

PRESS KIT  
**JAN KARSKI**  
**(MY NAME**  
**IS A FICTION)**  
YANNICK HAENEL  
ARTHUR NAUZycIEL



**Théâtre National de Bretagne**  
Direction Arthur Nauzyciel  
1 rue Saint-Hélier, CS 54007  
35040 Rennes Cedex  
**T-N-B.fr**



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**TOUR  
2017  
— 2018**

Lille, Théâtre du Nord  
16 03  
— 23 03 2018

Rennes, Théâtre National de Bretagne  
28 03  
— 07 04 2018

Saint-Brieuc, La Passerelle  
12 04  
— 13 04 2018

Nantes, Le Grand T  
18 04  
— 20 04 2018

Théâtre National de Bordeaux Aquitaine  
25 04  
— 28 04 2018

With **MANON GREINER**  
**ARTHUR NAUZCYIEL**  
**LAURENT POITRENAUX**  
and the voice of  
**MARTHE KELLER**

Duration 2h40

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After the novel by  
**YANNICK HAENEL** published by Gallimard, 2009  
Direction and adaptation  
**ARTHUR NAUZCYIEL**  
Video  
**MIROSLAW BALK**  
Music  
**CHRISTIAN FENNESZ**  
Set  
**RICCARDO HERNANDEZ**  
Lighting  
**SCOTT ZIELINSKI**  
Advice and Choreography  
**DAMIEN JALET**  
Sound  
**XAVIER JACQUOT**  
Costumes  
**JOSÉ LÉVY**  
Set assistant  
**JAMES BRANDILY**  
Costume assistant  
**GÉRALDINE CRESPO**  
Stage manager  
**JEAN-MARC HENNAUT**  
Sound engineer  
**FLORENT DALMAS**  
Master electrician  
**CHRISTOPHE DELARUE**  
Assistant stage manager  
**ANTOINE GIRAUD ROGER**  
Video engineer  
**THIERRY THIBAudeau**  
Documentary research  
**LEILA ADHAM**



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Show created at the Avignon Festival (France) 2011 from 06 July to 16 July at the Opéra-Théâtre.

Production : Théâtre National de Bretagne; Centre Dramatique National Orléans/Loiret/Centre. Coproduction : Festival d'Avignon; Les Gémeaux Scène nationale de Sceaux; CDDB-Théâtre de Lorient, CDN; MCB° Bourges, Scène nationale; La Comédie de Reims CDN, Festival Reims Scènes d'Europe. With the support of the Région Centre, the Polish Institute of Paris and the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès as part of the New settings programme. With the participation of the French Institute. With the help of the Theatre TR Warszawa and the French Embassy in Poland The set has been constructed in the workshops of the MCB° Bourges, Scène nationale.

## ARTHUR NAUZYZIEL STAGING

The novel was sent to me by Yannick Haenel after he saw *Ordet*. He recognised a similarity with his own approach: that of considering Art as a “place of reparations”. I read the book in New York during the rehearsals for the performance of *Julius Caesar* in Orléans and at the Festival d’Automne in Paris. I told the actors that in order to perform this tragedy, they had “to be like ghosts: you have seen the horrors of this world and you pass through all eternity never to forget”. I could read this same sentence in the novel when Karski speaks about his second visit to the ghetto: “I passed through this hell again to memorise everything”. In New York, I could follow Karski’s footsteps, since his arrival from Poland via the United Kingdom, his wanderings in New York imagined by Yannick Haenel in his book: the Frick Collection, the Public Library. I could walk down the street behind Penn Station named after him. I could surely recognize myself in this journey.

I read it a couple of days after the death of my uncle Charles Nauzyciel, my father’s brother, deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau from 1942 to 1945. One of the strong bonds between us had been built around this experience. As the first born of my generation, he began very soon to tell me about his experience in the concentration camp. I was in my early teens. During family gatherings on Sundays, or on other occasions, with his friends who were former deportees like himself, he talked. Not in a solemn manner, no, just like that, as it came to him, by association of ideas. My grandfather on my mother’s side had also been deported to Auschwitz Birkenau from 1941 to 1945 and talked a lot to me about it. But in an approximate French, more physical, more rough. I was five years old when he told me how they shared vegetable peelings and how the dead were hidden to keep their food. I write about this to explain that at home there was nothing one wouldn’t talk about. Everything was said. More than once, and over the years. And every time, new anecdotes, new sufferings, new memories, it was endless. What was told was beyond comprehension, but one understood. What is said to be “unimaginable” had been imagined, and so well imagined and designed that it could quite easily be applied, organised, by governments, by administrations, by civil servants, public services, firms, and so on. Laws, tenders, constructions, deportations, raids, it was necessary for many people to participate to make those things happen. In all of Europe, in fourteen countries. Where is the “unimaginable”?

Haenel imagined what had been haunting Jan Karski during those nights. In our family, we said of those who survived that they “came back”. A ghost is very concrete for me. A ghost speaks, talks, often repeats himself, and has restless nights.



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The silence and the sleepless nights of Karski visited by his ghosts make the subject unreal, puts it in the domain of dreams (nightmares?), visions. He is possessed. Submerged. Such a consciousness is not unspeakable, it is unbearable. The success of the novel is that it makes us feel something of that consciousness, that incredible suffering, which he had domesticated and tamed. The strong connection, from one unconsciousness to another, with Haenel’s book, gave me the possibility to calm my inner anxiety, the heavy burden, like a summons, of bearing witness for the witnesses: my grandfathers, uncles, cousins, friends. The anxiety of not recalling every detail of everything my uncle had told me. An irrational fear: he had been interviewed several times, the recordings still exist. And also the fear that those words will again be greeted by indifference or polite disapproval (“ok, we know already”, “it’s enough”, and so on). This discomfort was felt by those of the deportees who came back not daring to speak about what they had lived through, being afraid to bore, to feel the indifference or the polite boredom of the listener. I fight against it myself, I go against myself by approaching the Shoah so directly. This consciousness, these visions, this knowing which had been passed on to me in the womb, so to speak, are part of me, have always been a part of me and will always be. It took me some time to leave the survival behind me and open up to life itself. First born of a generation which is the first not having to flee or to hide, I know that the essence of my actions, of my work, is secretly dedicated to appease my inner beast, the monster, a permanent and dull ache one gets used to.



