



Under the aegis of the Fondation de France

BNP Paribas Foundation

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A patron of the arts committed to the stage

Chouf Ouchouf
A work by Zimmermann & de Perrot
Performed by Groupe acrobatique de Tanger

25 SEPTEMBER 2009 – WORLD PREMIERE
PALAIS MOULAY HAFID, TANGIER

Zimmermann & de Perrot enjoy the support of the BNP Paribas Foundation to develop their projects.

Widely recognised as one of the few patrons of new art in the circus, the BNP Paribas Foundation is reiterating its commitment to the writing and widespread performance of new works through its backing for the first production of Chouf Ouchouf.

The BNP Paribas foundation is thus continuing its partnership with the Zimmermann & De Perrot company, which began with the production of Gaff Aff and was followed by Öper Öpis and the widespread performance of these two pieces. The three-year agreement started in 2006 has now been extended for a further three years, until 2011.

The BNP Paribas Foundation has supported Groupe acrobatique de Tanger since 2008, when the collaboration with director Aurélien Bory gave it international prominence with the production of TAOUB. The BNP Paribas Foundation gives the group the means to raise its profile and reach a wider public by guaranteeing ongoing backing.

About the BNP Paribas Foundation

Under the aegis of the Fondation de France, the BNP Paribas Foundation aims to preserve and publicise the treasures contained in museums, to encourage creative artists and performers in disciplines that receive little corporate sponsorship (such as modern dance, new art in the circus, and jazz), and to fund medical research programmes in areas at the forefront of science. The BNP Paribas Foundation also supports projects in the areas of education, social integration, and disabilities. The foundation goes beyond mere financial sponsorship, supporting its partners in the same way as the bank supports its clients: by providing customised assistance on the basis of individual objectives, as well as offering advice and developing programmes in close collaboration with its networks in France and abroad.

Supporting new productions, helping performances reach a wider public, and supporting artists' residencies are all ways in which the BNP Paribas Foundation can help the development and dissemination of modern choreography, alongside other institutional partners.

About BNP Paribas

BNP Paribas (www.bnpparibas.com) is one of the six most secure banks in the world, according to Standard & Poor's. With a presence in 85 countries and more than 205,000 staff – of whom 165,200 are in Europe – BNP Paribas is a European leader in financial services on a global scale. It holds a key position in its three main areas of activity: retail banking, investment solutions, and corporate and investment banking. It is active in four domestic retail banking markets in Europe: Belgium, France, Italy, and Luxembourg. BNP Paribas also has a significant presence in the United States, as well as a strong position in Asia and in developing countries.

Chouf Ouchouf

A work by Zimmermann & de Perrot
Performed by Groupe acrobatique de
Tanger

Zimmermann & de Perrot, original idea, direction, set
Dimitri de Perrot, music
Martin Zimmermann, choreography
Sabine Geistlich, dramaturg
Ingo Groher, set construction
Andy Neresheimer, sound engineering
Ursula Degen, lighting design
Franziska Born avec Daniela Zimmermann, costume design
Franziska Born, Mahmoud Ben Slimane, wardrobe makers
Michèle Rebetez, set painter
Julien Cassier, acrobatics coach
Peter Bräker, sound effects research
Sanae El Kamouni, company head
Alain Vuignier, production director
Claire Béjanin, international producer
Jamila Abdellaoui, Mustapha Ait Ourakmane, Mohammed Archaf Chaâban, Adel Chaâban, Abdelaziz El Haddad, Najib El Maïmouni Idrissi, Amal Hammich, Mohammed Hammich, Younes Hammich, Samir Lâaroussi, Yassine Sراسi, Younes Yemlahi, acrobats of the Groupe acrobatique de Tanger

Executive producers Zimmermann & de Perrot
www.zimmermanndeperrot.com

A co-production of the Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg/Pour-cent culturel Migros/MC2, Maison de la Culture de Grenoble/Equinoxe, Scène nationale de Châteauroux/Le Volcan, Scène nationale du Havre/Espace Jean Legendre, Théâtre de Compiègne/Association Scènes du Maroc/Association Zimmermann & de Perrot
Zimmermann & de Perrot benefits from a co-operative grant agreement between the Department of Culture of the City of Zurich, the Department of Culture of the Canton of Zurich, and Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council

Zimmermann & de Perrot has enjoyed the support of the BNP Paribas Foundation in developing its projects since 2006

Scènes du Maroc receives support from the co-operation and cultural service of the French embassy in Morocco, the Institut français in Tangier – Tétouan, and the BMCI foundation, as well as assistance from Compagnie 111.

