

★ INDOOR FORMAT ★



★ LA RENVERSE ★

LES OMBRES PORTÉES



# LA RENVERSE

## Compagnie Les ombres portées

Shadow theatre and music

show premiered for the public space in May 2024  
at Senlis (FR) with La Faïencerie, théâtre de Creil

**creation of an indoor format**

**premiere on December 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**at Théâtre-Sénart, scène nationale (FR)**

show for all ages (7 years and older)  
running time: 1 hour, followed by a backstage tour

text in French during the show, to be translated and  
surtitled

*Unless otherwise stated, all the images in this dossier are taken from the show.*  
© Les ombres portées

## THE TEAM

**The show was imagined by:** Erol Gülgönen, Séline Gülgönen, Florence Kormann, Christophe Pagnon, Claire Van Zande.

**Its creation was a collective effort by:** Erol Gülgönen and Florence Kormann (stage, set and shadow design); Christophe Pagnon and Claire Van Zande (text, voice and torch lights); Séline Gülgönen, Fabien Guyot and Jean Lucas (musical composition); Frédéric Laügt and Corentin Vigot (sound design); Nicolas Dalban-Moreynas (lighting design) and Violaine de Maupeou (costumes).

**Manipulation:** Erol Gülgönen, Florence Kormann, Christophe Pagnon

**Music:** Séline Gülgönen (clarinets), Fabien Guyot, Jean Lucas (conch shells, trombone, accordion)

**Sound:** Frédéric Laügt

**Light:** Nicolas Dalban-Moreynas

**Production and distribution:** Christelle Lechat

**Production and administration:** Susanna Hsing

**With help from:** Baptiste Bouquin (outside ear), Léo Maurel (conch shell instruments), Thibault Moutin (lighting), Marine Somerville (colorization).