I also realised that I didn't know Poland where my family came from. "Never again will I set foot in Poland" is a sentence I often heard. Without denying the Polish anti-Semitism which had often been commented on, I realised by reading the novel and by discovering this remarkable man's story and that of so many others that today it was important for me to build new bonds with this country. Working on the book and this project is a paradox: I do it to give a voice to those disappeared witnesses, their visions and their fears, to reactivate this powerful and painful past, but also in order to move forward in my own story, to open up new perspectives for myself.

I do not know yet what form my work on Jan Karski will take. The controversy surrounding this book makes me certain of the necessity to stage it. To look for ways to tackle this question in today's theatre, what form could it take to recount this consciousness that resounds throughout the novel. Now in our forties, we have to appropriate history to transmit something fundamental. We may do it clumsily, others will do it better later but we will prepare the soil. Haenel deals with questions that should still haunt us, because they are fundamental to our society today. We still have to scrape the shameful cement of Europe, our future depends on it. But I am already glad about the journey I had to do to be able to put it on stage: to finally have the courage to go to Auschwitz or Siedlce, a village near Treblinka where the Nauzyciel come from, to find myself in this country to look for the traces of those before, a bit scared, like a dog sniffing the pavements, with the hope to find a presence, the sign of a presence? But no, nothing. There is nothing left to see. Everything is in the air. Nevertheless seventy years after the exile, the flight, I am there, spending time in Warsaw, working with Miroslaw Balka, one of the greatest Polish artists, rehearsing in the theatre TR in Warsaw, making important encounters. A year ago I would not have thought it possible. A miracle. To be in Warsaw, to create in Warsaw, yes, alive. A new horizon opens up for me.

## THE NOVEL BY YANNICK HAENEL

The words spoken by Jan Karski in Chapter 1 come from his interview with Claude Lanzmann in *Shoah*.

Chapter 2 is a summary of Jan Karski's book, *Story of a Secret State* (Emery Reeves, New York, 1944, which was translated into French as *Histoire d'un État Secret*. It was republished in 2004 by Points de Mire in its "Histoire" collection, as *Mon témoignage devant le monde*.

Chapter 3 is fictional. It is based on certain aspects of Jan Karski's life, which I have gathered from, among other sources, Karski, *How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust* by E. Thomas Wood and Stanislaw M. Jankowski (John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1994). The situations, words and thoughts I attribute to Jan Karski are pure inventions.

– Yannick Haenel, Introduction,  
Jan Karski, Éditions Gallimard, 2009



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## JAN KARSKI (MY NAME IS A FICTION)

The book by Yannick Haenel speaks about Karski's silence during forty years, of the passiveness of the Allies, of the abandonment of Europe's Jews, of the uniqueness of the radical extermination of a people. But beyond the story, one of the major interests of the book is its construction in three parts. The show will be the adaptation of the book for the stage, in other words, the staging of all three parts in continuity as seen in the novel. The embodiment of Jan Karski by an actor on stage, transforming him into a character and a ghost, creates a fourth chapter. At the end of the book, logic calls for the materialisation of his speech. The transmission of the message. Continuing Haenel's dream, we would like to see a man appear who would say: "I am Jan Karski, I have something to say", and it would be in 1942, and he would be heard...

What interests me in Haenel's book is how this man, one of the most fascinating of the 20th century, haunted and possessed by his message which he thinks has not been heard, has lived inside this silence. Theatre is by nature a place of mystery, of evocation of the dead and of ghosts. The theatre seems to me one of the rare places today where it is possible to recount all this, to testify to the complexity of the world and its inhabitants. It is a paradoxical form of art since it can be a place of silence and of listening at the same time, a place to relate a speech and also the failure of speech.

In the novel, Karski speaks to reactivate his memory and the existence of those he couldn't save. He speaks to not forget and so as to hand down an experience of hell. To give space to Karski so he may speak, even through the vision imagined by Haenel, is to give an audience for his speech, to give sense to this silence, his obsession, the ghetto he revisited hundreds of times in his nightmares, the message he turned over in his mind during all those years. To hear the resonance of the six million voices which haunted this man all his life.





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This structure, neither didactic nor ideological, enhanced with a certain delicacy: it relates the story of a speech and also the attempt of the novelist to keep it, to hand it over, to interpret it, in order to give an account by the means of literature of the things a historian cannot document: nightmares, nausea, silence. The book Haenel imagined poses the question of representation in an acute manner. Not the representation of the extermination, but that of a testimony: what could be the theatrical equivalent of the novel which uses documentary, biography and finally fiction? To give an account of a man, of the message that haunted him, his exceptional life: a "character" who dies and is raised from the dead several times, in every sense of the word, in different countries, a multiple "character" whose truth, as one may suspect, is the total of all these inventions: member of the Polish upper class, catholic churchgoer, spy, diplomat, adventurer, American professor, Honorary Citizen of Israel, Righteous Among The Nations.

Through him, through the structure of Haenel's novel, this show hopes to bear witness to those who, like Paul Celan, say, while the survivors pass away: "Nobody bears witness to the witness". A sentence without punctuation, neither question nor affirmation, an open sentence, which seems to float and come back to us.

This question is fundamental today. My generation has to accept the heritage of historians, the testimonies of those who disappeared, the studies and the works dedicated for the past fifty years to the judeocide and from there on, to test, to invent, to suggest new means of passing them on.

Who will pass on what and how? Which forms of art can be born out of this questioning without reproducing what has already been done? Haenel's novel is situated in this questioning. The structure itself suggests a multiplicity of forms of representations, and therefore the difficulty to suppose that one might be more exact than another, the concern of replacing ourselves in the historical context by inventing a way for ourselves to build on the base constructed by our predecessors. The structure that approaches fiction only in the third part shows the difficulty, but also the necessity of this fiction.

To take up the challenge of this adaptation for the stage, I wanted to gather a group of people for whom the stories already made sense: these artists brought together for the project of *Jan Karki (my name is a fiction)* come from France, Belgium, Poland, Switzerland, Austria, the United States. They are Karki's voyage, a voyage that reminds us that the events are European and American. As always, I think that the process and the imagined or real encounters to construct a performance have to become the subject itself. The show will be created at the Opéra-Théâtre for the Avignon Festival. In the heart of the town. To remind us that this world that wasn't of this world was nevertheless in the heart of Warsaw. The walls that surrounded it designed a giant roofless tomb in which lay hundreds of thousands of assassinated men, women and children.

This testimony, documented, biographied, fictionalised, is that of a Polish catholic told by a forty-year old Frenchman. The performance will also speak of the point of view on this man and his story, a major witness of the radical political and industrial extermination of the Jews in France and in the rest of the world. This point of view recounts the empathy ("to put oneself in the place of someone else"), and the awareness this generation may have of history, knowing what we know today and what we want to hand down.

