

ARTISTIC DOSSIER
THREE GREEN MEN
VALÉRIE MRÉJEN



Théâtre National de Bretagne
Direction Arthur Nauzyciel
1, rue Saint-Hélier
35000 Rennes
T-N-B.fr

With
PASCAL CERVO
CAMILLE RUTHERFORD
SARAH LE PICARD
and a sleeper

Duration 45 min
From 5 years

Direction
VALÉRIE MRÉJEN
Set design
KIKO HERRERO
CYRIL MOULINIÉ
Costumes
SOPHIE LIFSHITZ
Lighting
ABIGAIL FOWLER
Additional sound design
SIMON MULLER
Video animation
THAÏS COUTINHO
Sound effects
XAVIER DROUAULT
General management
YANN DUCLOS
Sound management
YOANN GABILLARD
PIERRE CHOLET

First version created in 2014. New version created at Théâtre National de Bretagne, 2020/2021 season. Production: red shoes | SOME SHOES. Associate production: Théâtre National de Bretagne. Co-production: T2G - Théâtre de Gennevilliers, Centre Dramatique National de création contemporaine; CDN Orléans / Centre-Val de Loire; Les Spectacles vivants – Centre Pompidou; La Fondation Cartier; Théâtre de la Commune, Centre Dramatique National d'Aubervilliers; Espaces Pluriels, Scène Conventionnée de Pau. Supported by CNC-DICRéAM and SPEDIDAM.

THREE GREEN MEN VALÉRIE MRÉJEN

A sleeping child dreams of three extraterrestrials whose flying saucer lands on planet Earth. Overwhelmed by everything they see, the visitors begin a series of experiments to try and understand the function of each object they encounter. In their explorations of this fascinating new world, the three green men drift little by little from dream to reality. For this show, created at Centre Pompidou, TNB associate artist Valérie Mréjen and her creative team enlisted the services of Xavier Drouault, a renowned sound effects engineer from the film industry, for five weeks of sonic and theatrical experimentation.

The result is a dreamlike journey where the gestures and language of the extraterrestrials conjure amazing characters. At first somewhat robotic, their movements are gradually embellished with hilarious, hare-brained onomatopoeia. Their (mis)use of everyday items causes bursts of unstoppable laughter in audiences young and old. These green men eat vegetables as green as they are, use and abuse wild insults, and delight the audience, transporting them on a journey full of charming visual and sound effects.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The idea for *Three Green Men* emerged from thinking about sound effects, and about how they're often produced using objects that have nothing to do with the images on screen. I wanted to create a whole universe from the familiar setting of the home, starting from a collection of everyday objects and cooking utensils in order to reveal, thanks to the curiosity of some extraterrestrial visitors, the secret character of these 'ordinary' things, their hidden lives and possibilities.

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The piece was born as well from the desire to create certain images: to depict the dreamlike visions conjured up by the objects' sound effects. In this way, the show coexists in two worlds: the everyday one, with all its familiar objects, and then a parallel universe of dreams, surreal situations, and altered states of consciousness, where the imagination has free rein.

THREE GREEN MEN BY VALÉRIE MRÉJEN, IF SOUND COULD DREAM

'The children's laughter bursts out amidst the creative insults, seismic nightmare alerts, and wobbly rear ends. Mad sound poetry that hits the bullseye.'

– LE MONDE | Emmanuelle Jardonet, 2014

THREE GREEN MEN, DREAM DJS

'A visual and minimal performance created by the artist Valérie Mréjen, *Three Green Men* pays homage to sound effects and their ability to conjure worlds using next to nothing.'

– LIBÉRATION | Marie Lechner, 2014



CREATION 2014 – FIRST VERSION

Paris, Centre Pompidou; T2G – Théâtre de Gennevilliers; Aubervilliers, Théâtre de la Commune; Paris, Fondation Cartier; Pau, Espaces Pluriels

CREATION 2020 – NEW VERSION

Rennes, Lillico / salle Guy Ropartz
13 11 – 21 11 2020

TOUR 2021/22

Bain-de-Bretagne, Bretagne Porte de Loire
Communauté

29 09 2021

Paris, EPPGHV La Villette

24 11 – 28 11 2021

Louvigné du Désert, Centre culturel Jovence
05 12 2021

Rennes, Théâtre National de Bretagne
08 12 – 22 12 2021

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Minimum technical specification:
proscenium stage, 15m by 9m with 11m
to the frame. A touring version is also available
with a smaller set. Get in touch for more
information.