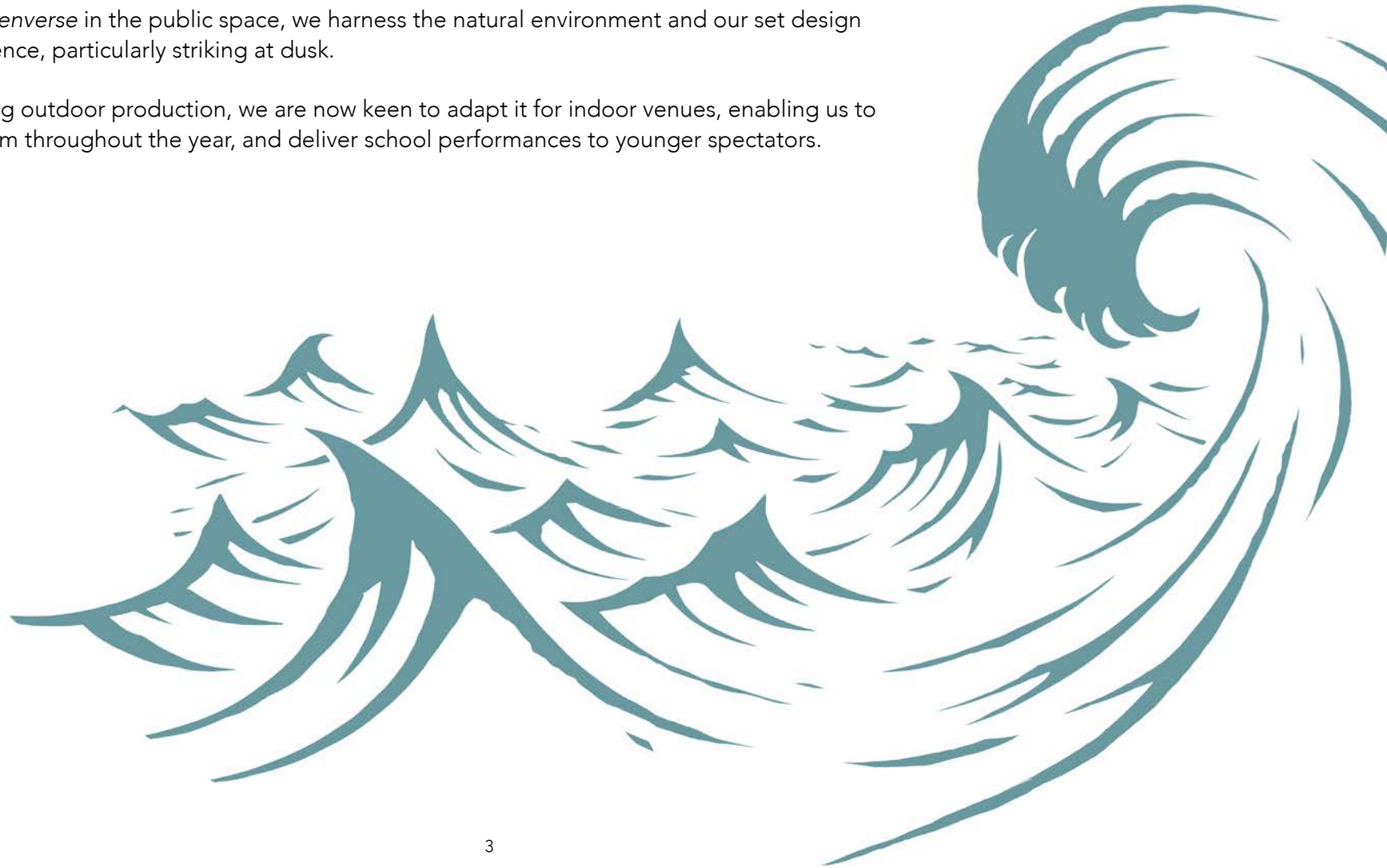
# FROM THE STREET TO THE STAGE

After having deliberately made the move from the confines of indoor theatre to the public spaces, we would now like to create an indoor format of our show *La Renverse*.

Following the first outdoor performances, we realised that this shadow play could also thrive in a theatrical setting, provided we could distil the essence of its street magic into a new scenographic and dramaturgical framework.

Indeed, when performing *La Renverse* in the public space, we harness the natural environment and our set design to create an immersive experience, particularly striking at dusk.

Originally designed as a touring outdoor production, we are now keen to adapt it for indoor venues, enabling us to reach a wider audience, perform throughout the year, and deliver school performances to younger spectators.