– Arthur Nauzyć

# WALTER LAQUEUR THE TERRIBLE SECRET INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW EDITION (1998)

This book first appeared in 1980; since then it has been reprinted numerous times and translated into a dozen languages. Although several of the topics I covered had already been touched on in a number of valuable monographs, my book was the first, I believe, to bring together and examine the many questions raised by the 'terrible secret': When did the Jews in occupied Europe know about their destination (and their destiny)? To what extent were the Germans in the Reich informed? When and through what channels did the information reach London, Washington, and the capitals of the neutral states? When did it reach Palestine? And finally, if so much was known so early, why was it so often disbelieved or, at best, discounted as exaggeration? I did not specifically address one obvious question that flowed from the others: What could have been done to help the victims? At the time, the material available was simply not sufficient to allow for a comprehensive appraisal. I am all the more grateful, therefore, for the new information that has surfaced, and for the revelation it offers about what was and was not known in those crucial years. These new books and articles, as well as the new material discovered in formerly inaccessible archives, complement my work to a substantial extent. Far from revising my earlier conclusions, the details that have come to light reinforce them, with the result that one can now write with far greater certainty about the events of that time. Twenty years ago, for example, it was still widely argued that prior to the summer of 1944, no one in the West, and hardly anyone in occupied Europe, had heard anything but vague rumours of Auschwitz and the other extermination camps. While it is of course highly unlikely that everyone knew everything, it now seems clear that much fuller information was available than was earlier thought and that it reached even people who were almost totally isolated and had no access to privileged sources of information.

[...] Swiss businessmen traveled widely in Eastern Europe during the war and while they were not as a rule permitted to enter concentration camps, they saw and reported a great deal; one of them, for instance, had been present when twenty thousand Jews were killed in Odessa in 1941. Other important Swiss sources previously unknown to me were the records of interrogations of German deserters, whose numbers were not insignificant in 1942-3. Swiss military intelligence had only limited interest in the fate of the Jews but some of the deserters had witnessed scenes of mass murder and their eyewitness accounts can be found in the Swiss archives.

Yet other accounts came from sick and severely injured Polish soldiers (among them several Jews) who reached Switzerland when the Red Cross arranged an exchange of prisoners in the summer of 1912. Nor had I been fully aware of the role of the radical press in wartime Switzerland. Periodicals such as *Nation*, *La Sentinelle* and *Das Israelitische Wochenblatt*, the organ of the Jewish community in Switzerland, were of course subject to censorship.

Yet while they carried on a guerilla war with the authorities, forever afraid that irresponsible journalists might provoke Goebbels, a great amount of information did manage to get through. Virtually every major extermination camp, including Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, and Sobibor, was mentioned in their pages as early as 1942, even though the dimensions of the mass murder were not fully known. [...] By far the most important source of information has of course been Poland, where the greatest number of massacres took place.

The Polish underground reported to the Polish Government-in-exile almost every day: shorter items were sent by wireless, longer, more detailed ones by courier to London. It can now be established with certainty that the first report of massacres was dated 30 August 1941. Civilian and military underground leaders sent further detailed information from Poland during September and October. The gist of this information was published in the Bulletin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and *Dziennik Polski*, the Polish daily newspaper in London, on 29 October and 31 October 1941 respectively. Subsequent reports were transmitted to the Jewish members of the Polish National Council. What all these accounts portrayed was a picture of devastation: 10,000 Jews had been killed in Włodzimierz; 8,000 in Pinsk; 6,000 in Brzesz; in Homsk, Motel, and Kobryn, every Jew had been killed. As for the areas to the north and east of Poland, most Lithuanian Jews had been murdered, with the exception of 40,000 who remained in Vilna. In Borislaw, Mohylev, and other cities where there had been major Jewish communities, not a single Jew was left. We now know that during the first half of 1942 the systematic extermination of Polish Jewry was reported by the Polish underground and Jewish sources such as the Bund, the Polish Jewish Labour party. The Bund report that reached London before the end of May estimated the number of people killed as 700,000 and insisted that their murders were part of a general plan, not isolated 'pogroms' however massive in scale. Even before the London Daily Telegraph published a frontpage story on the Bund report, the Polish Cabinet had sent a report to the Allied government. Over the next few days the British Broadcasting Corporation made the news available in various languages. In a press conference sponsored by the World Jewish Congress in June, one million Jews were reported to have already been murdered. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, the Polish Minister of the Interior for the Government-in-exile, estimated that the number of Jewish victims was merely 200,000, but he nevertheless mentions the existence of major extermination camps such as Belzec, as well as the use of poison gas.





News of the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto on 22 July 1942 reached London within four days. It was said that 6,000 Jews were being deported daily; the actual figure was considerably higher. The Polish underground in Warsaw complained after the war that while it had sent many reports about this event to London, both the BBC and the Polish Government-in-exile were reluctant to publish them. In fact, only three such reports have been found; others may have been lost: a third or even more of the dispatches from Warsaw were lost in transmission. It is also possible, as Dariusz Stola has recently pointed out, that more stringent Polish censorship in London prevented the publication of details and that the arrest of a group of Swedes in Warsaw who had acted as couriers hindered the transmission of information. Be that as it may, the essential information was available in June and July 1942 and the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto with its 400,000 inhabitants only confirmed what was by then a near certainty, that it was Nazi policy to exterminate Polish and East European Jewry altogether.

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[...] Only within the last few years has it become clear how much the British knew through their celebrated decoding operations. Not only military historians but also the public at large is now aware that the British had broken the most secret German codes and were reading the messages exchanged by the Germans during much of the war. Not every fact was reported in these messages, for the simple reason that no one would have dreamed of using the wireless for reports over short distances. Moreover, decoding could take a long time, and whenever the Germans changed their codes there was bound to be a lag until the Allied decoders could catch up. But the amount of information obtained in London about the European theatre of war is indeed astounding and historians have speculated for a long time on how much information about the Holocaust was received by the Allies in this way. Some historians doubted whether anything of significance percolated from this source prior to 1944; others, including myself, suspected that the British had decoded a tremendous amount of information even though they did not publicize this fact. This dispute was finally settled in 1996 when decrypts released in London revealed that British Intelligence knew virtually from the day Hitler launched the invasion of the Soviet Union that the Einsatzgruppen, the special unit that had been set up to kill Jews, had started their sinister operations. Almost daily, reports were intercepted detailing the number of Jews killed by what unit and where. On 12, September 1941, for instance, the following note was sent by the chief decrypter to Churchill and designated recipients: 'The fact that the Police are killing all Jews that fall into their hands should by now be sufficiently appreciated. It is not therefore proposed to continue reporting these butcheries specially, unless so requested.' Senior intelligence officers knew, but did anyone else? Perhaps these officers kept this information to themselves because it was of no military use, as some historians have suggested?