VALÉRIE MRÉJEN

DIRECTION

ASSOCIATE ARTIST

Valérie Mréjen is a visual artist, writer, director and videographer. Over two decades she has shown her work in numerous festivals and exhibitions, in France and abroad (including at the Palais de Tokyo, Centre Pompidou, Tate Modern, and Brooklyn Museum). In 2008, the Jeu de Paume gallery in Paris mounted a retrospective of her work, titled *La Place de la Concorde*. She has published several books (*Mon grand-père*, *L'Agrume* and *Eau sauvage* with Éditions Allia; *Forêt noire* and *Troisième personne* with P.O.L.). She has produced numerous short films and documentaries, including *Pork and Milk* (2006), and the 2011 feature film *En ville* (released internationally as *Iris in Bloom*). Her films, like her books, work with intimate stories, family or romantic conflicts, and the hidden current of tragedy that lies beneath the banal. Whether in film or writing, she tries to capture the momentary and the fleeting.

Working with Arthur Nauzyciel, she produced a short film for his performance based on Allen Ginsberg's *Kaddish*. She co-adapted the novel *L'Empire des lumières* (*The Empire of Light*) by Kim Young-ha, as well as the novel and play *La Dame aux camélias* (*Camille*) by Alexandre Dumas fils (presented at TNB, September 2018).

