

La Vie Brève
Théâtre^{de}
l'Aquarium

THE DECEITFUL CROCODILE/ DIDO AND AENEAS

Adapted from **Henry Purcell**'s opera and other materials
A creation by **Samuel Achache**, **Jeanne Candell** and **Florent Hubert**



© Victor Tonelli / ArtComArt

On tour

Production-touring

Marion Bois – Codirector +33 6 21 35 38 08 marion@laviebreve.fr

Floria Benamer – Production and tour Manager +33 6 75 52 80 16 floria@theatredelaquarium.net

THE DECEITFUL CROCODILE/ DIDO AND AENEAS

Opera Theatre

After **Henry Purcell**'s opera and other materials

Stage direction **Samuel Achache** and **Jeanne Candel**

Music direction **Florent Hubert**

Collective orchestration

Choir direction **Jeanne Sicre**

Set design **Lisa Navarro**

Lighting **Vyara Stefanova**

Costumes **Pauline Kieffer**

Set building **François Gauthier-Lafaye, Didier Raymond, Pierre-Guilhem Costes**

By and with

Matthieu Bloch, Judith Chemla or **Anne-Emmanuelle Davy** (alternately), **Vladislav Galard** or **Myrtille Hetzel** (alternately), **Florent Hubert, Clément Janinet** or **Marie Salvat** (alternately), **Olivier Laisney, Léo-Antonin Lutinier, Thibault Perriard, Jan Peters, Jeanne Sicre, Marion Sicre** and **Lawrence Williams**

Thanks to **Frédérique Bini, Domitille Duke, Philippe Binard, Lucie Ben Bata, Agnès Estrade, Rémi Sella, Dominique Hollebeke** and **Compagnie Midi-Minuit**

To Isabelle Seguin

Production (reprise 2021)

la vie brève - Théâtre de l'Aquarium

Production (creation 2013)

C.I.C.T. - Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord

Co-production

Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg;

Comédie de Valence - Centre dramatique national Drôme-Ardèche;

MC2: Grenoble; Le Radiant-Bellevue / Caluire-et-Cuire; Théâtre de Caen;

Théâtre Forum Meyrin / Genève

With the support of the **Théâtre de la Cité Internationale**

With support for production and touring from **Arcadi Île-de-France, SPEDIDAM, DRAC Île-de-France** and **Région Île-de-France**

Duration of the show: 2h05

Premiered on January 8, 2013 at La Comédie de Valence



TO KNOCK UP THE OPERA / STAGE-WRITING

« In its old sense, the verb 'bricoler' [here translated "to knock up"] applied to ball games and billiards, to hunting, shooting and riding. It was however always used with reference to some extraneous movement: a ball rebounding, a dog straying or a horse swerving from its direct course to avoid an obstacle »

Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*

Constructed from Purcell's baroque opera *Dido and Aeneas* and other materials gleaned during rehearsals in literature (Virgil's *Aeneid*, Shakespeare's *Sonnets* for example), cinema, documentary or painting, this composite work will be performed by a team of musicians who may not seem to be "made" for this kind of music since they are not baroque musicians, but have more of a jazz background and singers who are primarily actors. Jazz musicians work in ways that are close to methods that actors use when working on a collective piece (improvisations, orchestration of an existing piece of music, making do and mend). We have tried out these methods in our collective *D'ores et déjà* (*Le Père tralalère / Notre terreur*) and *la vie brève* (*Robert Plankett*) and we wish to question Purcell's opera in the same way. All participants in this project are considered as a co-author of this work, be they musicians, actors/singers or set designers.



AWARD

On June 2nd, 2014, the show was awarded the Molière for Best Musical Theatre performance of the year.

PRESS

Beneath the (intentional) tinkered aspect, the craftsmanship is there, patient, imaginative, evidently and deeply attached to the sense of English baroque.

