

THE SAINT PLAYS

by Erik Ehn | directed by **Clea Minaker**

produced by **THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE**

| SEASON 2014-15 | FORCES



FEBRUARY

18-19-20-21 at

7pm & 9pm

21-22 at

1pm & 3pm

**CAZALET
THEATRE**

7141 Sherbrooke W.

10 | 5 \$ students

Images, Program
and more @
concordia.ca/theatre

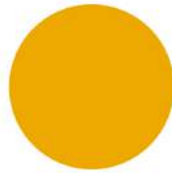
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The plays selected for our 2014-15 season of Public Performances all engage with the theme of FORCES. Whether the issues are politics, AIDS, nationalism, saints, religion, war, faith, or human aspiration, the FORCES that impact us and the need for creative human response are very much in the air.

As a society, we are at a time when we are often challenged to reevaluate our beliefs and our openness to others. The Saint Plays was programmed with this in mind. The extraordinary body of research devoted to the Saints by author Eric Ehn demonstrates a profound motivation to understand aspects of these beliefs. To capture Ehn's insights, and to share them with the audience, we thought that director Clea Minaker was the best creator for the project, to animate these texts with her own visions. Her mastery of puppetry, (a major art form) and Object Theatre (an increasingly important performance medium) brings these stories of imagination, faith, and poetry to life. Puppetry practices offer a fabulous way to share a story, often with beguiling, magical effects. I hope you will join me in my excitement as we experience this captivating performance of sharing and understanding of cultural values.

Raymond Marius Boucher
Artistic Director

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



A human life, whether small or great in its' proportions, is a dot on the social sentence. Life: infinitely unique, entirely universal.

The saint results from an instant, when probable facts, and popular rumours conflate: a legend is born. Through our storytelling, we weave happenstance and conundrum, into myth.

Erik Ehn's' preface to the Saint Plays has been working in us like a glorious manifesto: a call to creation, to presence; to big cheap, to broken through; to spectacle; to breathe and body; to poetry and song; to theatre as hospitality.

The 'inviting emptiness' in this room results from the fact that we come before you holding effigies. Standing here in the flesh, we merely demonstrate how "all action is risen and unravels in exhaustion, drowning, decay, or bliss."

We construct our figures, and then it all unravels, and quickly, for as Ehn writes, "narrative closure is idolatrous," and "these are little and poor vanishing acts."

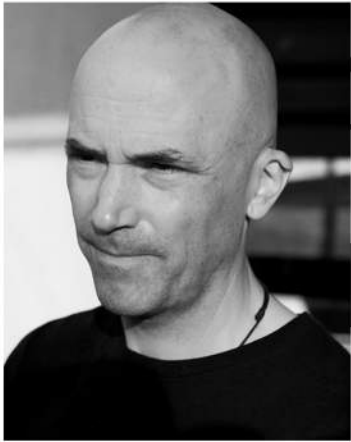
We draw 12 bodies together in space and in time, conspiring to give the signs of life; we charge these clay and wooden resonators with poetry, and try to make them sing.

Three plays, three saints, three young women. Three evocations of the tumultuous stringing together, of actions, and of circumstances, that are the essence of life.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



A performer, designer, and director, Clea Minaker explores contemporary puppetry art. Clea has created with musicians Feist (The Reminder Tour 2007-2008), So-called, Kid Koala, and Esmerine. In 2013, she collaborated with Atom Egoyan at the Canadian Opera Company, and presented a solo, *The Book of Thel*, at Festival Artdanthé in Montreal. In 2009, Clea was awarded, the Siminovitch Protégé Prize for Theatre Design by Ronnie Burkett. Clea trained at the International Institute of Puppetry Arts (2002 -2005) in Charleville-Mezieres, France.



