



MC93

MC
93
maison de la culture
de Seine-Saint-Denis
Bobigny

A Play For The Living In Times Of Extinction

16 - 19 October 2024 and 14 - 17 November 2024 | Bobigny, France

DAVID GESELSON - AUTHOR AND STAGE DIRECTOR

David Geselson wrote, directed, and performed in "Doreen" (2016), awarded the Best Creation in French Language in 2017 by the Critics' Syndicate, based on "Letter to D." by André Gorz. He also created "On the road-Kaddish" (2014), "Unwritten Letters" (2017), and "Neandertal" (2023). In 2020, he wrote and directed "Silence and fear".

Geselson directed Thibault Vinçon's "Eli Eli," Juan Mayorga's " Insomniacs," and Pauline Peyrade's "Fists" at Teatro Español in Madrid. In March 2024, as part of the European project STAGES and at the invitation of MC93, he will direct "A Play for the Living in times of Extinction". In the 25.26 season, he will direct his first opera, "Bohemia," at the invitation of the Nancy Opera. His novel " Unwritten Letters," published by Le Tripode in March 2021, won the 2022 Revelation of the First Novel award from the Society of Literary People. His other plays are published by Lieux-Dits.

As an actor, Geselson worked with Tiago Rodrigues in "Lover's chorus", premiered in September 2021, played in Anton Chekhov's "La Cerisaie (The Cherry Orchard)" at the Avignon Festival 2021, and participated in "Bovary," created in 2016 at Théâtre de la Bastille.

He received training at the School of the National Theatre of Chaillot, the Drama school "Terrible Children," and the National Conservatory of Dramatic Art. In various theatre productions, he collaborated with directors such as Brigitte Jaques, Cécile Garcia-Fogel, Gilles Cohen, David Girondin-Moab, Muriel Trembleau, Christophe Rauck, Gabriel Dufay, Jean-Pierre Vincent, and Volodia Serre.

JULIETTE NAVIS - ACTRESS AND DIRECTOR

Juliette Navis trained at the National Conservatory of Dramatic Art, in Paris. There, she developed her stage writing skills, which remain at the heart of her practice. At the same time, she worked with Jeanne Candel in the Brief Life Collective, before founding her own company, Regen Mensen, in 2016.

It was within this collective that she began her directing work, with the creation of the show *The Timidity of Trees*, in collaboration with dancer and choreographer Romain Guion. Since then, Juliette Navis has written and directed a trilogy for which she has taken on popular and archetypal figures, Jean-Claude Van Damme, and Céline Dion, to question man's conquering relationship with his habitat. In 2023, she is alone on stage at the MC93 in Bobigny, for the new show directed by David Geselson, "A Play for the Living in times of Extinction", based on Katie Mitchell & Miranda Rose Hall.

THE RESIDENCY

With the support of the University of Lausanne, the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne has developed an action protocol and a self-analysis tool to enable it to move towards greater sustainability. It was within this framework that Katie Mitchell was invited to create the show *A play for the living in a time of extinction*. This creation meets a very precise set of specifications, to be met by each of the twelve European theatres involved in the STAGES protocol. At the MC93, the play was recreated by the Lieux-Dits company, founded in 2009 by David Geselson.

During his residency, the artist chose to focus his plastic and aesthetic research on the use of light (see *Workshop Focusing light, minimizing energy*) and music, working notably with a theatrical studies researcher and a cellist. The residency resulted in the publication of a booklet entitled *Traces*, which brings together the director's logbook, interviews with the various participants, and photographs.

