

BRUSSELS, SEPTEMBER 2013

Dear friend,

1. The standing human. The image of that still, unknown man standing there in front of a tank or a mass of soldiers, or far too long on a huge square staring stubbornly and alone at the void in front of him. That void which in no time at all can change into an inferno. That's the image. Why is this possibly the best known and most poignant image of our times? Because it is not intended to be an image? Because the man in question had no intention of creating an image? And is anything but an artist? Because the standing man's gaze is sharp and focused, completely at rest? Has he accepted that he may be crushed? These are questions that vex me to exhaustion because I cannot find an answer to them. Now I am on the point of leaving for China I am thinking about them even more. We are after all performing in the theatre on Tiananmen Square. I have been invited as an 'official' artist from the official West. I have a safe

and interesting life and am paid sufficiently for it. I am a guest in that huge, strange, marvellous and controversial country. I read somewhere that since 2005 there have been 87,000 uprisings, large and small, in China. I will not be standing still on a square while I am there. I fear that would be a form of pathetic colonialism. I hope I will learn a lot from what I see and experience. A country where art is an intensive part of everyday life. Even if it is censored or suppressed. It is there and will always be there. And it is always good. Art is always good.

2. The running man. In that superb video by Jesper Just in the Danish pavilion in Venice. The man who doggedly keeps on walking in an artificial city, a copy of Paris with Eiffel Tower and all the rest, somewhere in China. And never stops because there is nowhere to rest. His gaze is that of a man in search of something looking around distractedly,

not knowing what to focus his gaze on. Aimless. I think it's a very European image. A depressing image full of beauty. European artists are running men and women who have no reason to stand still. If only that could remain so. Since the Second World War more than 1000 new wars have already been waged on this planet. The nationalists in Europe like wars. War is never good. Though it is inspiring. But then again that is a Christian notion.

3. The recumbent human. While we were travelling around Europe on a very busy summer tour, I received the message that my eighty-eight-year-old mother had been robbed by two 'bandits' as she called them. She had to wrench off her wedding ring, which she had never taken off in more than fifty years, with lots of soap and pain. My mother is one of the recumbent people. According to Canetti this is the most natural position. When my mother gave the bandit her ring she said to him: 'This ring contains my whole life. For you all it means is death.' My mother is a good mother. Once a standing mother, invincible like all mothers. She told me not to interrupt my travels to comfort her. And would I bring a ring back from China. The recumbent human is the most defenceless and thereby the least interesting human, but certainly the finest.

Until after China
JL

Just before going to press we learnt of the death of Marianne Van Kerkhoven, one of the best-known and most distinguished dramaturges in our theatre landscape. She was very closely involved in the genesis of Needcompany. She was a meticulous critic and dedicated dramaturge. We remember her with affection.

AGENDA

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 Kaaitheater (Brussels)

16, 17 September 2013

National Center for the Performing Arts, Beijing
+86 010 6606 4707

20, 21, 22 September 2013

Tianjin Grand Theatre, Tianjin
+86 22 83882008

26, 27, 28 September 2013

No. 13 Theatre, Guangzhou
Drama Art Center
+86 20 8725 8626

11, 12, 13 October 2013

World View Series, National Theater
Concert Hall, Taipei
+886 2 3393 9723

Our thanks to the Brussels Capital region for their support in organising this unique tour.

MARKET PLACE 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)

10, 11 September 2013

La Bâtie, Château Rouge, Annemasse
+41 22 738 19 19

12, 13 November 2013

Kaaitheater, Brussels
+32 2 201 59 59

18 November 2013

SPIELART Festival #10, Munich
+49 89 54 81 81 81

21, 22 November 2013

Scène Nationale de Sète et du Bassin de Thau, Sète
+33 4 67 74 66 97

MUSH-ROOM

Grace Ellen 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)

30 October 2013

Theater in Bewegung, Theaterhaus Jena
+49 364 149 8060

ODD? BUT TRUE!

Lemm&Barkey

Created with/performed by: Julien Faure, Benoît Gob, Sung-Im Her, Maarten Seghers, Mohamed Toukabri, Catherine Travelletti

Production: Needcompany | With cooperation of BRONKS (Brussels)

9 November 2013

EXPORT/IMPORT festival, BRONKS, Brussels
+32 2 219 99 21

GOLDFISH GAME

Jan Lauwers

Director: Jan Lauwers | Script: Jan Lauwers, Dick Crane | Camera and photography: Maarten van der Put, Maarten Vanden Abeele | Editing: Nico Leunen | Music: Doachim Mann
Sound Design: Sen Jan Jansen | With: Grace Ellen Barkey, Victor Lauwers, Anneke Bonnema, Hans Petter Dahl, Timothy Couchman, Dick Crane, Gonzalo Cunill, Viviane De Muynck, Misha Downey, Carlotta Sagna, Simon Versnel, Tijen Lawton

Production: Needcompany, De Filmfabriek, VRT, Canal+, Brugge 2002, Fonds Film in Vlaanderen

14 September 2013

Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing
+86 10 5780 0200

NEEDCOMPANY

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

BURGTHEATER SINCE 2009

THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AT NEEDCOMPANY

SUMMER TOUR

Needcompany has enjoyed a fantastic summer tour. **Marketplace 76** toured Europe's major festivals, from the Holland Festival in Amsterdam to the Malta Festival in Poznan, taking in the Avignon Festival and going on to the Venice Biennale. Of the Malta Festival in Poznan, Guido Lauwaert wrote for Knack Focus: *"In Needcompany's case [Marketplace 76] the audience seemed euphoric. Despite the late starting time of 9.30 pm, the remote venue, and the fact that the performance was delayed by 30 minutes because on two occasions 200 chairs had to be found and the aisles filled up so that none of the 1600 spectators would be disappointed, several hundred mainly young people remained seated for the discussion afterwards, which ended at about 2.30 in the morning. If there had been a third performance, it would have had an audience of 800 too."*