— [Sophie Bourdais](#) – *Télérama*, June 2021

This show and its unbridled spirit turn upside down every boundary, those which usually confine each discipline to its own square, but also those of the reasonable and of the exuberant, opening vast playgrounds to a limitless imagination.

— [Marie-Valentine Chaudon](#) – *La Croix*, June 2021

No need to be keen on baroque opera nor to be a Purcell's specialist in order to be taken on board by this sensational team of musicians-actors-singers who know how to do everything, who give themselves without counting and deliver a wild version of Dido and Aeneas which they fill with jazz and farcical moments without spoiling its beauty... on the contrary!

— [Maïa Bouteillet](#) – *Paris Mômes.fr*, June 2021

In this contemporary farce based on an antique backdrop, it seems quite natural that all members of the cast, well-known for their skills of improvisation, uplift and transform Purcell's baroque score into jazz energy and manage to find the fine balance where music becomes action.

— [Fabienne Arvers](#) - *Les Inrockuptibles*, February 2013

Everyone there would deserved to be mentioned, because the success is a result of the brightness of all those talents united (...) We laugh as much as we are moved, go!

— [Armelle Héliot](#) - *Le Figaro*, December 2013

Glorious and exhilarating youth of this troupe that excels in everything.

— [Éric Loret](#) – *Libération*, February 2013

Double bass, clarinet, saxophone, violin, trumpet and drums form the orchestra brought together by Florent Hubert, an orchestra that does better than being totally integrated in the theatrical action, but where the instruments become full actors. (...) We have to say that they accompany actors who are terrific instruments and who play with the codes of opera with an infectious euphoria.

— [Fabienne Darge](#) - *Le Monde*, February 2013

THE COUNTERPOINT



The rehearsal process integrates provocations, constraints and work frames defined by the stage directors: we question both music and performance (singing/acting posture, relation to space, musical transpositions and reformulations, relation to a convention, the approach of tragedy, rewriting of a myth and its themes...).

There is no separation between music and theatrical action, everything is on the go at the same time and in the same space – writing, editing... The work is “stage-written”.

Facing directly tragedy and its representation, extreme emotions and themes that tragedy implies: to love – to leave – to devour – to let oneself die. Finding the equilibrium point where music and theatrical action are indissociable, where music is action.

MUSICAL CREATION



We have no intention of being true to a style of an epoch or an origin. We wish to perform a work from the 17th century that in itself is Purcell's appropriation of more ancient elements. The « semi- opera » à l'anglaise and the Elisabethan theatre that feel close to us invite this dramaturgical plasticity. The baroque music is “incidental music” - it rests on a reasoning that is extra-musical, rhetorical, poetic or cultural. It is euphoric (in the etymological sense of the word). We are the only ones to blame for this concept of a music that does not systematically seek its supreme degree (La « grande musique ») but exists on all levels, from the most trivial to most sacred, allowing us to oscillate between the spectacular and the minimalist. For example, a singer could be asked to « move down » from operatic singing to simple singing, even humming, to spoken song...

The accompaniment is at times reduced to its skeleton, giving the ensemble an aspect of a lecture on contemporary instruments. The musicians have done a work of re-appropriation of Purcell's work in order to be able to play it, transforming certain aspects, contracting or stretching certain values, infiltrating the score, inserting musical commentaries, putting secondary aspects into foreground, etc... The freedom of interpretation must reign not only on stage but also in the approach to music.

