

Nature II

Nature II is a Brussels-based theatre group consisting of two people, **Magrit Coulon** and **Bogdan Kikena**. Magrit Coulon is a director, Bogdan Kikena is a dramaturge. They met while studying at INSAS and decided to continue their collaboration in the real world, whose customs they adopted in 2019, with only their paper diplomas turned into hats.

Fascinated by dust, damaged things and languages that are supposedly dead but still mumbling, they work on surveying territories that, although shared, summon their own imagination.

Such is the case with **HOME - pieces of nature in ruins**, Magrit's first show, in which months of meticulous observations and recordings in a Brussels home are combined with a burlesque of diverted codes, archly non-spectacular, and the passage of time that metamorphoses the gardens into forests and the residents into kings and queens of a ruined castle.

So it is with **La Pavane**, a small garden theatre made by Bogdan, where costumed figures, as if out of the wardrobe, re-enact the birth of the Western gaze, in 15th century Italy visited by Kafka.

And so with **All destroyed cities look the same**, a show they wrote together and which launches a European Museum of Memory and Destruction (MEMED) on the road; a travelling museum in which two guardians watch over our collective memory, unless they are distractedly punching holes in it.

This is the case with **l'Avenir**, in which Magrit continues the path cleared in *HOME*, staging a community of solitudes. How to live alone? How can we make a theatre of coincidences rather than of chains of events? Where do epochs go when they disappear? Choreographic and musical, the show draws the landscape of a shared and perhaps infinite expectation, composed of all the nothings that make up an existence.

At the crossroads of these works, the reliefs that form the artistic landscape of the company take shape: research into the specificity of theatrical time and its writing, the investigation of the relationship we have with our memory and the way it transforms our perception of the world, the burlesque and the grotesque as tools of representation and the charge of diverting or even reversing the real that they carry within them.

HOME - pieces of nature in ruins

**Maeterlinck Prize
for the Best
Discovery 2020**

Direction

Magrit Coulon

With

Carole Adolff, Anaïs
Aouat, Tom Geels

Dramaturgie

Bogdan Kikena

Physical work

Natacha Nicora

Sound

Olmo Missaglia

Light

Elsa Chêne

Set design

Irma Morin

Production

Nature II, National
Theater Bruxelles,
Maison de la culture
de Tournai.

**Teaser
Captation**

In a room, three residents are waiting.

A table, three chairs, a clock, an armchair, a radio.

This is a common room. A space for being together, a space for being alone.

Nothing happens. We wait for the doctor, a call, a visit.

In this closed world, where time seems to have a hold only on the bodies, three residents face the joys and tragedies of their daily lives. What do you do when the green plants turn into a forest of fir trees, the storm tears down the walls and there is no one to serve the next meal?

HOME is a show that questions the place of retirement homes.

Based on documentary research carried out by the team in a medicalised retirement home in Brussels, we sought to understand the specific nature of these places and the way in which life is organised there.

This show aims to give an account of the temporality and atmosphere so particular to these homes, through the daily life of the residents who live there. This everyday life where their relationship to life, to others and to their own memories are intertwined with malice.

Young actors lend their bodies to the voices of the elders, in a tender and lucid tribute to these old people placed out of sight of the healthy.



La Pavane

A garden reached by a flight of steps, surrounded by a wall of old stones and overhung by vegetation: if you are silent and listen carefully, you can hear the wind blowing through the leaves, the chattering of the cicadas and, even further away, the streets of the city.

The sun shines on this part of the garden as it did on the other garden, the Renaissance garden, in the Italian sun of the 15th century; and we still eat the fruits of that ancient garden, even if they are now covered with a thin layer of rot, or dust. Nothing new under the sun? Three costumed figures replay the furious games of the Western gaze, to the slow rhythm of a pavane.

A form for a garden, La Pavane is the fruit of a work devoted to the links of complicity, resistance and crisis that unite artistic representation, representation of power and the powers of representation. Using the artistic and political landscapes of the early Italian Renaissance as a pretext and playground, the moulds of our sensitive and sentimental education, this archaeological and grotesque show attempts to identify the specificities and excesses of the Western gaze, which has turned the world into a theatre of supposedly universal possessions and delights.