# THE SHOW

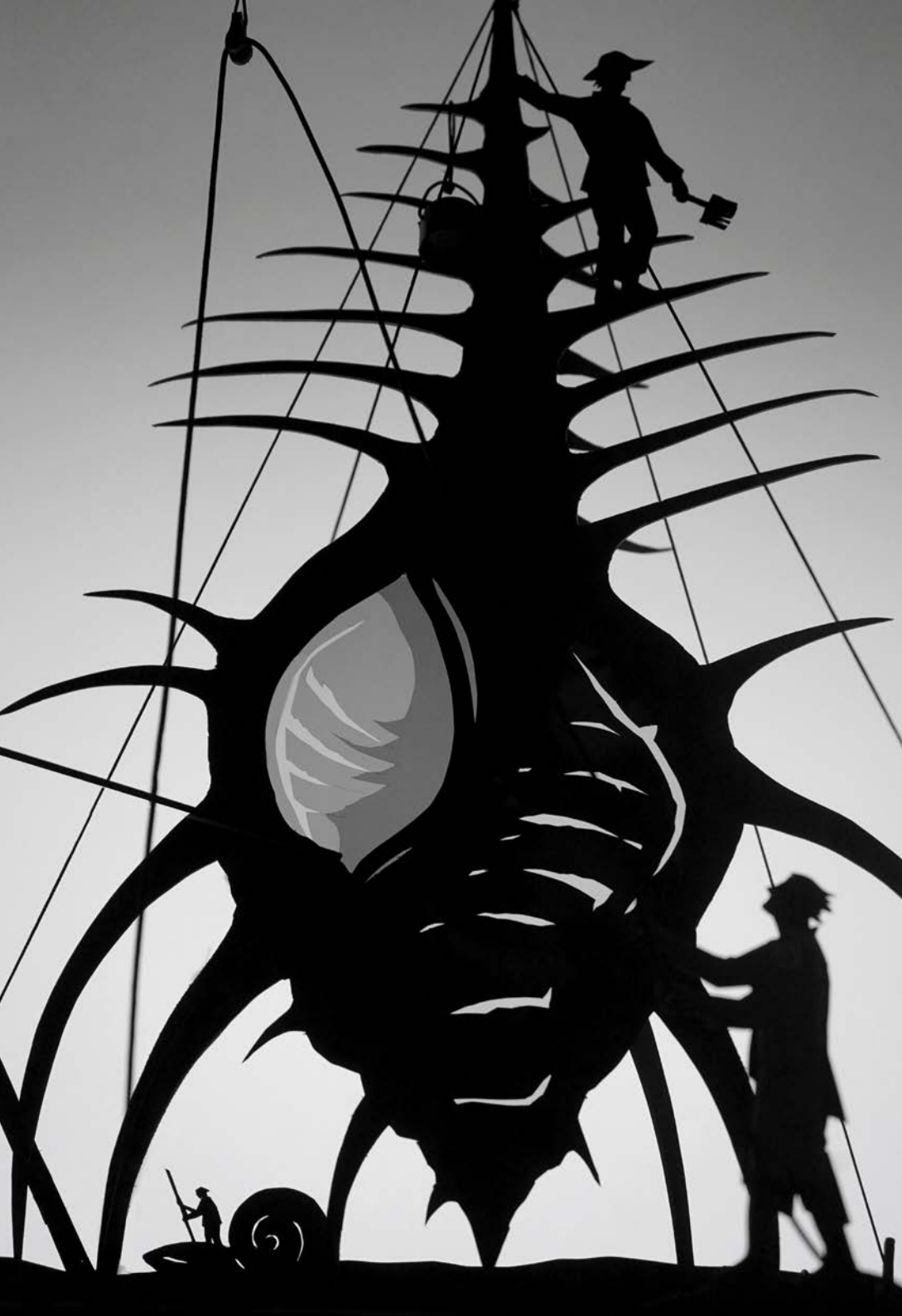
*Out at sea, with its changing tides, there is a suspended moment known as 'La Renverse'. Like the popular saying 'between a rock and a hard place' on dry land, it is a notion that is as much elusive as it is magical. Some say that in this fleeting moment, between the incoming and outgoing tides, anything can happen.*

excerpt from the text

A lighthouse keeper discovers the logbook of a lonely sailor. After reading the final pages, which evoke as much mystery as they do desperation, he decides to set off in search of the sailor's sinking ship. This moment marks the beginning of an extraordinary journey that will take him to lands he once thought were beyond his wildest imagination.

On the big screen of a shadow theatre, this dreamlike tale is brought to life by three puppeteers and three musicians. The audience is taken on a journey through a fabulous universe that invites them to unleash their imagination.





# AN INVITATION TO TRAVEL AND IMAGINE

Imagination - the myriad forms it can take, its power and its relationship with reality - is fundamental to the work of our company. Found at the heart of all our creations, it comes alive in the fantastic tales of *Pekee-Nuee-Nuee*, the dreamt-up city of *Les Somnambules* and the unbridled inventiveness of the *Natchav* circus. Developing the imagination is also the main focus of our educational initiatives (workshops, transmission). We're convinced that it's the fundamental skill for living uniquely as well as for transforming and reinventing the world as we know it.

Imagination is therefore the central theme of *La Renverse*, as we tell the story of a lighthouse keeper's imaginary voyage. Combining poetic and dreamlike writing, the show takes audiences on a journey shaped by real and invented tales of travel (like those of Jules Verne or François Place) as well as poetic prose (like that of Italo Calvino).

Our show revolves around the adventures of the lighthouse keeper. After leaving his lighthouse, he is caught in a supernatural storm that thrusts him into an extraordinary universe. Audiences follow along as he embarks on his journey, passing through fantastic worlds and unexpected lands, all the way to the heart of his imagination.