PERFORMANCES ON TOUR



Season 2023-2024

4 & 5 November 2023, Teatro Due, Parma (IT)

Season 2022-2023

23 September 2022: Théâtre Jean Vilar, Suresnes (FR)

From 27 to 30 September 2022: Théâtre Olympia, CDN de Tours (FR)

19 & 20 October 2022: Comédie de Colmar (FR)

5 & 6 April 2023: La Halle aux Grains - Blois (FR)

27 & 28 April 2023: Le Moulin du Roc - Niort (FR)

4 & 5 May 2023: MC2 Grenoble (FR)

16 & 17 May 2023: Théâtre de Nîmes (FR)

From 9 to 14 June 2023: Théâtre National Populaire – Villeurbanne (FR)

Season 21-22

12 June 2022: Théâtre de l'Idéal - Là-Haut, Biennale d'Art Lyrique - Tourcoing (FR)

From 24 to 26 June 2022: Festival dei Due Mondi - Spoleto (IT)

Season 20-21

From 15 June to 4th July 2021 : Théâtre de l'Aquarium, in BRUIT Festival, Paris (FR)

Season 2015 – 2016

25 & 26 September 2015: L'Apostrophe, Scène nationale de Cergy-Pontoise (FR)

1 & 2 October 2015: Espace Jean Legendre, Compiègne (FR)

5 & 6 October 2015: Théâtre Rutebeuf, Clichy (FR)

9 & 10 October 2015: Théâtre National de Nice (FR)

14 & 15 October 2015: La Criée, Marseille (FR)

1 June 2016: Platonov Festival, Voronezh (RU)

Season 2013-2014

From 6 to 9 November 2013: Théâtre Garonne, Toulouse (FR)

13 & 14 November 2013: Théâtre de Caen (FR)

17 & 18 November 2013: Théâtre de Vanves (FR)

From 21 to 23 November 2013: Théâtre de Lorient (FR)

26 & 27 November 2013: Grand Théâtre du Luxembourg (LU)

30 November & 1 December, 2013: Le Radiant Bellevue, Caluire-et-Cuire (FR)

From 4 to 7 December 2013: MC2, Grenoble (FR)

From 27 December 2013 to 12 January 2014: Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris (FR)

31 March 31 & April 1st 2014: Théâtre Firmin-Gémier-la Piscine / Chatenay-Malabry (FR)

4 & 5 April 2014: Sortie Ouest, Béziers (FR)

9 & 10 April 2014: La Comète, Châlons-en-Champagne (FR)

16 & 17 April 2014: Théâtre des Salins, Martigues (FR)

From 22 to 24 April 2014: Le Trident, Cherbourg (FR)

29 & 30 April 2014: Forum Meyrin, Genève (CH)

12 & 13 May 2014: Espace Malraux, Chambéry (FR)

16 & 17 May 2014: Théâtre de la Renaissance, Oullins (FR)

20 & 21 May 2014: Théâtre de Villefranche-sur-Saône (FR)

26 & 27 May 2014: Festival Théâtre en Mai, Théâtre Dijon Bourgogne (FR)

From 3 to 5 June 2014 : CNCDC Châteauvallon / Toulon

13 & 14 June 2014: Festival KunstFestpiele – Hannover (DE)

Season 2012-2013

Premiere : January 8, 2013 : La Comédie de Valence (FR)

From 14 January to 3 February 2013 : Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris (FR)

la vie brève



Founded by Jeanne Candel in 2009 in Paris, la vie brève is an ensemble in which actors, musicians, stage directors, set designers, costume designers, technicians who get together regularly for periods of research and creation. If the initial nucleus originally met during their training course, la vie brève never stopped developing since its creation, it transforms itself, rephrases itself according to the necessities of the shows it proposes. Collective writing is what shapes la vie brève's creations. The actors and/or musicians and singers are put at the center and are considered as creators and authors, not as just performers. This polyphonic writing breaks the boundaries of the functions and techniques of the people who make the performances of the company.

Since July 2019, la vie brève runs the Théâtre de l'Aquarium which becomes a house of creation for theatre and music intertwined. "Have people swing in each corner" is its leitmotiv. Associate artists, actors-musicians-singers, companies in residence work to have this resonator instrument vibrate. A resource center and a workshop dedicated to eco-conception contribute to the project. The public is invited twice a year, in winter and in spring to BRUIT – music and theatre festival, and from time to time to public events.