Directing and playing Bogdan Kikena

With Maya Lombard, Jules Bisson et Pascal Jamault

External view Hicham Boutahar

Choreographic advice Zoé Lakhnati

Costume advice Gabrielle Smith

General advice Magrit Coulon

Production Nature II

With the support of COCOF, MoDul, Théâtre des Doms.

Created in July 2021

Teaser
Captation



All destroyed cities look the same

Conception

Magrit Coulon and Bogdan Kikena

Interpretation

Pascal Jamault and Maya Lombard

Writing and dramaturgy

Bogdan Kikena

Directing

Magrit Coulon

Production

Nature II

With the support of

Théâtre Océan Nord, la Chaufferie-Acte1, Festival de Liège/Factory, la Fabrique de Théâtre, le Bocal, le BAMP, Un Festival à Villerville.

Created in august 2022, Villerville.

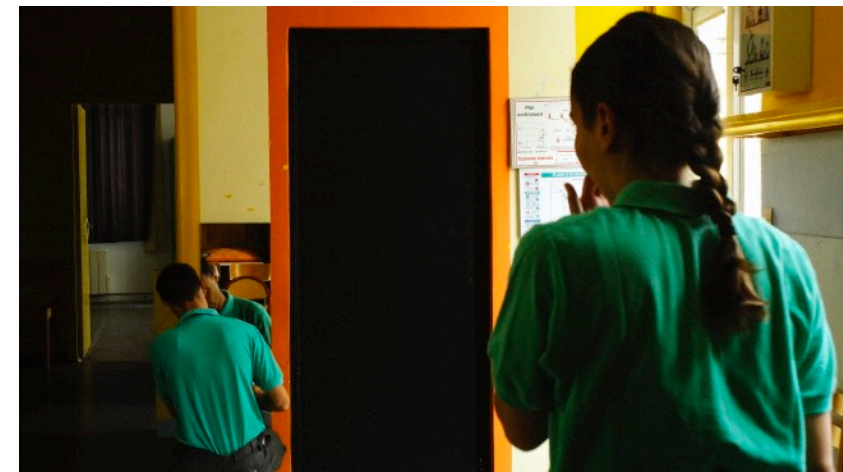
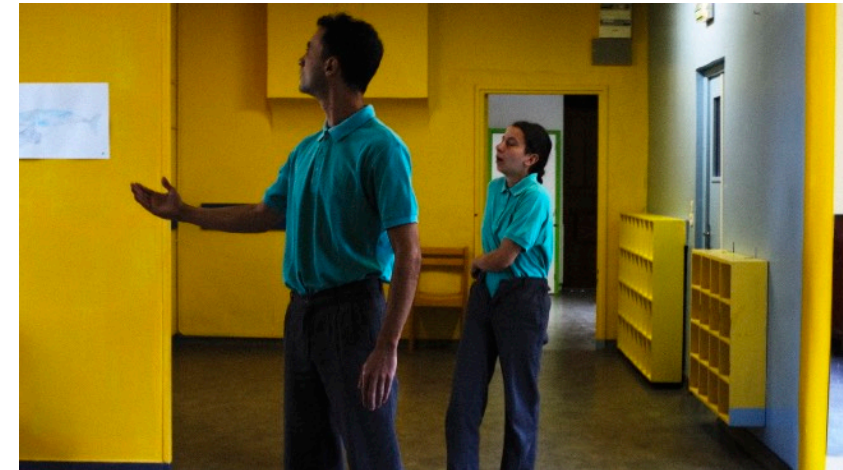
Teaser

The guardians of MEMED (European Museum of Memory and Destruction) are waiting for visitors who do not come. They look out of the window, doze off a bit, walk around the room, make sure once again that everything is in order, that everything is ready, but the visitors do not come. At times we hear a recording: it is the inner voice, the thoughts of one of the guards as he continues to live before us, silently. One is consumed by nostalgia for the time when the Museum was packed; the other, because of the war, suspects Nazis everywhere. The irremediable and incomprehensible absence of the visitors begins to act on them, and on the theatrical machine, like a black hole.