Since Churchill countersigned the reports sent to him, and since these reports included information about the mass murder, this debate too has been settled. We are not certain with whom Churchill shared this information, but precisely because it was not of great military or operational importance, he may well have talked about it to others. We know, for example, that Churchill in a public speech at the time mentioned that mass murder was being committed by police battalions, a fact that was as yet quite unknown. In reviewing all this new information, I do not mean to suggest that no more work needs to be done. On the contrary, I can think of at least three major lacunae. One concerns, paradoxically, the situation inside Germany. The extermination of the Jews was considered a state secret in Nazi Germany. It could be discussed in a small circle but only indirectly, by way of hints and circumlocution, in the mass media and in public speeches. And yet, a massive amount of information was available to hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of Germans from an early date in the testimony of eyewitnesses, in the aesopian (and not so aesopian) language of bureaucratic memoranda, and in the personal letters and memoirs written at the time. These many sources have not yet been systematically explored, perhaps because the amount of material is so overwhelming. Just as my letters were returned to me after fifty years, there must be many thousands of such collections that survived, at least some of which, despite official censorship and self-censorship, must contain references to the persecution of the Jews. Nor do we know the extent of the Vatican's knowledge. Through its international connections the Catholic Church was the first to hear of the mass murder but to date no outsiders and only a few trusted priests have had access to its archives. What publications there have been are selective and of an official character. Glasnost has not yet reached the Vatican, but nor has it been practised in Russia. Though details about other aspects of recent Soviet history have come to light, the matter of Soviet knowledge of the murder of the Jews remains shrouded in secrecy. And yet the Kremlin must have known a great deal: Soviet intelligence had many informants behind the German lines. That the murder of the Jews did not figure high on the Soviet agenda goes without saying.

But some of the information they received and relayed to Stalin and other Soviet leaders must have touched on it. With few exceptions, neither the files of military intelligence nor those of the NKVD have yet been opened. True, even if Moscow and Rome had had a full and accurate picture early on, they are not likely to have taken action. But still it is important to know. Despite these lacunae, however, it is abundantly clear from the sources that have become available since my book was published that the murder of European Jewry was not a secret, even if the Nazi leadership tried to make it so. This is no surprise: the disappearance of millions of people could hardly be concealed. Yet how do we explain the claims of many Germans after the war that they had not known the destiny of the Jews, and how do we explain the corresponding unawareness of many Jews that their deportations could lead only to one end?



As for the Germans, except for those who directly or indirectly participated in the mass murders or who happened to witness them, few had a full picture of the 'final solution'. Nor did many of them know details, for instance about the gas chambers. But they did know that the Jews disappeared and they assumed that they would never return. When Goebbels and the Nazi security services spoke of the 'harsh measures' taken against the Jews, these could not possibly have been understood as referring merely to the fact that Jews were compelled to leave their homes or forced into hard labor, for millions of Germans also had to give up their homes and do all kinds of things that were dangerous or unpleasant or involved great physical effort. In wartime these are not 'harsh measures'. 'Harsh measures' could mean only one thing and since Hitler had spelled it out – destruction and extermination – even before the outbreak of war, the destiny of the Jews was not in doubt. But neither was it a very important issue for most Germans, who feared for their families and friends, and themselves suffered all manner of deprivations and dangers. The murder of the Jews was a minor affair that dominated the thinking of very few Germans. It was also an unpleasant affair, something no one felt particularly proud of - and therefore better suppressed. Those who later argued they hadn't known that between five and six million Jews had been killed, many of them in gas chambers, were not lying: neither the number of victims nor the manner of killing had ever appeared in the papers. And yet, people did know that the Jews had perished. The extent of knowledge among Allied leaders and the public in Britain, America, and the neutral countries was also greater than commonly believed, and a similar mechanism was in operation: the fate of the Jews was not a secret, but it seemed a small matter in comparison with the truly decisive issue, namely the conduct of war. How much longer would the war last, how many more sacrifices would be required for victory, what kind of future awaited the neutrals? As far as the Allied leaders were concerned, any effort to save Jews would only distract from the general war effort; moreover, they reasoned, the Jews would be safe only when Nazi Germany was destroyed and full victory achieved.

That the victory might come too late for the victims was bound to be a matter of little concern. Since, as it seemed to these leaders, nothing could and should be done to help these unfortunates, knowledge of their fate had to be relegated to a secondary place or temporarily forgotten. In time of war leaders had to concentrate on what was absolutely essential, and the fate of the Jews of Europe was certainly not among their high priorities. As for the Jews, we have it from many sources that they knew that those deported to the camps were facing certain death. But there is also evidence that many of those arriving in the camps not only from distant countries like Holland and Greece but also from Germany and Austria were devastated when they understood that they were about to be killed. This they had not expected. What had they expected? Deprivation, hard labour, inclement weather, difficult living conditions, but not immediate death for many and a slower death for those lucky enough to survive the first 'selections'. Many – probably most – of them had heard about the mass killings in the East; even if only one out of a hundred had listened to foreign radio stations, such information spread within days if not within hours. But they were not willing to accept the horrible truth, for the same reasons that many people even in normal circumstances are unwilling to accept certain death. They hoped that some of them would survive even if the worst came to pass, and perhaps they would be the lucky ones. This, at least, is true of those in the earlier mass transports to the extermination camps; among the later deportees there was little optimism left, for the news of the mass killings had filtered back through smuggled – out letters and other means. These explanations are not, of course, new. Those today who did not live through that time, however, may have difficulty accepting them. Human beings know, more or less, how to cope with familiar situations. This seems to be true of both very sophisticated and very primitive people, of both leaders and followers. But the terrible secret was unprecedented, certainly in modern history. In such circumstances, how could confusion and apathy not be the natural response?