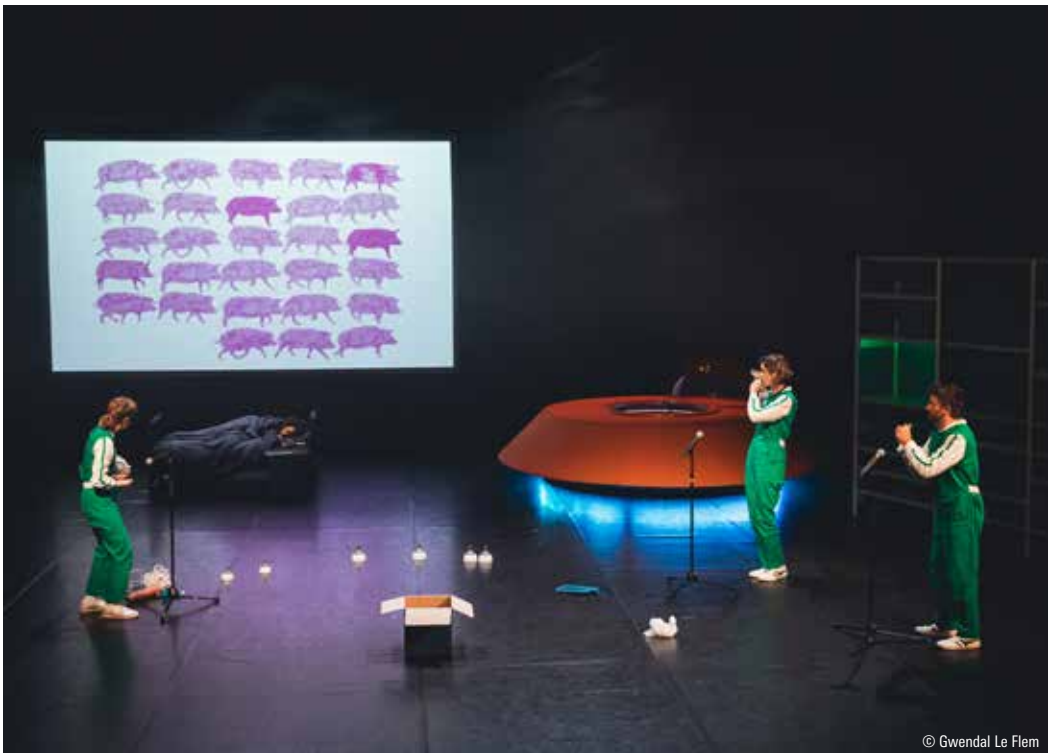
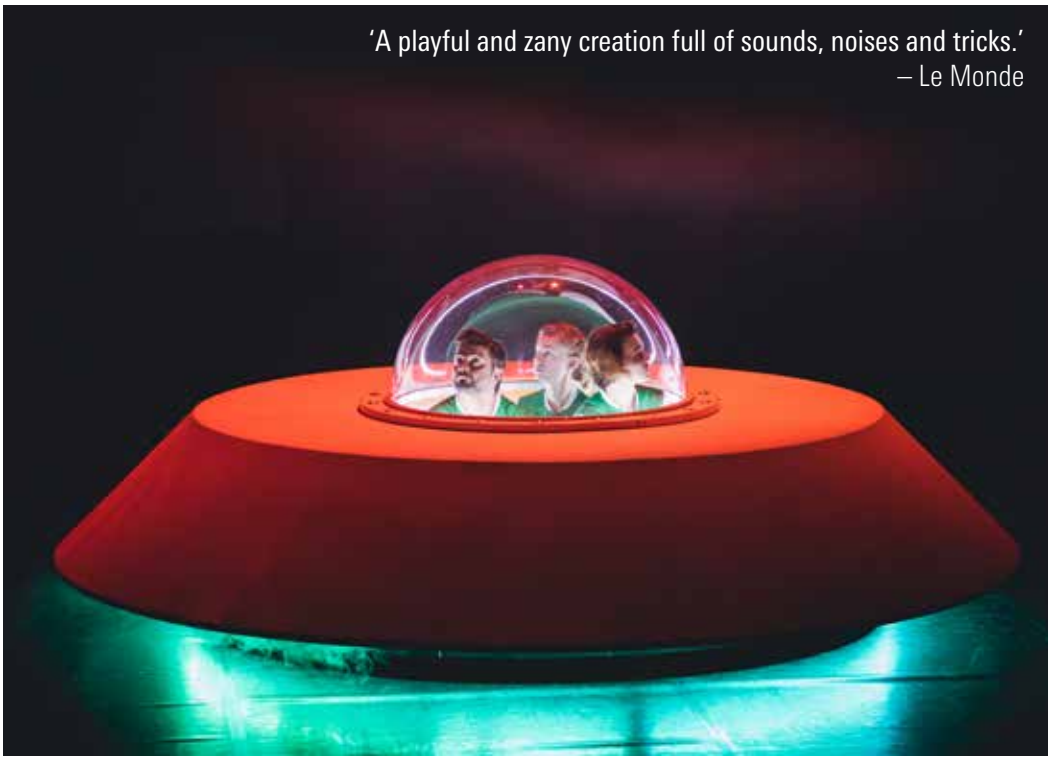
She has been an associate artist at TNB since January 2017. In March 2018 she organised a weekend that opened the theatre to families. The event was marked by her film *Quatrième*, a portrait of young people living in rural family homes in Ille-et-Vilaine. In 2019, she worked with Albin de la Simone to devise the children's show *Le Carnaval des animaux*, inspired by the music of Saint-Saëns. In 2021, she creates *Gardien Party* with Mohamed El Khatib and presents her show, *Trois hommes vertes*.



DISCOVER
THE WORLD OF VALÉRIE MRÉJEN
valeriemrejen.com

CREATION DIARY
on T-N-B.fr

'A playful and zany creation full of sounds, noises and tricks.'
– Le Monde



WORKSHOPS BEFORE AND AFTER THE SHOW

DISCOVERING SOUND

Made for ages 5 and up, *Three Green Men* lends itself well to workshops that explore space, bodies, theatre and music. Like the show itself, the workshops are inspired by the art of sound effects, and explore the way everyday objects can be used to create improbable sounds and, in context, new stories, senses and meanings.

— Making a nursery rhyme in noise (5-7 years)
The children are divided into small groups. Taking a well-known nursery rhyme as a base, they slowly transform it by replacing repeated words with evocative sounds created using everyday objects.