Condemned to wait for visitors who no longer come, these two guardians of memory try to find meaning in the passing of time and in their life's work. In charge of everything - from unloading the MEMED van to setting up the exhibition space to giving guided tours - Maya and Pascal have been running the Museum since its creation. As war rages in Europe, these two enigmatic, burlesque yet everyday figures try to cope with the new and desperate situation, and wonder about their future.

Where have the visitors gone?
What is the point of remembering?
How to live when you feel useless?
And what is the point of MEMED?

With this nomadic show, Nature II settles in any non-theatrical space to host this travelling museum and its two guards.



L'Avenir

A common room, perhaps an old refectory and perhaps, if you pushed the tables and chairs against the walls, something that would look like a ballroom. It is somewhere but it would be difficult to say where exactly; if you looked out of the window which is like the fourth wall of this room, you could see a landscape of hills, unless they are sleeping volcanoes, for the ear sometimes picks up a kind of distant hum. Everything is very quiet, perhaps a little too quiet: not the calm before the storm, but a silence of artifice, as if before the beginning of something.

Then someone arrives, a solitude, then another, and another, and another, and another, and another that we hadn't seen and yet was there. Perhaps they are all together at last. Perhaps someone is missing. It's hard to say, they have never seen each other. Are they lost? Are they dead? Have they gone away, disappeared from their own lives? They are together and they are alone. Sometimes one of them looks at the landscape, another one sketches a few dance steps, another one tries to remember a childhood song and each of them tries to help her. Often we dress up. The new curtain is also inaugurated, and there are speeches and toasts. Then the volcanoes wake up.

« This show is an attempt to collectively bring into play experiences that society wants to restrict to the field of our intimacy, so that we alone are responsible for them: responsible for our solitudes, our melancholies, our sadnesses, our depressions, our nostalgias.

To stage a great community of solitudes, and all the attempts we make to avoid being alone. To continue the search for a theatrical writing that is choral and choreographic, an almost imperceptible writing of bodies and everyday things. Writing of a shared time that passes without us; and then with the audience, writing of a shared attente, a shared emotion, a shared laughter at our attempts, our difficulties and our failures to be together, to be ourselves.

I would like theatre to be the occasion for another game. It is a game that is almost erased, so buried in the course of daily life that we forget that it is an uncertain game, always being replayed. A game that is not spectacular, a game that is almost not a game but the attempt to live together at the same time. »

Directing Magrit Coulon **Writing and dramaturgy** Bogdan Kikena **Interpretation** Raphaëlle Corbisier, Emmanuelle Gilles-Rousseau, Jules Puibaraud, Romain Pigneul, (...) **Seasonal dramaturgy** Stéphane Olivier **Physical and choregraphical work** Natacha Nicora **Sound** Olmo Missaglia **Set design** Justine Bougerol **Accessories and costume** Max Coulon **Song work** Lucile Charnier

Production Nature II, National Theater Wallonie-Bruxelles **Coproduction** Maison de la culture de Tournai, CDN de Lorient, Maison Antoine Vitez, (...).

To be created in novembre 2024.

*How to live and not be alone?
Is the forest of my childhood really lost?
Where do things go when they disappear?
And why did the volcanoes fall asleep?*



Attempts to think

Official delegation.

The official delegation is a gathering of four directors: Héloïse Jadoul, Silvio Palomo, Simon Thomas and Magrit Coulon.

They meet for the first time in the winter of 2021. Based on their experience as project leaders, trying as best they could, in the current reality, to continue to dream of other ways of doing and thinking about their practices and working conditions, the Official delegation set out on new paths. Without further ado, they set off on an adventure in the official car in May 2022, to meet various French cultural institutions.

Obviously, no revolution ensued. But the questions continue, and so do their meetings, ever more joyfully depressed and wildly inventive.

The delegation will be hosted for several weeks in the summer of 2023 at the T.U Nantes and Théâtre de Saint-Nazaire theatres, where it will be able to devote itself to invent other paths.



Gardens of the future.

At the invitation of Alain Cofino Gomez of the Théâtre des Doms, Bogdan Kikena was invited to organise three days of meetings on the topic of the future of the performing arts. He was given carte blanche to formulate three questions, three paths to open.