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Work includes The Saint Plays, No Time Like the Present, Wolf at the Door, Tailings, Beginner, The Cycle Plays (for Theatre of Yugen) and Ideas of Good and Evil. The Soulographie project is a series of 17 plays on the history of the US in the 20th Century from the point of view of its genocides; scripts include Maria Kizito, Heavenly Shades of Night are Falling, Yermodea, Drunk Still Drinking. Artistic Director, Tenderloin Opera Company (Providence RI – generating new works of music-theater by, for and about people who are homeless/homeless advocates). Artistic Associate, Theatre of Yugen (SF). Graduate of New Dramatists. Current Chair, and Director of Writing for Performance, Brown University.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

“three plays on the struggle after one's true name in, through, around and in spite of politics, the church and the self; politics and political resistance and resistance to politics; praying with and for the church, and the self = the word that forgets. infinitely short/long trip aided by a trinity of a more perfect and inscrutable sort.

three of an ongoing series of plays that are sometimes the dragon (swallowing) and sometimes breaking out of the dragon, each - helplessly. moving to 366 plays; will produce a play a day in 2024, running in 24 hr rep during the last two weeks of the year.”

SYNOPSIS

Radio Elephant (Barbara) Barbara's father locked her in a tower at the age of 13. The more Barbara learns, the more her head expands: Elephantiasis... There is a warrant out for her arrest.

The Freak (George) Gunna was born with wings. In a dream she meets an unsuccessful Knight, all he wants is to become a saint- Gunna decides to help him.

Pain (Eulalia) Liz has been left for dead by an unknown cult in New York City. While searching the subway tunnels for her missing daughter, Maggie has a vision of St. Eulalia's martyrdom.

DRAMATURGICAL NOTE

Ehn refers to the saint as a “human mandala — a life in a ritual shape held up as a focus for contemplation.” Though sainthood is achieved by a number of means, a special class of the canonized are the martyrs. Of the Saints Ehn has chosen to bring new life to in his series of Saint Plays we’ve elected George, Barbara and Eulalia, all traditionally martyrs — individuals subjected to brutal torture and in turn death, in the fervid defense of their faith. It is not the faith which demands suffering, but the society that sees it as an institutional threat. These maimed martyrs are witnesses to the cankered nature of these institutions.

Historically, the three saints depicted in our production were persecuted among thousands of fellow Christians during the reign of Diocletian. Yet it has been a practice long before the Renaissance for artists to mix history, myth and the contemporary, to include signs which are familiar to the audience in the artist’s present, amidst historical facts. Peter Brook reminds us of the importance of “the closeness of reality and the distance of myth, because if there is no distance you aren’t amazed, and if there is no closeness you aren’t moved.” These representations lead to their own myths, to the ever-expanding realm of discovery allowed by each particular saint.

Though often reified and turned into objects of worship through various practices of idolatry, Saints are not inherently products of these practices. In our work, the puppets aren’t whole and complete objects for singular contemplation, but rather, lend themselves to a dramaturgy of animation, wherein temporality and ephemerality—performance—takes precedence over their thingness.

The texts presented to you this evening will sometimes feel dense or alienating in their condensation of images and demand for a poetic sensibility from spectators. That being said they have been tempered by a rhythm that allows one to come up for air.

These plays might be understood as encyclopaedic, in relation to Encyclopédie of Diderot and d’Alembert, a compendium that sought to contain the knowledge of the past, speak to the needs of the present, and it’s greatest ambition, to inform the future. It is our belief that Ehn has achieved this, and has done so in an elegant, if abrasive, manner devoid of hubris

CREATIVE TEAM

Erik Ehn
Playwright

Clea Minaker
Director

Amy Keith
Design Supervisor

Peter Shaw
Assistant Director

Kate Stockburger
Stage Manager

Alexandra Maisonneuve
Assistant Stage Manager

Anthony Kennedy
Dramaturg

Stephen Quinlan
Singing coach

CAST

Amelia Castillo
Eulalia

Leah Fong
Gunna

Jillian Harris
Maggie

Tyson Houseman
Dad

Dima Issa
Jesuit

Marika Karlsson
Narrator

Katarina Keca
Father

Arianna Markle
Bob

Alex Petrachuk
Barbara

Gabriela Petrov
Narrator

Agnès Rivet
Knight

Kelsey Walsh
Jo



DESIGN TEAM

Annie Maheux

Puppet Designer for Radio Elephant
(Barbara)