— Making a fairy tale in sound (7-10 years)
Helped by the workshop leaders, the children record the noises they imagine when told a story. All the noises are made with the help of everyday objects, giving the children a chance to try their hand at the art of sound effects. This workshop can begin with a sonic 'show and tell' where each child presents a sound and the other children describe what the noise conjures up in their imagination.

MEETING THE OTHER

The principle of this workshop is to introduce children to diversity, and to help them develop a relationship with 'the other' that is based on curiosity.

— Before the performance
We encourage the children to imagine and depict an extraterrestrial using various mediums – illustration, plasticine, etc. Then their designs are shown to the group and we use them to subtly introduce the question of stereotypes: Does an extraterrestrial always have to be green? Should they be a man or a woman? Is an extraterrestrial always humanoid?

We then guide the children to question what happens when we come into contact with different cultures and the role played by bias: How might the extraterrestrials react to ordinary objects? What language would they speak? Would we be able to communicate with them? How would we do it?

The goal is to open a space where children can imagine ways these situations could play out. We can also lead the children to think about – and examine – how they themselves might react if faced with an alien.

— After the performance
Following the performance, we tackle the assumptions that the children made during the show. Did we need to understand what the extraterrestrials were saying in order to understand the performance as a whole? Did they say any words in English?

For the older children: Did you hear any words in another language? Which one? Are these words, like the everyday objects the extraterrestrials use, given a new twist? We encourage the children to play with their own language to invent some new codes and different expressions. Will they manage to communicate with their alien friends?

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR DRAMATIC ARTS

The Théâtre National de Bretagne (TNB) traces its roots back to the creation of the Centre Dramatique de l'Ouest, one of France's first national centres for dramatic arts, in 1949. In 1968, a second venue called the Maison de la Culture was opened in Rennes and the two organisations began working together closely. In 1990, they merged to form the Théâtre National de Bretagne. In many respects, TNB stands out among France's network of national centres dedicated to dramatic arts. As a European centre for theatrical and choreographic production, its mission embraces not only theatre but dance, music, cinema and education. It also organises an annual festival, Festival TNB, and welcomes some 200,000 audience members each year. Since the foundation of TNB, a number of directors have stood at the helm: Hubert Gignoux, Georges Goubert, Guy Parigot, Chérif Khaznadar, Dominique Quéhec, Pierre-Jean Valentin, Pierre Debauche, Emmanuel de Véricourt, and François Le Pillouër. Since 2017, TNB has been led by the actor and stage director Arthur Nauzyciel.

On arriving in the role, Nauzyciel introduced an artistic strategy grounded in three fundamental values – Share, Transmit and Connect – and appointed 16 TNB associate artists and one research fellow. His vision for TNB is to erase the traditional barriers between artistic disciplines, inviting the public to experience the extraordinary fluidity of contemporary artistic expression. As such, cinema also assumes its rightful place in forming an integral part of TNB's programme.

With the start of the 2018 season, Arthur Nauzyciel and the associate director of TNB's education programme, Laurent Poitrenaux, introduced a reform of the programme at TNB's School of Dramatic Arts with two aims: to orient the school towards the training of multidisciplinary performers, and to open it to international influences.

THE NATIONAL CENTRES

The primary mission of a Centre Dramatique National (CDN) is artistic creation for the theatre stage. Following the construction of the first centres in the aftermath of World War II, France now boasts 38 CDN around the country. Originally envisioned by the French politician Jean Zay, and developed by Jeanne Laurent and André Malraux, they were designed to decentralise dramatic production and deliver cultural democratisation throughout France. To this day they remain the mainstay of the country's cultural policy: an endorsement of the idea that art, culture and theatre are a public service, and that the state has a responsibility to make high quality art available to all its citizens. Management of the national centres is usually entrusted to established stage directors, ensuring the long-term viability of their artistic work and anchoring it in a particular region and local audience. With a focus on theatrical creation, contemporary writing, innovative staging, and the hosting of major shows of French and international origin, the CDN remain unique in the world and welcome a combined audience of over one million each year.



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