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– Walter Laqueur  
Washington, London, Jerusalem, summer 1997



## JAN KARSKI EXERPT

The mysteries that assailed me during all those years continue without me, and probably without anybody. Because it is impossible to live at the heart of abandon, such mourning is inconceivable: it must be impossible to get over extermination, just as it is impossible, at a different level, to get over God, or over his absence. The proportions of such mourning transcend the world, and transcend each person's possibilities. It was during those years of silence that I discovered the works of Franz Kafka. At once, I felt like his brother. Joseph K. and I had the same initials: J.K., the initials of exile. Here was someone who had heard me. Kafka's ears were not blocked. On the contrary, no one's ears were more open than his. During my life, I have talked to Kafka far more than I have to any so-called living person. It is doubtlessly because he, too, was a messenger. It happens that messengers, in their attempts to find someone able to listen to their message, become lost and stray into unknown lands; and so they discover truths that should have remained hidden; they conceive a fear that closes for them the doors of understanding, but which opens other doors which are more obscure, and even infinite. When I met Pola, I had just learnt that I had become an American citizen. This was in 1953, I had started studying again and was now going to start teaching. Jan Karski was not my real name, but as I had entered the territory under it, I could no longer change it, and even less admit that it was false: that was a serious crime in America. So, for the rest of my life, I kept my Resistance name. I am Jan Karski, former courier of the Polish Resistance, and retired university professor. After all those years of wandering, I started to live again. I started going every night to Broadway. I loved music hall. I loved movies with Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly. I also loved modern dance, and it was during a show by a young European troop that I met Pola. She was dancing with a dozen youngsters from England, Poland and France to Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. From that very first evening, at the very moment when Pola appeared on the stage of that little theater in Greenwich Village and, dressed entirely in black, started spinning around as her gestures unwound one by one, I loved her. It was Pola's solitude that attracted me, the way solitude spoke in her. Only solitude is worthy of love, and when you love someone, our love is addressed to what is most solitary in them. That evening, I understood, while a woman was defying the abyss that opened out at each of her gestures, that the only thing which can endure against the abyss is love; only something like love can stand up against the abyss, because love in fact exists in an abyss.

That evening, going back to my room, after being introduced to Pola Nirenska, after having been troubled by her smile, the smile of someone who has lost everything and who considers that nothing is ever lost, I thought that the instant when another person's solitude stares at you, then it opens that abyss. It closes again quickly. But if it then reopens, and opens to the extent that it will never close again, then that abyss changes into what can be called love.

I was so happy that evening that, with my friends and Pola's friends, I talked away merrily, everyone was joyful, those terrible years were behind us, and Pola Nirenska was looking at me, and I was looking at her, and I guessed at once what those terrible years had meant to her, just as she had guessed, at first glance, how terrible those years had been for me, and that only the future could fulfill us, and that this is all we wanted: the future – for ever. She had been dancing since the age of eight, she had started dancing in a school in Krakow, then at the Conservatoire of Music, then in London, after leaving Poland because of the first anti-Jewish measures, and after her parents had left for Palestine, and now she was dancing in New York, where she managed a little troop. I spoke, that evening, about Rembrandt's *Polish Rider*. Did she know that, only a few yards away, just by Central Park, in the Frick Collection, there was the most beautiful painting in the world, a painting that spoke of our solitude? Rembrandt had guessed that this solitude is not made of unhappiness, but has inside it a secret that pulls the solitary from the worst and which, perhaps, saves them. You have to see the smile of the Rider, I said to Pola, because her smile was gleaming in the shadows. That evening, I did not dare tell Pola that she had the same smile, but I did invite her to come and see Rembrandt's *Polish Rider* with me, whenever she wanted. I waited for her on a bench in Central Park. The foliage of the elm trees was red, and light was streaming down on that fall day. Pola arrived, and it seemed to me to be natural that she was there, as though we had been together for ages. In the Frick Collection, we went straight to the room with the Dutch paintings. The warmth of the *Polish Rider* enveloped us. It was when we left the museum, that day, and were walking down a path in Central Park, that I asked Pola to marry me. We hardly knew each other but, for the past hour, I had the impression that we knew each other very well. Because it was not us who had been contemplating the *Polish Rider*, Pola said, it was he who was contemplating us; and while he was contemplating us, he had seen us together, and had seen a couple. In a way, it was him, Rembrandt's *Polish Rider*, who made a couple of us, he had seen us as a couple, and had married us. That is why I asked Pola to be my wife, and she answered with a smile, the same one she had when she danced, the smile that can be seen in Rembrandt's painting; and, thanks to that smile, I knew the answer was yes. Even if she had not said "yes", it was "yes"; it was not a "yes" for right now, but it still was "yes". Later, when we got married, I reminded her of that "yes" which she had pronounced with a simple smile, the "yes" of pleasures to come, a "yes" that I had learnt to recognize, and which came to her above all when she was dancing, because then her entire body said "yes", and this "yes" went so far that it seemed to be spill out from her body and drag her arms, legs and hair into the twists and turns of an affirmation, and she remembered it quite clearly.



I started teaching at the university of Georgetown. Speaking in front of students was an immediate joy for me: and so, along with my speech, I recovered the joy of being heard; the possibility of being heard gave me back my faith in speech. Like ten years before, during those talks when I toured America, I also started listening again, to hear what each student had to say. Teaching brought me out of my isolation and delivered me from my curses; it was when I talked with my students that I started thinking again. I had shifted from obsession to thought. I stopped chewing over my story like a personal disaster and stopped seeing myself as a victim; I started to view what had happened to me as a more general experience, linked to the twentieth century, in other words the history of a crime. In fact, I had experienced the end of what was called "humanity". You must be careful about that word, I used to tell my students, it may even be no longer possible to use it correctly, because it has served as an alibi for the worst atrocities, it has been used as a cover-up for the most abject causes, both in the West and in the Communist countries. The word "humanity" has become so compromised during the twentieth century that, each time it is used, it is as if we start to lie. It is not even possible to talk about "crimes against humanity", as people did in the sixties, when Eichmann was being judged in Jerusalem: speaking about "crimes against humanity" implies that a part of humanity has been preserved from barbarity, but barbarity affects the entire world, as was shown by the extermination of the Jews of Europe, in which not only the Nazis were involved, but also the Allies. I was pleased to have recovered my speech, and my lessons in modern history, at Georgetown and then at Columbia, took the form of a ritual for me: in my teaching, there was something of my sleepless nights. I often thought of a sentence by Kafka, one of those mysterious sentences I read during my years of silence: "Far, far from you, world history is unfolding, the world history of your soul." This sentence was destined to me, as it was to all of my students, and to you. We think that world history is happening far away from us, it always seems to be occurring without us, but in the end we realize that it is the history of our souls.