Illustrated by projected shadow images and live music, this tale of adventure is also interspersed with spoken text, taking the form of part logbook-part narration.

At the end of the performance, we invite the audience to share in a convivial moment by discovering the sets of the show.



# SHADOWS IN MOTION

To project the shadow images, we built large panoramic sets that illustrate the different landscapes crossed by the lighthouse keeper and will amplify the sensation of travel and discovery for the audience.

The complexity and richness of the sets allow us to shift back and forth between a wide, all-encompassing view to a more in-depth reading of the space, rich in unusual details.

We create dynamic, vivid images using articulated puppets to illustrate the actions of the characters and events. Designed utilising various layers and levels, our sets create an effect of depth, thereby enriching the imagery.

It's the manipulation of light that creates the narrative rhythm of the show. By using portable lights to illuminate the sets, we bring this tableaux to life using techniques similar to those employed in the art of cinema (tracking shot, zoom, cut, etc.). The sequence of images set the pace of the story and provide dramatic effect.





# LIVE MUSIC AT THE FRONT OF THE STAGE

In *La Renverse*, three musicians accompany the narrative, while leaving the imagination of the audience to roam free. Music plays a more important role here than in the company's other creations. The pieces are developed in such a way that the audience attend an hybrid form between performance and concert.

The experience of composing and performing over the last fifteen years has led to a musical style that is truly unique to our company, one influenced by both jazz and traditional music. However, the rhythmic dimension of the music in *La Renverse* is more developed than in our previous shows, thanks to the presence of a percussionist, who reinforces the idea of the journey moving forward.

The music is performed by three multi-instrumentalists (trombone, accordion, clarinet and bass clarinet, different percussions, drums, conch shells), which enables a wide range of musical styles to be explored to illustrate the different moments of the journey. The use of voice and vocals also contributes to this richness. The sound effects (pedals) and the conch shells used as instruments accentuate the strangeness of some pieces in the underwater world.



# A SET DESIGN COMBINING A SHADOW THEATRE WITH A FILM-CONCERT

Each of our productions experiments with new scenographic and theatrical forms, reflecting the subject matter of each piece. With *La Renverse* indoor, we feature a minimalist set design that recalls the traditional art of shadow theatre.

Bringing our show indoor will enable us to use large-format shadows that showcase intricate details of our visuals and immerse the audience in our marvelous narrative. Our large cyclorama for the shadows will look like a cinema backdrop. At the heart of our scenography lies the synergy between visuals and music, with the musicians positioned frontstage, creating an engaging film-concert-like experience.

While paying homage to cinema, our production uniquely exposes the behind-the-scenes craftsmanship of image creation, setting us apart in a world saturated with digital visuals. As the audience takes their seats, they will discover a stage without screen, featuring two distinct areas

- upstage, the musicians' area;
- backstage, the puppeteers' area with multiple sets.

The reveal of our cyclorama, folded on the floor until the first scene, adds a touch of magic. As it rises into place, it evokes the marine sails and ropes that are integral to our lighthouse keeper's world - the main character - establishing both the narrative and technical framework of our story.

For the rest of the show, shadows will be projected from behind the cyclorama, creating a seamless narrative flow. The audience's gaze will shift between the immersive visuals on screen and the live musicians below, highlighting the dynamic interplay between music and image.

As the story unfolds, blurring the lines between reality and fantasy, our final scene will dissolve the boundaries between the two spaces by lowering our screen, echoing the fall of our story.

Beyond the performance itself, we will extend the experience of the audience by offering them a behind-the-scenes look at our shadow-making workshop. In a post-show exhibition, the audience will be invited onto the stage to explore the craftsmanship and techniques that bring our shadows to life.



# TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The stage set consists of a large cyclorama (6m by 3.15m) placed at the middle of the stage and framed by borders and sides.

Three musicians sit front stage in front of the screen.

The manipulators' area is behind the stage, from which the shadows are projected. This area is raised by 12 1m-high risers.

## STAGE REQUIREMENTS

The audience is to be seated directly in front of the stage.

Total darkness is required for the room.

