Essen) and Internationales Figurentheater-Festival (Erlangen)

World premiere
22, 23 March 2013
PACT Zollverein, Essen
+49 201 289 47 11

4, 5 April 2013
Dansens Hus, Stockholm
+46 8 508 990 90

Belgian premiere
19, 20, 21 April 2013
Kaaithheater, Brussels
+32 2 201 59 59

8, 9 or 10 May 2013
Internationales Figurentheater-Festival, Erlangen
+49 9131862511

24 May 2013
De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam
+31 20 626 68 66

27, 28 May 2013
STUK, Leuven
+32 16 320 300

25, 26 June 2013
Malta Festival, Poznan
+48 61 64 65 243

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, Emmanuel Schwartz, Maarten Seghers, Catherine Travelletti, Jan Lauwers, Elke Janssens

Production: Needcompany | Coproduction: Ruhrtriennale (Bochum), Burgtheater (Vienna) and Holland Festival (Amsterdam)

12, 13, 14 April 2013
Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Frankfurt
+49 69 40 58 95 20

14, 15, 16, 17, 18 May 2013
Kasino / Burgtheater, Vienna
+43 51 444 4145

30, 31 May, 1 June 2013
deSingel, Antwerp
+32 3 248 28 28

28, 29 June 2013
Malta Festival, Poznan
+48 61 64 65 243

ANALYSIS – THE WHOLE SONG MaisonDahlBonnema

With: Hans Petter Dahl and Anna Sophia Bonnema

Production: MaisonDahlBonnema, Needcompany & M-A-P | Coproduction: BIT Teatergarasjen (Bergen) | With the cooperation of BUDA (Kortrijk), 3D Square/ HOWEST (Kortrijk), Kaaithheater (Brussels) | With residencies at ImpulsTanz (Vienna), PACT Zollverein (Essen) | With the support of the Flemish Authorities and Norsk Kulturråd

18 March 2013
During TEFAF, Ainsy, Maastricht
+31 43 350 55 55

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

Production: Needcompany | 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 | With cooperation of Kaaithheater (Brussels)

19 March 2013
During TEFAF, Theater aan 't Vrijthof, Maastricht
+31 43 350 55 55

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, Eléonore Valère (replaces Tijen Lawton), Inge Van Bruystegem

Production: Needcompany and Salzburger Festspiele | Coproduction: Schauspielhaus Zürich and PACT Zollverein (Essen) | With cooperation of deSingel (Antwerp) and Kaaithheater (Brussels)

3, 4 May 2013
Théâtre National de Nice
+33 4931 9090

THE HOUSE OF OUR FATHERS – PERFORMANCES Jan Lauwers

With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Julien Faure, Yumiko Funaya, Benoît Gob, Elke Janssens, Jan Lauwers, Romy Louise Lauwers, Maarten Seghers, Mohamed Toukabri, Catherine Travelletti, Inge Van Bruystegem

Production: Needcompany

14, 15, 16 June 2013
KunstFestSpiele, Orangerie Herrenhausen, Hanover, +49 511 168 499 94

THE HOUSE OF OUR FATHERS – INSTALLATION Jan Lauwers

17-22 June 2013
KunstFestSpiele, Orangerie Herrenhausen, Hanover, +49 511 168 499 94

THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AT NEEDCOMPANY

GRACE ELLEN BARKEY & THE RESIDENTS: MUSH-ROOM

Since December, Grace Ellen Barkey has been making herself felt at Needcompany with the rehearsals for her new creation, **MUSH-ROOM**. No less a group than the iconic avant-garde art collective The Residents has created new music for **MUSH-ROOM** and has issued it on a CD with very special artwork. You can buy the CD at our webshop from 1 March, but you can already listen to the song *Sticks and Logs* now.

The Residents and Grace Ellen Barkey are well-matched with their psychedelic and extreme imagination. Here is what Grace Ellen Barkey says about her new production:

“It’s autumn. A hallucinogenic autumn with falling leaves, wind and rain, and occasionally the sun shines to remind us of the beauty of decay. We immerse ourselves in the melancholy and in the end of things. But ultimately resistance to it wins. I am the president of the movement against melancholy!”

MUSH-ROOM will premiere at PACT Zollverein in Essen (Germany) in March and will then be on in Stockholm. The Belgian premiere is at the Kaaithheater in April. In May it will travel to Erlangen, Amsterdam and Leuven, and in June to the Malta Festival in Poznan.

The Residents will be on their ‘Wonder of Weird. The 40th Anniversary Tour’ in Europe from the end of April till the end of May. Their path will cross Needcompany’s in various cities on several occasions. A few days after the Belgian premiere of **MUSH-ROOM**, The Residents will be on at Het Depot in Leuven, where you will later be able to see **MUSH-ROOM** too, at the STUK. In May The Residents will be giving a concert at the Muziekgebouw aan ‘t IJ in Amsterdam and four days later Needcompany will be at De Brakke Grond in Amsterdam too. In Stockholm you can see **MUSH-ROOM** as Dansens Hus and The Residents at Södrateatern.

TOUR

We brought the tour of **The Art of Entertainment** to a successful close in Turnhout, Villeneuve d’Ascq, Aalst, Bruges and Leuven. As La Voix du Nord put it: *‘Two hilarious hours of pure entertainment’*. **Marketplace 76** was very well received in Vienna, Bruges, Brussels and Seville. The Flemish news magazine Knack wrote: *‘Portraying and channelling the darkest emotions with cheerful colours and powerful tableaux vivants: Lauwers remains a master of the art’*. And Flemish newspaper De Morgen: *‘This production has more incredible ideas in store than many other artists have in their entire oeuvre’*.

This season we shall also be performing this supremely musical piece in Frankfurt, Antwerp, Amsterdam and Poznan.

Apart from this, Needcompany will also be at the ‘During TEFAF’ festival, which, as the name implies, takes place during the art fair in Maastricht; they will perform Jan Lauwers’ **Isabella’s room** and MaisonDahlBonnema’s **Analysis – the Whole Song**, the third part of **Tokyo, Paris, New York – a Pop Opera Trilogy**. We shall be celebrating the 250th performance of **Isabella’s room** there; its premiere was at the Avignon Festival in 2004.

In May we shall be performing **The Deer House** in Nice. Jan Lauwers’ installation **The House of Our Fathers** is being shown during the KunstFestSpiele in Hanover. After more than 25 years of research in media art, dance, theatre, literature, music and film, Jan Lauwers is for the fifth time venturing into 8-hour marathon performances with the members of Needcompany. This will be the biggest installation of the series. After the three performances it can still be visited for a week.

MARKETPLACE 76 PUBLICATION

And finally, the Dutch version of **Marketplace 76** has been published by De Nieuwe Toneel Bibliotheek and can now also be purchased from our webshop. While awaiting the publication in English read this and dream gently away:

Night. The old woman moves slowly across the village square. She scatters bread for the gulls. She carefully folds up the paper bread bag and puts it in her handbag. She slips. She hurts her knee. She gets up with some trouble and goes home. The square is deserted once again. The fountain is not working. Nothing has happened.