## YANNICK HAENEL

### AUTHOR

Born in Rennes, he is the son of a professional soldier, he was brought up in Africa and studied at the military school in La Flèche, subject of his first novel *Les Petits Soldats (The Little Soldiers)* published in 1996 at La Table Ronde. Together with François Meyronnis, he is director of the review *Ligne de Risque* they founded in 1997.

He has published five novels for the Éditions Gallimard : *Introduction à la mort française (Introduction to French Death, 2001)*, *Évoluer parmi les avalanches (To Evolve surrendered by avalanches, 2003)*, *Cercle (2007, December Prize and Prize Roger Nimier)*, *Jan Karski (2009, Prize of the Novel Fnac and Prize Interallié)*, and *Les Renards pâles (2013)*. *À mon seul désir (To my only desire, 2005)*, an essay on the *The Lady And The Unicorn*, is published by les Éditions Argol. His novel *Le Sens du calme (The Sense of calmness)* is published by Le Mercure de France.

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He has been a columnist for the literary and cinema magazine *Transfuge* since 2007.

In 2017, he published the novel *Tiens ferme ta couronne* which receives the Prix Médicis. He is as well since 2017 associate artist at the TNB.



## LAURENT POITRENAUX ACTOR JAN KARSKI

Growing up in Vierzon, he arrived in Paris at the age of eighteen and entered the Théâtre en Actes, Lucien Marchal's theatre school. Apart from several parts in films such as *Tout va bien on s'en va* by Claude Mouriéras and *D'Amour et d'eau fraîche* by Isabelle Czajka, his career is mainly on the stage. He worked under the direction of Christian Schiaretti as a member of the troupe of the Comédie de Reims (*Le Laboureur de Bohème* by Johannes von Saaz), Thierry Bedard (*L'Afrique Fantôme* by Michel Leiris), Éric Vigner (*Brancusi contre États-Unis*), Daniel Jeanneteau (*Iphigénie en Aulide* by Racine) and Yves Beaunesne (*Oncle Vania* by Tchekhov and *Dommage qu'elle soit une putain* by John Ford). He created with actor Didier Galas a song recital called *Les Frères Lidonne* followed by *3 Cailloux* and *La Flèche et le Moineau* based on Gombrowicz. A regular actor in stagings by Ludovic Lagarde, he played in almost every one of his productions: *Trois Dramaticules* by Samuel Beckett, *L'Hymne* by Gyorgy Schwajda, *Le Cercle de Craie Caucasien* by Bertolt Brecht, *Faust ou La Fête électrique* and *Oui dit le très jeune homme* by Gertrude Stein and *Richard III* by Peter Verhelst. He created texts by Olivier Cadiot: *Sœurs et Frères*, *Le Colonel des Zouaves*, *Retour définitif et durable de l'être aimé*, *Fairy Queen*, *Un Nid pour quoi faire*, *Un Mage en été*, all directed by Ludovic Lagarde. Together with François Berreur he created *Ébauche d'un portrait*, based on the diary of Jean-Luc Lagarce, for which he received the Critic's Prize for Best Actor of the Year 2008.

With *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)*, Laurent Poitreux will be working again with director Arthur Nauzyciel: they performed together in *Brancusi contre États-Unis* directed by Éric Vigner and created at the Festival d'Avignon in 1996 and he played the title role of Arthur Nauzyciel's first production *The Imaginary Invalid or The Silent of Moliere* based on Molière and Giovanni Macchia, in 1999. He is Trigorine in *The Seagull* by Chekhov, created in July 2012 at Avignon Festival (Cour d'honneur of the Popes' Palace). He received the 2011 Beaumarchais Prize for best actor in *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)*.

In 2017, he becomes responsible educational associated with the Drama School of the TNB.

## MARTHE KELLER THE VOICE

Since her debut at the Schiller Theater in Berlin, the actress Marthe Keller has pursued an international career. She was revealed in France in the the seventies in the famous French television series a *Demoiselle d'Avignon (The Young Lady from Avignon)* and in Philippe De Broca's movies *Les Caprices de Marie (Give Her the Moon)* and *Le Diable par la queue (The Devil by the Tail)*. She then performed under the direction of Christopher Frank, Claude Lelouch, Benoît Jacquot, Nikita Mikhalkov, Mauro Bolognini. On stage, she worked with Sami Frey, Philippe Adrien, Michelle Marquais, Patrice Chéreau, Jorge Lavelli, Lucian Pintilie, Claus Peyman, Peter Konwitschny.

In the United States, she starred in movies by Billy Wilder, John Schlesinger, Sydney Pollack, John Frankenheimer and with film partners such as Al Pacino (*Bobby Deerfield*), Dustin Hoffman (*Marathon Man*), Marlon Brando (*The Formula*). At the Carnegie Hall, she starred in *Jeanne D'Arc au bûcher* by Arthur Honegger which toured the world and for which the New York Times awarded her the Prize of Best Actress of the Year. In 2002, she was nominated for a Tony Award for her role in *Judgment at Nuremberg*, directed by John Tillinger on Broadway. She is also an opera director and staged most notably *Dialogues of the Carmelites* by Francis Poulenc at the Opéra national du Rhin in Strasbourg in 1999, *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Donizetti at Plácido Domingo's request and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Metropolitan Opera of New York in 2005.

## MANON GREINER ACTRESS POLA NIRENSKA





# ARTHUR NAUZYCIEL

## DIRECTOR

## ACTOR

After studying visual arts and cinema, Arthur Nauzyciel trained as an actor in the school of the Théâtre National de Chaillot (Paris) run by Antoine Vitez (1978). He began his career as an actor then turned to stage directing. His first production as a director was *Le Malade imaginaire ou le Silence de Molière*, after Molière and Giovanni Macchia for the théâtre de Lorient, CDN (1999), followed by Samuel Beckett's *Oh les beaux jours* (*Happy days*) for the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe (2003) and the Teatro San Martin in Buenos Aires (2004).