Samuel Achache

Training until 2006 first at Music Academy of the 5th arrondissement in Paris with Bruno Wacrenier and Solène Fiumani, then at the National Academy of High Drama Studies in classes of Árpád Schilling, Philippe Adrien, Alain Françon and in Mario Gonzales's mask workshop. In 2015, he stages *Fugue*, presented at the Festival d'Avignon. He renewed his collaboration with Jeanne Candel on *Orfeo / Je suis mort en Arcadie* and on *La Chute de la maison* with the Festival d'Automne. In 2018, he creates *Chewing gum Silence* with Antonin Tri Hoang with the Festival d'Automne, *Songs* with the Ensemble Correspondances – Sébastien Daucé. In 2021, he leaves the Théâtre de l'Aquarium and la vie brève and creates his own company La Sourde in order to continue his work around theatre and music.

Jeanne Candel

After studying literature, she joins the Centre National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique (CNSAD) where she works with Andrzej Seweryn, Joël Jouanneau, Muriel Mayette, Philippe Adrien, Mario Gonzalès and Árpád Schilling. From 2006 to 2011, she regularly works with Árpád Schilling with whom she creates four shows. In 2009, she founds la vie brève and stages with the company: *Robert Plankett* (Artdanthé, 2010); *Le Crocodile trompeur / Didon et Enée*, co-stage directed with Samuel Achache, (Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, 2013); *Le Goût du faux et autres chansons* (Festival d'Automne, 2014), *Orfeo*, co-stage directed with Samuel Achache, adapted from Monteverdi (Comédie de Valence, January 2017); *Demi-Véronique*, a theatrical ballet inspired by Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony co-created and performed with Caroline Darchen and Lionel Dray (Comédie de Valence, February 2017); *Tarquin*, a lyrical drama composed by Florent Hubert on a libretto by Aram Kebabijan (Nouveau Théâtre de Montreuil – CDN, September 2019). In February 2016, she is invited to stage *Bründibar* by Hans Krása at the Opéra de Lyon. She stages *Hippolyte et Aricie* by Jean-Philippe Rameau (Opéra Comique, November 2020) and *The Rape of Lucretia* by Benjamin Britten (Opéra de Paris / Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, May 2021). In January 2023, she directs and acts in *BAÛBO – the art of not being dead*, the first show created and rehearsed in the Théâtre de l'Aquarium, She has a passion for *in situ* creations, in which the driving force of the creation relies on extracting tales, unconscious stories from preexisting places and has created several. Since July 2019, she manages alongside Marion Bois and Elaine Meric the Théâtre de l'Aquarium, in Paris' Cartoucherie, making it a home for creation dedicated to the intertwining of music and theatre.

Florent Hubert

Studies in composing, arranging and musicology completed his education as jazz musician. After meeting Jeanne Candel and Samuel Achache, he became the musical director and actor in *Le Crocodile trompeur*, freely adapted from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. He then took part in numerous creations with the company la vie brève: *Le goût du faux et autres chansons* in 2015, *Fugue* premiered at the Cloître des Célestins in Avignon in 2015, *Orfeo / Je suis mort en Arcadie* in 2017, at the Bouffes du Nord, in 2019 at the Nouveau Théâtre de Montreuil *Tarquin* for which he composed the music. With Judith Chemla and Benjamin Lazare, he worked at the conception of *La Traviata / vous méritez un avenir meilleur*, show premiered in 2016 at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord. With Richard Brunel, he has just finished working on an adaption of *Pelléas et Mélisande* for the Opéra de Lyon and is now preparing a new show around Schumann's lieder with Samuel Achache.



© Victor Tonelli / ArtComArt

www.theatredelaquarium.net / 01 43 74 72 74

la vie brève – Théâtre de l'Aquarium est subventionné par le ministère de la Culture, la Région Île-de-France et reçoit le soutien de la Ville de Paris.

L R 22-005892 / L R 22-004369 / L R 22-004371