With Lisette Lombé, Olivier Neveux, Adeline Rosenstein, Joelle Sambu, Diane Scott, Maksym Teteruk.

Day 1. WHAT TRADITIONS FOR TOMORROW'S STAGES?

There is the experience of an absence of tradition or of an impossible tradition; there is the experience of being suffocated by a monumental cultural heritage. How do these two seemingly paradoxical experiences intertwine? Is it possible to untie them? What artistic, political and formal possibilities do they presage? To ask the question of the traditions at work on tomorrow's stages is to ask the question of future communities and the utopias of which they will perhaps be the collective translation; it is to seek the junction between origin and horizon; it is to try to define the terms of an aesthetic of resistance.

Day 2. DOES REPRESENTATION HAVE A FUTURE?

"I would like to put forward the hypothesis of a crisis in our system of representation. It is a crisis whose focal point is ideological, and which manifests itself, in my opinion, through two important phenomena: the loss of confidence of a large part of the population in the principles of representative democracy inherited from the French Revolution; the struggle of political minorities against a system of cultural representation denounced as partial, oppressive and unjust. The aim here is to discuss this hypothesis and to reflect on the promises and formal upheavals that this crisis could bring to the field of artistic representation, but also to question the very notion of representation when it no longer wears the mask of the universal.

Day 3. SHOULD WE FIGHT CULTURE?

« There is only the minor that is great and revolutionary. »

This postulate of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari will serve as a starting point for the discussion. The aim will be to open up the range of consequences that this position implies for the present and future practices of institutional scenes. For if it is true that minor art can be great and revolutionary, it is because it plays against administered culture and not for it. What is the place of political minorities within the official cultural system? And is it a matter of taking that place, negotiating it or refusing it?

Calendar

21 > 22.11.2022	HOME - Le Zeppelin - Lille (FR)
24.11.2022	HOME - Maison du Théâtre d'Amiens - Amiens (FR)
26 > 27.11.2022	HOME - Kinnekbond - Mammer (LUX)
01 > 02.12.2022	HOME - Tournée Grand T - Cap Nort - Nort (FR)
06.12.2022	HOME - Tournée Grand T - Espace Culturel Le Champilambart - Vallet (FR)
08.12.2022	HOME - Tournée Grand T - Espace Retz - Machecoul (FR)
12 > 14.12.2022	HOME - T.U. Nantes - Nantes (FR)
20 > 21.01.2023	Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent - INSAS / Le Rideau - Bruxelles (BE)
02.02.2023	Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent - La Fabrique de Théâtre - Frameries (BE)
21.02.2023	HOME - Théâtre Edwige Feuillère - Vesoul (FR)
24.02.2023	HOME - Théâtre La Sarbacane - Pontarlier (FR)
28.02.2023	HOME - La Halle ô Grains - Bayeux (FR)
16 > 19.03.2023	HOME - Caméléon Théâtre - Tahiti (FR)
13.06.2023	Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent - Centre Wallonie Bruxelles - Paris (FR)
14 > 18.06.2023	HOME - MC93 - Bobigny / Paris (FR)
Summer 2023	Délégation officielle - Résidence de recherche et de réflexion - T.U Nantes et le Théâtre Saint-Nazaire (FR)
12 > 14.09.2023	Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent - Festival Factory - Liège (BE)
12 > 13.10.2023	Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent - Festival GO! - CDN Le Quai - Angers (FR)
15 > 17.03.2024	Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent - Théâtre National - Bruxelles (BE)

Internet website

All the press review

Pro section



« It is because everything here is about play, pretense, theatre. In the blink of an eye, we move from the past to the present, from classical theatre in costume to the absolute naturalness of the contemporary stage, from meticulous preparation to the total negation of the latter, from the whim of a grande dame to the false suicide of a desperate creator... A formidable deconstruction of the theatre itself in all its deceptiveness, absurdity and magic. »

