

Bringing worlds together

A conversation with Milena Buziak

This is the second play by Belgian playwright Marcel Cremer you've directed. What excites and inspires you about his writing?

For me, his writing—poetic, enigmatic, and open to interpretation—offers the director a great deal of freedom, even as it constructs a concrete and singular universe in which the characters evolve. Written in a non-chronological way, this work plays with the notion of time, shifting between the present of the performance to the distant past. As with *La femme corbeau*, it's a challenge to understand the structure and the issues the characters are dealing with in this play, and another challenge to invest it with our own meaning and bring it to life. I think I like challenges!

It's also the second time you've worked with sign language and with a deaf actor. What motivates this choice, and how, between *Traversée* and *Le cheval de bleu*, has your approach evolved?

Traversée was my very first encounter with sign language and the Deaf community. It took time and trial and error to find the overlap between the two languages and fully connect with the non-hearing audience. With *Le cheval de bleu*, I feel much better equipped; I want to push things farther and use sign language as a way to generate certain movements in the play. There are very few works where the physicality of this language is an integral part of the concept. The experience of *Traversée* allowed me to understand the necessity of this approach for deaf audience members, and its interest for hearing patrons. When the two languages synchronize, magic happens.

***Le cheval de bleu* addresses several themes. Can you tell us about them, and explain how they resonate with you?**

I recently realized that since *Platero et moi*, our company's first production in 2009, Voyageurs immobiles has been collecting a strange bestiary (the figures of the Donkey, the Raven, the Horse). Even in *Traversée*, without the Bird being overtly present, it is often mentioned. It's a strange fact that I can't quite explain.

Le cheval de bleu plays with the notion of time to evoke mourning, the right to be different, the importance of words (but without words), of listening (with your whole body, not just with your ears), and of intergenerational transmission. What attracts me is the enigmatic presence of the animal, which always appears at the right time, when it is needed most. Its name says it all: it is not a blue horse, but a horse OF blue. It's in blue that it exists. And here also lies its power to calm us, to nourish us with its stories and help us face the world.

Interviewed by Amélie Dumoulin