Since then there have been numerous productions in France and abroad: Thomas Bernhard's *Place des héros* (*Heldenplatz*) at the Comédie-Française (2004), the entry of the Austrian author into the repertoire of France's national theater; Kaj Munk's *Ordet* (*The Word*) staged at the Avignon Festival (2008) and at the Théâtre du Rond-Point during the Paris Autumn Festival (2009); *Jan Karski* (*mon nom est une fiction*)/*Jan Karski* (*my name is a fiction*), adapted from the novel by Yannick Haenel, staged at the Avignon Festival (2011). *Faim* (*Hunger*), based on Knut Hamsun's novel, with Xavier Gallais at the Théâtre de la Madeleine in Paris (2011); Anton Chekov's *La Mouette* (*The Seagull*) staged in the Cour d'honneur of the Papal Palace at the Avignon Festival (2012); *Kaddish* by Allen Ginsberg (2013), reading created at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire du Judaïsme then at the Avignon Festival (2013).

Arthur Nauzyciel works regularly in the United States: in Atlanta he staged two plays by the French playwright, Bernard-Marie Koltès: *Black Battles with dogs* (2001), also presented in Chicago, Athens (at the International Festival), and in France at the Avignon Festival (2006); and also in Atlanta, B-M Koltès's *Roberto Zucco* (2004); in Boston, for the American Repertory Theater, Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party* (2007) and William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (2008), which went on tour to the Paris Autumn Festival and the Ibero-American Theater Festival in Bogota, Colombia.

Arthur Nauzyciel has created a number of shows abroad that were then revived in France or at international theater festivals: Samuel Beckett's *L'Image* (*The Image*) in Dublin (2006) with Damien Jalet and Anne Brochet, Lou Doillon later Julie Moulier, the production was also staged in Reykjavik, New York, Paris, China, Japan; Marie Darrieussecq's *Le Musée de la mer* (*The Sea Museum*), performed at the National Theater of Iceland (2009); Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party*, revived for the National Theater of Norway (2012). He has also worked for dance and opera. In 2011 he staged the opera *Red Waters* by Keren Ann Zeidel and Bardi Johannsson (*Lady and Bird*) and contributed to the creation of *Play* by the choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and the dancer Shantala Shivalingappa. He regularly works with other artists on his projects: Christian Fennesz, Miroslaw Balka, Damien Jalet, Sjon, Erna Omarsdottir, Winter Family, Valérie Mréjen, Étienne Daho.

Arthur Nauzyciel is a recipient of the Villa Médicis Hors les Murs Prize. His production *Jan Karski* (*mon nom est une fiction*) was awarded the Georges-Lerminier Prize.

From 2007 to 2016, Arthur Nauzyciel has been the director of the Centre Dramatique National Orléans/Loiret/Centre. Since January 1st 2017, he is the director of the Théâtre National de Bretagne/Rennes.



## MIROSLAW BALKA

### VIDEOGRAPHER

Arthur Nauzyciel has invited Miroslaw Balka, one of today's most important artists, to participate in the creation of *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)*. He asked him to conceive a specific work for the second part of the performance. Miroslaw Balka has made a film.

Born in Poland in 1958, Miroslaw Balka is one of the most important artists of his generation. His works are represented in the most prestigious museum collections: Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (Washington), Tate Gallery (London), National Museum of Contemporary Art (Oslo), Van Abbe Museum (Eindhoven, Pays-Bas), Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles) and the Museum of Modern Art (New York).

In 2009, his installation *How It Is* (Turbine Hall) at the Tate Modern in London sucked visitors into the darkness of a steel container- sculpture, an architectural black hole evoking the terror of being locked up.

He will exhibit his work in 2011 at the Museo Nacional Centro Reina Sofia in Madrid as well as the Center of Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, where he will mount an exhibition titled *Fragment* comprising of his videos made since 1998. Some of these leave an indelible memory, such as *Winterreise* (2003) and *Bambi* (2003) in which young deers wander about in the snow in front of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp.

In the Warsaw exhibition, video is used as a sculptural medium making it possible to rethink a space as a place of memorial tension. Balka uses video as an experimental tool through which he questions the reversion of the real into image, in the same way as Michelangelo's poems about form. In this sense, the Warsaw exhibition can be read as a single work, engaging the viewer on both a physical and a psychological level.

With Balka, an economy of means is associated with the extreme evocative power of his works. Whether by means of sculpture or filmed images, a process of transformation is always at work in them. Recycling organic matter (soap, hair, ashes), creating sculptures of minimal appearance or videos of a "fragment" of reality, Balka's work follows no aesthetic discourse, referring always to the uncontrollable depth of individual experience projected into the collective space- time. Thus, it is the status of the subject and the object in their presumed otherness that he is questioning; the way subject and object interact within the confines of the perception of the visible world and open up to shifting order of the poetic. "My work is always on the borderline" Balka states.

His participation in the creation of *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)* is his first work for the theatre. From september 27 to 6 november 2011, in conjunction with the performances of this creation in Orléans, the FRAC Centre organised one of the first solo exhibitions of Miroslaw Balka's work in France. He created a new piece specially for this occasion.

## DAMIEN JALET

### CHOREOGRAPHER

Damien Jalet is an independent Belgian and French choreographer and dancer working internationally. Interested in the capacity of dance constantly reinventing itself by conversing with other media such as visual art, music, cinema, theatre and fashion; his works are often collaborative.

He worked as a choreographer and dancer for companies such as Ballet C. de la B., Sasha Waltz and Guests, Chunky Move, Eastman, NYDC, Hessisches Staatballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Scottish Dance Theatre, Iceland Dance Company and many more.

His latest works as choreographer include: *Babel(words)* with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui with a set by Antony Gormley (two Olivier Awards), presented in 2016 at the Cour d'Honneur du Palais des Papes in Avignon; *Les médusés*, a choreographic installation for 30 performers in some of the main rooms of the Louvre in Paris; *YAMA* for the Scottish Dance Theatre with a set design by American artist Jim Hodges; *Bolero* which he directed together with Cherkaoui and the performance artist Marina Abramovic for the Paris Opera Ballet with costumes by Riccardo Tisci; *Inked* for the British Kathak dancer Aakash Odedra; *Obsidian Pieces* for the Iceland Dance Company in collaboration with Erna Omarsdottir (Icelandic national Performing Art Award Grimman 2015 for the best choreographer).

In October 2015 he choreographed *Gravity Fatigue*, devised by fashion designer Hussein Chalayan at Sadler's Wells in London. *THR(O)UGH*, a choreography for Hessisches Ballett, collaborating again with Jim Hodges, Austrian composer Christian Fennesz and designer Jean Paul Lespagnard, nominated for best choreographer at German theater awards "der Faust".

He created *The Ferryman* with the director Gilles Delmas, highlighting the relation between his works and existing rituals practiced in Bali and Japan, this film gets the exclusive participation of Marina Abramovic and composer Ryuichi Sakamoto. It is presented during the whole Venice Biennale at Palazzo Fortuny starting May 2017.