Jean-Marie Wynants - Le Soir - 21/07/21 - BE

« La Pavane likes to play down the dramatic scenes (or is it the other way round?), punctuating them with concrete actions: the characters suddenly measure the distance separating them from the spectators, suddenly take off their clothes to put on those of the other gender. Here there is a search for a tone, a language through verbal logorrhea. It becomes more and more outrageous, difficult to classify. It becomes more and more questioning and comes close to criticizing the act of representing (or the art of governing?) in a meticulous fantasy without forgetting to worry us. »

Sylvia Botella - Toute la Culture - 26/07/21 - BE



« In a short format (35 minutes), La Pavane manages to unsettle minds and turn conventions upside down. Although it is not a participatory or immersive show, the audience is totally integrated into the performance, and is part of it from the start. We are disturbed, we don't know where we stand... Here, words are rare, almost absent, the scenography is minimalist as much as the actors' gestures, and yet, the theatre is absolutely omnipresent. The simple, uncluttered and terribly effective acting is at the heart of the theatrical device: everything happens in the looks, bringing out something strange and comic at the same time. And yet, underneath this air of light, nebulous fun, the play offers - both in its silences and in its use of a famous tirade from Hamlet - real food for thought about the art of acting. Proof, if any were needed, that one can shine with intelligence without words... We won't go into more detail, because you certainly need to know as little as possible to be seduced by this jewel in all its originality. One word: bravo! »

Théâtre Actuel - 28/08/21 - France



THE DIZZYING VIRTUES OF OBSERVATION - Marie Baudet - La Libre Belgique - 06/03/20

« A striking picture up to that point, in its placid muteness, Home forks - without yielding anything of its meticulousness in interpretation - to encompass the words of residents. [...] We are far beyond the playback: in an intimate, intense understanding of these extreme ages, so far from those of these budding artists. Listening to the ordinary and the strange, they plunge into them with as much respect as whimsical irreverence, and without the shadow of a mockery. A work of light and shade, humour and humility, commitment and nuance, which makes the social disparities of their interlocutors heard. A true, great, important discovery. »

CHALICE OF WORDS - Victor Inisan - I/O Gazette - 19/07/2021 - France

« This is how "Home", on the edge of beauty, constantly embodies its subject more than it illustrates it: without succumbing to aestheticization or morality, it illuminates reality through symbolist means; and in this interwoven web of existential words and silences, succeeds in moving its viewer with a brilliant finesse. »



LE CANARD ENCHAINE - 21/07/2021 - France

« And yet: this great age towards which we are heading without wanting to know it, our incredible fragility to come, what might remain of our humanity despite everything, it's all there. Sometimes theatre can take us to a place from which we do not return. We don't come back from it. »

IMPATIENCE FESTIVAL: A VERY OPEN HUIS CLOS - Anaïs Héluin - Scene Web - 15/01/21 - France

« By taking an interest in the lives of our elders, the young Franco-German director signs a tender and slightly absurd chronicle of old age. A funny and endearing first show, which reveals the gift of observation of an artist to be followed. »

EAR MORE THAN THE EYES - Joëlle Gayot - Télérama - 09/01/21

« They blur the lines between reality and fiction, as evidenced by Magrit Coulon's adventure (Home. Pieces of nature in ruins). The latter, a Belgian director, spent many months in a retirement home. She recorded the residents, let the tape run along with the conversations, and collected the trembling words that she reproduced, without erasing their rough edges or removing the silent parts. The voices of the elderly come to us in their raw state. At the same time, three mute actors mime them in playback, their bodies instinctively adopting the postures, the pouting and the mimicry of the interviewees. Fascinating morphoses that impose the emergence of the infinitesimal on the stage: "For residents of retirement homes, everything is an event: a bird chirping behind the curtain, crossing a room to get to one's chair, sitting in that chair, says Magrit Coulon. The work on sound, which sharpens the spectator's ear, makes him or her attentive to details and silences, to this minimal environment that is too often parasitized by the saturation of signs in our daily lives." By making listening the instrument that alleviates the overflow of spectacularisation, the director shows the legend of the painting rather than the painting itself. And she entrusts the imagination with the task of filling the void by welcoming inner visions. »

THE DISCOVERY **** - Christian Jade - RTBF - 05/03/20 - Belgique

« A lucid tenderness permeates the staging of these three old men, smeared with jam, sometimes gathered around a dissonant piano to exist while waiting for the sky to fall on their heads. »

HOME : INTERVIEW OF ARTISTIC TEAM - Jenny Lippmann - Szenik - 24/08/2021

« For your first show you have chosen a subject that is not very usual for a young company. While most of them rush to talk about politics or revolution, you chose the subject of old age. Why did you do this?