Michelle Lee

Assistant Puppet Designer

Elizabeth Waitzer

Puppet Designer for The Freak
(George)

Sarah Morena

Assistant Puppet Designer

Nicolas Ruzza

Puppet Designer for Pain (Eulalia)

Clarisse Bériault

Assistant Puppet Designer

Bryanna Blackwell

Space and Set Designer

Luz Gaitan

Assistant Set Designer

Elizabeth Waitzer

Costume Designer

Sarah Morena

Assistant Costume Designer

Mishelle Lam

Lighting Designer

Ariel St-Louis Lamoureux

Assistant Lighting Designer

Devon Bate

Sound Designer

STUDENT PRODUCTION TEAM

Helena Roy Magee

Kim Hall

Scene Shop Crew

Mariana Braga

Daniella Van Tran

Costume Shop Crew

Mariana Braga

Dresser

Cedric Chau

Properties Shop Crew

Sarah Hiseler

Christian Stephens

Lighting Crew

Matthieu Marin

Assistant Technical Directors

PRODUCTION STAFF

Norberts J. Munčs

Director of Performance Production
(DPP)

Pietro Cerone

Technical Coordinator / Multimedia

Jen Strahl

Administrative Assistant to the DPP/
Stage Management Coach

Paul Teichgraber

Technical Coordinator / Lighting

John Davis

Stage Supervisor, FC Smith Complex

Cameron Mckinnon

Head Technician, FC Smith Complex

Marlène Lucas

Head of Scene Shop

Sandrina Sparagna

Christian Stephens

Work Study Student, Scene Shop

Mairi Robertson

Head of Properties Shop (Puppets)

Jeremy Gordaneer

Properties Shop Assistants

Ana Julia Carrasquel Padrón

Work Study Student, Properties Shop

Marija Djordjevic

Head of Costume Shop (Puppets)

Sonya Vallis

Costume Shop Assistant

Aly Piatkowski

Work Study Students, Costume Shop

Jennifer Johnson

Venues Assistant

Roxane Halary

Graphic Designer

DEPARTEMENT OF THEATRE

FULL-TIME FACULTY

Edward Little
Acting Chair, Professor

Andreas Apergis
Visiting Artist

Sandeep Bhagwati
Associate Professor
Canada Research Chair,
Matralab Director

Raymond Marius Boucher
Senior Lecturer (ETA)

Kit Brennan
Associate Professor

Ana Cappelluto
Professor, Associate Dean

Amy Keith
Assistant Professor (LTA)

Noah Drew
Assistant Professor

Gene Gibbons
Associate Professor

Nancy Helms
Professor Pre-Retirement (LTA)

Amanda Kellock
Visiting Artist

Eric Mongerson
Professor

Clea Minaker
Visiting Artist

Ursula Neuerburg-Denzer
Assistant Professor

Robert Reid
Associate Professor

Mark Sussman
Associate Professor

PART-TIME PROFESSORS

Frederic Carpenter
Elisabeth Couture
Joe De Paul
Jean-François Gagnon
Dirk Gindt
Shannon Holmes

Cristina Lovita
Corinne Merrell
Cathia Pagotto
Anne Sabourin
Rachael Van Fossen
Liz Valdez

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Maud David-Lerebours
Department Administrator

Jen Cressey
Department Assistant

Nicoletta Pasquino
Department Assistant

Jen Reimer
Office Assistant

ANTIGONE

by Sophocles
directed by Andreas Apergis



DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE
SEASON 14-15 | FORCES



APRIL

8-9-10-11 at 8pm
10-11 at 2pm

D.B. CLARKE THEATRE

1455 Maisonneuve W.

\$10 | \$5 students
seniors

Images, Program
and more @
concordia.ca/theatre

The two sons of Oedipus have died fighting each other for the throne. King Kreon decides to honour one of the brothers and leave the other to rot on the battle field, unmourned. Antigone challenges Kreon's edict, claiming she follows the gods whose authority is beyond the state's rule. Set in modern day Montreal, this version highlights the timely themes for a contemporary audience.

PRODUCED BY
**DEPARTMENT
OF THEATRE**
GRAPHIC DESIGN : ROXANE HALARY