He directed *Vessel* together with Japanese visual artist Nawa Kohei, a collaboration initiated during a four-month-long residency at Villa Kujoyama (Japanese Medicis villa in Kyoto). The performance for seven dancers has been presented in many important venues in Japan such as Rhom Theater Kyoto and Naoshima's Art Site and will be played next march at the Perth international festival in Australia.



## RICARDO HERNANDEZ SET DESIGNER

For Arthur Nauzyciel, he created the sets of: *Julius Caesar*, *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)*, *Red Waters*, *Abigail's Party*, *The Seagull*. Born in Cuba and raised in Buenos Aires, he studied in the United States, at the Yale School of Drama. He works regularly on Broadway, where he won many awards for productions such as: *The People in the picture* (at legendary Studio 54), *Caroline or change*, *Parade* (Tony Awards nominee and Drama Desk), *Topdog/Underdog*, et lately *Porgy and Bess* (Tony Awards 2012).

For the opera, he created amongst others the sets of *Appomattox* by Philip Glass in 2007, *Lost Highway* direction Diane Paulus, based on David Lynch's film, presented at the Young Vic, London (2008), and those of *Il Postino*, composed by Daniel Catàn and directed by Ron Daniels, created at Los Angeles Opera and presented at Châtelet-Théâtre musical of Paris in 2011. Productions in which he participated were played in major theaters in New York and the United States: New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, Lincoln Center, BAM, Goodman Theater, Kennedy Center, Mark Taper Forum... For the theater, he has worked with directors George C. Wolfe, Brian Kulik, Mary Zimmerman, Ron Daniels, Liz Diamond, Peter Wood and especially Robert Woodruff, Ethan Coen, John Turturro. More recently, he designed the set of *Marie Antoinette* by David Adjmi, directed by Rebecca Taichman in Autumn 2012 at the ART (American Repertory Theater).

## SCOTT ZIELINSKI LIGHTING

For Arthur Nauzyciel, he created the lighting design of: *Julius Caesar* (2008), *The Sea Museum (Le Musée de la mer)*, *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)*, *Red Waters*, *Abigail's Party*, *The Seagull*.

Scott Zielinski lives in New York. For theater, dance and opera, he has worked on projects created throughout the world, with American or foreign directors, including Richard Foreman, Robert Wilson, Tony Kushner, Hal Hartley, Krystian Lupa. In New York, he works regularly on Broadway, for the production of *Topdog/Underdog* by Suzan-Lori Parks, and for Lincoln Center and The Public Theatre. It also creates the lights for productions in many other North American cities, with directors and choreographers such as Neil Bartlett, Chase Brock, Chen Shi-Zheng, Karin Coonrod, Ron Daniels, David Esbjornson, Daniel Fish, Sir Peter Hall, Tina Landau, Jonathan Moscone, Diane Paulus, Lisa Peterson, James Robinson, Anna Deavere Smith, Twyla Tharp, George C. Wolfe, Mary Zimmerman and recently for *Miss Fortune* by Judith Weir at the Royal Opera in London. Scott Zielinski holds a Master in "Theatre Design" at the Yale University School of Drama.

## XAVIER JACQUOT SOUND DESIGNER

For Arthur Nauzyciel he designed the sound for *The Imaginary invalid or the silence of Moliere* in 1999, *Black Battles with dogs* in 2001, *Happy Days* in 2003, *Ordet (The Word)* in 2008, and *The Seagull* in 2012.

He studied at the Théâtre National in Strasburg. He has worked regularly with Éric Vigner, Thierry Collet, Daniel Mesguich, Xavier Maurel, Stéphane Braunschweig and on short feature films as well as on films and documentaries for television. He has chaired the "sound and video" department of the school of the National Theatre of Strasburg from 2005 to 2008.

## CHRISTIAN FENNESZ MUSIC COMPOSER

Born in Austria, Christian Fennesz became a guitar player and started a solo career in 1990, creating experimental electronic music. His work drew attention in 1997 with the album *Hotel Paral.lel* and in 2001, he released his cult album *Endless Summer* inspired by the pop music of the Beach Boys, remixing melodies and abstract electronic compositions. It was re-released again in 2007. Fennesz works with artists such as Ryuichi Sakamoto, Jim O'Rourke and Peter Rehberg, Mika Vainio, Christian Zanesi, Sparklehorse, David Sylvian and Keith Rowe. He released his album *Black Sea* in 2008, *In the Fishtank* with Sparklehorse in 2009 and *Szampler* in 2010. He lives and works in Vienna.

## JOSÉ LÉVY COSTUMES

The design of the costumes of *Ordet (The Word)* directed by Arthur Nauzyciel was his first collaboration for a theatre project, then came *Jan Karski (my name is a fiction)*, *The Seagull*, *Splendid's*. A polymorphous artist and free electron. Alternately designer, fashion designer, artistic director, interior designer and artist, José Lévy had excelled in all areas of the fashion world before expressing himself in the Fine Arts. Known for his brand of ready-to-wear clothing José Lévy in Paris, which made him famous from the USA to Japan. He was artistic director of Emanuel Ungaro and Holland and Holland, and more recently he has designed for the Manufacture de Sèvres, the gallery Tools, Emmanuel Perrotin, Astier de Villatte, Roche Bobois and Gallery B. Bensimon. In December 2014, he designed a collection for Monoprix, more than 100 references in the world of fashion (man, woman, child), beauty and food. He is a scholar of the Villa Kujoyama and Grand Prize of the City of Paris.



**Théâtre National de Bretagne**  
Direction Arthur Nauzyciel  
1 rue Saint-Hélier, CS 54007  
35040 Rennes Cedex  
**T-N-B.fr**



#### **CONTACTS TNB**

##### **JEAN-BAPTISTE PASQUIER**

Director of production and  
international development  
T +33 (0)2 99 31 55 33  
M +33 (0)6 79 04 57 04  
jb.pasquier@t-n-b.fr

##### **EMMANUELLE DE VARAX**

France and international diffusion /maïa  
+33 (0)6 61 17 03 51  
emmanuelle@maia-arts.org

##### **NATHALIE GASSER**

Press  
+33(0)6 07 78 06 10  
gasser.nathalie.presse@gmail.com

##### **ANNE CUISSET**

Deputy director  
a.cuisset@t-n-b.fr

##### **NATHALIE SOLINI**

Secretary general  
n.solini@t-n-b.fr