Scènes du Maroc is supported by the BNP Paribas Foundation in developing its projects

Barely a year after *Öper Öpis* the pioneering duo plunge into a new adventure with Groupe acrobatique de Tanger, who they saw and fell in love with in Aurélien Bory's five-year smash hit drama *Taoub*. Marrying their love of the world of the circus with their desire to embark on a common project, the groups spent time working together and exchanging ideas at a magical location opposite Gibraltar. On the one hand there were two Swiss artists who invent wordless dialogue bursting with poetic and humorous images and fuse music with circus and dance; on the other there were 12 actor-acrobats who learned and perfected their art on the great beach in Tangier before taking it around the world. The two artists had a dream. "We will build a bridge and we will learn to fly ... we will be clowns and wild animals ... on the edge of the abyss, they smile and support each other. Life, death, exile, love. And laughter. The spectacular. In short, life itself!"

As is customary in their world of fantasy, Zimmermann and De Perrot create a visually powerful, living scene. In this production, building façades alternately swallow people up and reveal them. We see the noisy alleyways of the medina, and the boats in the port of Tangier. There are elements to make you want to climb higher, soar, and take flight.

And the point is ...

In Arabic, Chouf Ouchouf means: "Look, and then look again!"

Any encounter with the new and unknown disorients us with feelings of complexity and confusion. We project our own involuntary desires and fears on the other person, and we cling to our impressions and apprehensions. We attempt to impose our own views, to reassure ourselves. Conversely, we offer ourselves as a space for others to make their own projections.

How can a genuine encounter take place under such conditions? In this desert, how can we move towards an oasis – rather than a mirage?

Chouf Ouchouf places itself at the centre of this labyrinth of questions and reflections. Through the use of humour this great theme is transformed into a cascade of scenes, conjugated and amplified to the point of absurdity, until everything is turned upside down – and ends up weightlessly floating.

Chouf Ouchouf touches the spectator with its intensity and emotion; it overwhelms, forcing us to gaze clearly: at the stage, and at ourselves.

Zimmermann & de Perrot

Martin Zimmermann was born in 1970 in Winterthur, Switzerland. After studying to be a set designer he gained a distinction in his training at the Centre National des Arts du Cirque (C.N.A.C.) in France. A founder member of Compagnie Anomalie, he performed in the legendary Cri du Caméléon by Joseph Nadj. He returned to Zurich in 1998, and began working as a choreographer.

Dimitri de Perrot was born in 1976 in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. While studying at the Lycée Artistique italo-suisse in Zurich he already worked as a DJ. After gaining his diploma he began teaching himself, developing both as a musician and as a composer. In 2005 he was awarded the prize of musician of the year by the City of Zurich (the Werkjahr prize for Pop/Rock/Jazz).

The two artists wrote GOPF (1999), HOI (2001), JANEI (2004) with the collective MZdP, ANATOMIE ANOMALIE (2005, direction and script by Zimmermann, music by de Perrot) for Compagnie Anomalie, GAFF AFF (2006) and ÖPER ÖPIS (2008) with their company Zimmermann & de Perrot. The shows have been performed more than 1,000 times worldwide, and won many prizes.

Zimmermann & de Perrot make their productions by hand. Sets are meticulously designed, and play a crucial role in each production. Always on the move, they turn into workshops of the imagination where music and the human form are ingeniously combined. The set becomes a giant playground where the human condition is laid bare, and theatrical conventions overturned.

The two Swiss artists have truly invented a wordless language bursting with powerful images. Their humorous, sometimes absurd but always poetic artistry reveals their love for humanity.

Groupe acrobatique de Tanger

The group was brought together by Sanae El Kamouni in 2003. Its aim was to work with acrobats from Tangier on new material. Its starting point is simple: Morocco has a form of acrobatics that is unique, with its own history, and which is maintained at a very high level thanks to the existence of many troupes and families who carry on the tradition. However, there is no creativity open to these artists; they are condemned to perform the same acts over and over again in the street, in traditional circuses, and for rare commissions for tourism or entertainment.

Convinced that there is a different future for these talented artists, she invited director Aurélien Bory to come to Tangier to produce the first modern Moroccan acrobatic performance. Thus TAOUB was born in June 2004 in the heart of Tangier, in the Mendoubia gardens. It immediately met with a resounding success, in Europe and worldwide, with more than 300 performances.

The success of TAOUB brought Groupe acrobatique de Tanger to the attention of the public and professionals, and led to its consolidation.