Tickets for *Marketplace 76* turned out to have sold out very quickly at the Avignon Festival too. Though it started with thunder and flashes of lightning over the Cloître des Carmes. The audience waited patiently and more than an hour later the performance started in the pouring rain. Needcompany conquered the gods with a cracker of a performance and were rewarded with roaring applause. The press were very keen on the play too. Libération put *Marketplace 76* on its cover under the heading 'The gems of the festival': *"Marketplace 76 is extreme in its violence, nastiness and humour, in such a way that the performance can only succeed or fail. Marketplace 76 is not a failure. (...) What we see on stage is exactly like the atmosphere and tone of Queneau's superb poem les Vivants et les Morts. (...) A joyous macabre dance."* La Gazette wrote: *"It paints a brilliant picture with a palette rich in nuances linked to characters who*

are frightening and pitiful as well as generous and moving, but above all human." *"A theatrical adventure, marvellously sung and danced"* was the verdict of L'Humanité, and La Provence found it *"Excellent and brilliant, and the audience asks for more."* The Italian press at the Venice Biennale also put their impressions into fine words: *"Energy at 760,000 volts; such is the elusive but clearly palpable leading character in this metaphorical but only too real marketplace. This place of exchange – and here this friendly-sounding word becomes a threat – is shown in all its beauty and ugliness. Relentless truth."* (Eccolanotiziaquotidiana.it) *"Jan Lauwers does not take sides, but composes his whole team out of simply exceptional artists, not just actors, not just dancers, not just performers. He uses their complexity to give shape to the equally complex dramaturgical and conceptual structure with its overlaps and accumula-*

tions. This structure sometimes obliges us to select an individual part to focus our attention on, then swallows itself and explodes. It presents us with the fragments of a person who is doomed to experience an impossible coexistence." (Sipario.it) This season *Marketplace 76* can be seen at the La Bâtie festival in Genève, the Kaaitheater in Brussels (rerun), the SPIELART Festival #10 in Munich and the Scène Nationale in Sète.

Grace Ellen Barkey's **MUSH-ROOM** was also extremely well received at the Malta Festival and at ImPulsTanz in Vienna. The Austrian newspaper Falter proclaimed: *"We want more!"* Der Standard wrote: *"A parcel bomb, that's what it promises to be tonight. But one you need not be afraid of, despite the bang it makes. It's a piece of consciousness-expansion with political aspirations. And entertainment is written in*

capitals. So anyone who has not yet found a parasol mushroom or cep this summer will be exceptionally well served. Here, as in the Land of Plenty, they dangle down from the fly loft on strings." Praise was also to be found in Knack Focus: *"Fun at last, and, figuratively, warmth too. A ninety-minute trip by eight dancers under the influence (artificial, of course) of drug-friendly mushrooms. (...) At last the imagination takes control. With a lively foundation that isn't dull for a second, but remains full of surprises. The success of the piece doesn't rely only on its 'tricky trips', but also on its mixture of cultures. This combination repeatedly makes for a surrealist spectacle, with the typical Needcompany stamp on it."* **MUSH-ROOM** can be seen at the Theater in Bewegung German dance festival in Jena in October. The music for the production, written by the legendary group The Residents, is already being reissued on CD and the vinyl version is coming out in November.

MaisonDahlBonnema performed the final part of their opera trilogy, **Analysis – The Whole Song**, in the charming Schauspielhaus during ImPulsTanz. It was a happy reunion, following the residence that Hans Petter Dahl and Anna Sophia Bonnema had been given there in the run-up to this production in 2011.

The House of Our Fathers, an installation by Jan Lauwers, was shown in the splendid baroque Herrenhausen gallery in Hanover. In the course of one weekend more than 3000 people attended the marathon performances. Some watched for 5 minutes, others stayed for 4 hours. The Hannoverische Allgemeine also thought it was quite extraordinary: *"The installation displays a disparate contradiction, extraordinary and absurd, precious and cheap, sublime and banal. Just like life and mankind."*

I WANT (NO) REALITY

Ana Brzezińska

Director: Ana Brzezińska | Photography: Piotr Tokarski, Charles Jurga
Editing: Agnieszka Glińska PSM

Production: Yeti Films | Coproduction: Needcompany

14 September 2013

Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing
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18, 19, 20 October 2013

13e Festival du Film sur l'Art, ISELP, Brussels
+32 2 218 23 17

Guangzhou. The company will then travel on to Taipei in Taiwan, where another 3 performances will be given at the National Theatre during the World View Series performing arts festival, whose guest country this year is Belgium. All this will be accompanied by workshops, master-classes, films, public encounters and all sorts of other activities. It is due to the efforts and enthusiasm of Tian Gebing's avant-garde Paper Tiger Theatre group that, after 2 years of negotiations, we are able to do this.

ODD? BUT TRUE!

Needcompany will for the first time be presenting a children's play at the fantastic BRONKS children's and youth theatre in Brussels. Lemm&Barkey's visual idiom is an invitation to view things through children's eyes. The premiere will be during the EXPORT/IMPORT festival in November.