Magrit : *Because we think that old people should be part of the revolution.* »



Bogdan Kikena

Playwright and director



PERFORMANCES

Toutes les villes détruites se ressemblent — August 2022

Writing and Dramaturg - direction by Magrit Coulon.

Festival in Villerville - Villerville.

Éloge de l'altérité - November 2021

Play - direction by Isabelle Pousseur.

Théâtre Océan Nord - Bruxelles.

La Pavane - July 2021

Direction - creation at the Théâtre des Doms as part of the Garden Party

Festival d'Avignon - Avignon.

HOME - Morceaux de nature en ruine — March 2020

Dramaturgy - direction by Magrit Coulon.

Festival de Liège - Liège.

Maeterlinck Critics' Prize, category 'Best Discovery'.

International tour.

L'improvisation de Palerme — June 2019

Direction - end of study creation in the framework of the OUTSAS festival - Brussels.

EDUCATION

2019 - Master's degree in Stage Direction. INSAS Theatre - Brussels.

2015 - Master 1 in philosophy. University of Paris-1 Panthéon Sorbonne - Paris.

2012 - Diploma of Musical Studies, violin class of Noemi Schindler.

Conservatoire National de Musique de Gennevilliers - Gennevilliers.

Magrit Coulon
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Parvis de Saint-Gilles, 11
1060 - Bruxelles

French: mother tongue
German: fluent
English: fluent



STUDIES AND TRAINING

- apr-may 2022 **Artist Residency - dramaturgy**
Dramaturgy team - ETC grant
Schauspielhaus Graz, Austria.
- 2021 - 2022 **Comparative Dramaturgy and Performance Research**
International master with ULB - Bruxelles and Goethe Universität - Frankfurt.
- 2014 - 2019 **Direction Studies - Master 1**
Institut National Supérieur des Arts du Spectacle, Bruxelles.

WORKS - DIRECTING

- 2018-23 ***HOME - pieces of nature in ruins***
Creation in March 2020 at the Liège Festival, co-production with the Théâtre National.
Critics' Choice Award 2020: winner in the "Best Discovery" category.
Selected for the Impatience Festival 2021 (le 104) and the Avignon Festival 2021 (Théâtre des Doms).
International tour.
- 2019-22 ***All destroyed cities look the same***
Co-directing with Bogdan Kikena, sound design.
Received a research grant from the Chaufferie-Acte1.
Project presentation at the Festival Pré-Fabriqués 2019 (BE), the Festival Factory 2020 (BE), and working step at the Festival of Villerville (FR) in 2022.
- 2016 ***Kebab Piercing***
Short form performance - The possible gaps between the actor and the text. Like putting the subtitles of one film under the images of another.
Festivaleke, Brussels.
- 2014 - 2015 ***Sorry Now***
based on a text by R.W Fassbinder, co-directed with Maxime Arnould.
Creation at INSAS, performances at the Festival Murmurez Frénétiques, Brussels.

OTHERS

- Since 2020 **Teaching** at the schools of architecture in Paris-Belleville and Strasbourg.
Soon will be teaching at the Summer School of Actors at the Teatro Municipal Sá de Miranda, July 2023.
- 11/2022 ***Wendepunkte*** directed by Natasha Syvanenko.
Dramaturgy. Citizens project.
Schauspielhaus Graz, Austria.
- 06/2019 ***L'improvisation de Palerme*** directed and written by Bogdan Kikena.
Space and light design. INSAS exit festival, Outsas, Brussels
- 2017 - 2019 ***MUR/MER***
Theatrical performance by Elsa Chêne - *Assistant Director*
Festival Courants d'Airs 2018 via CAS, Brussels / Festival Danse Élargie 2018, Paris (2nd prize) /
Evening performance at Sadler's Well, 2019, London / Festival Tout Mons Danse, 2019, Mons.