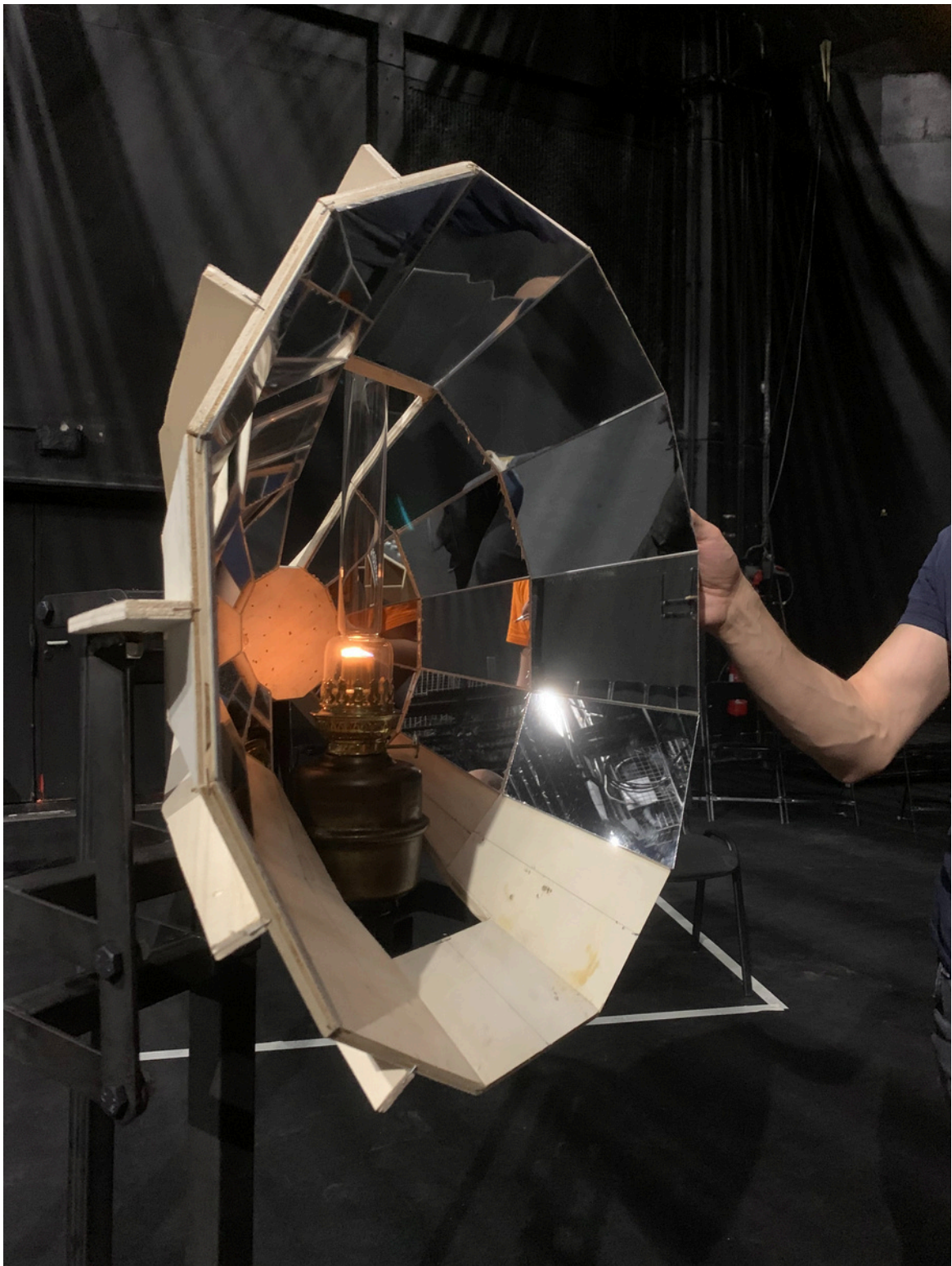
David Geselson writes in particular: "First day of work. We read Miranda Rose Hall's play with Juliette and Jérémie. It's 33 degrees today. The text talks about the mass extinctions our planet have experienced over the past four billion years. It's like a conference. We're debating. I tell myself to take it like this: this show is a conference. It's very simple. You don't need anything but Juliette. And Juliette continues to read. We don't comment anymore. There's an emotion that grips all three of us. It's about the sixth mass extinction,

the one we Homo sapiens triggered. It tells the story of how living beings are disappearing. That the next species to go extinct will be us, probably in the near future. And then it talks about the death of bats. And then it talks about the death of mothers. No one says anything. I think of all three of our mothers, living and dead. It's hot. It reminds me of my childhood, summers in the Middle East. I'm comfortable with the heat. But not today's heat. Because this one tastes like death."

The essential question identified by Jérémie Papin, the show's lighting designer, can be summed up in the following extract: "The Living raises the question of how to make a show that is coherent from an ecological point of view. I have no idea what an ecologically coherent show would be. Or rather, I don't think there is an answer to that question. I don't know what ecological coherence is. Ecological coherence is perhaps an ideal to strive for. But we can't achieve it. Contemporary Western society as a whole is outside this paradigm. No?"

After several weeks of work and reflection, at the end of the first rehearsal phase, David Geselson expresses a form of resolution in the poetic paragraph that closes this diary:

*"In eternal exile we walk on soil of woven roots.
And the weaving becomes the place.
Roots, places.
And that's it.
That's what roots do: they weave time.
And time weaves paths.
And paths weave links.
And bonds weave stories.
And stories weave shelters.
Places to defend.
Maybe that's it: roots weave zones
to defend.
Or maybe, just maybe, places to love.
I don't know about that.
But I think I prefer the idea of love
to the idea of combat.
So.
Don't solve anything yet.
Just look at the roots woven from past journeys
and tie ourselves to the roots woven here, in Bobigny
Bobigny, in the free Republic of stories."*



UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) LINKED TO THE WORKSHOP

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



THE GLOBAL GOALS