The stage must be raised or at ground level.

The stage must be covered in black vinyl dance flooring.

Stage dimensions (minimum):

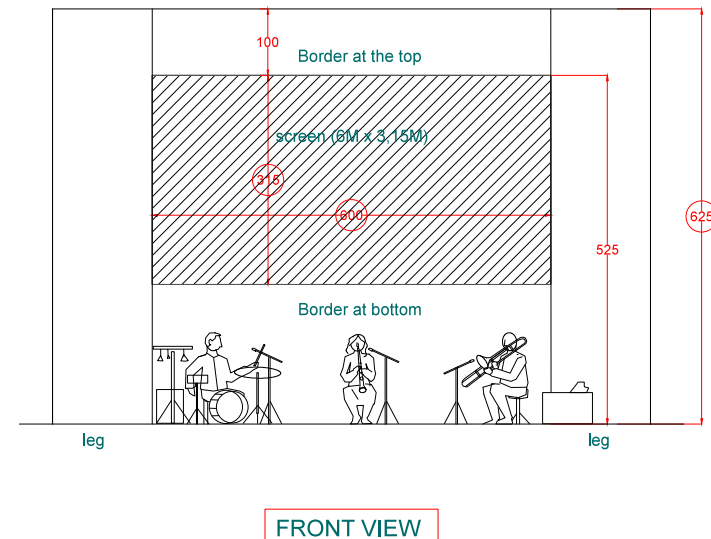
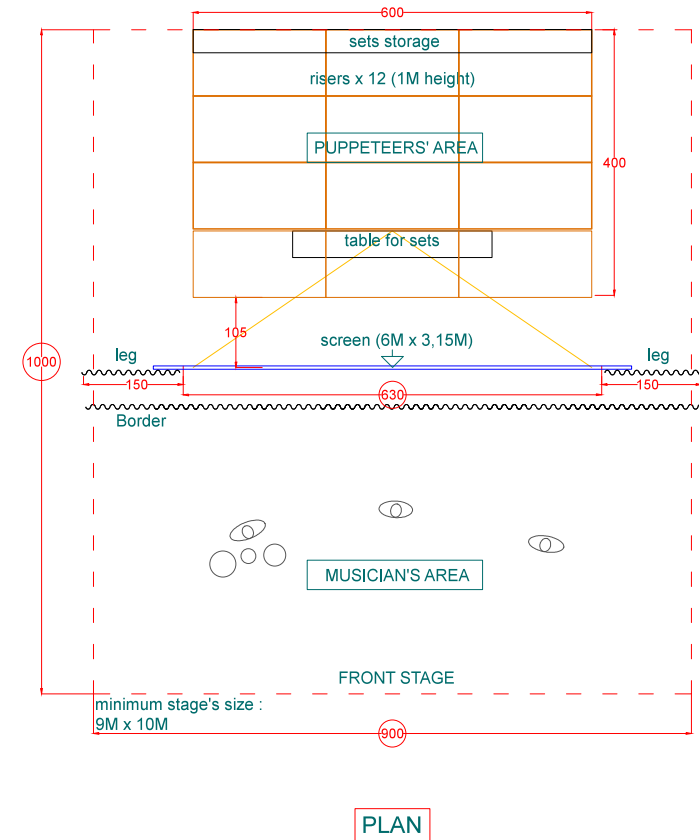
- wall-to-wall clearance: 9m
- depth: 10m
- height to lighting rig: 6m

Text in French to be translated and subtitled with a video projector.

## MAIN PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- touring company: 9 members (4 puppeteers, 2 musicians, 1 lighting technician, 1 sound technician, 1 tour manager)
- running time: 1 hour, followed by a backstage tour
- capacity for all-ages performances: between 300 and 400 people (to be adjusted according to the seating configuration)
- capacity for school performances: 300 people maximum
- advance set up of drapery, lighting and sound system required
- set up and rehearsals: 3 or 4 4-hour session (to be confirmed)
- strike out: 1 4-hour session

*Detailed technical rider (with light plan, schedule, technical requirements, etc.) available on request.*

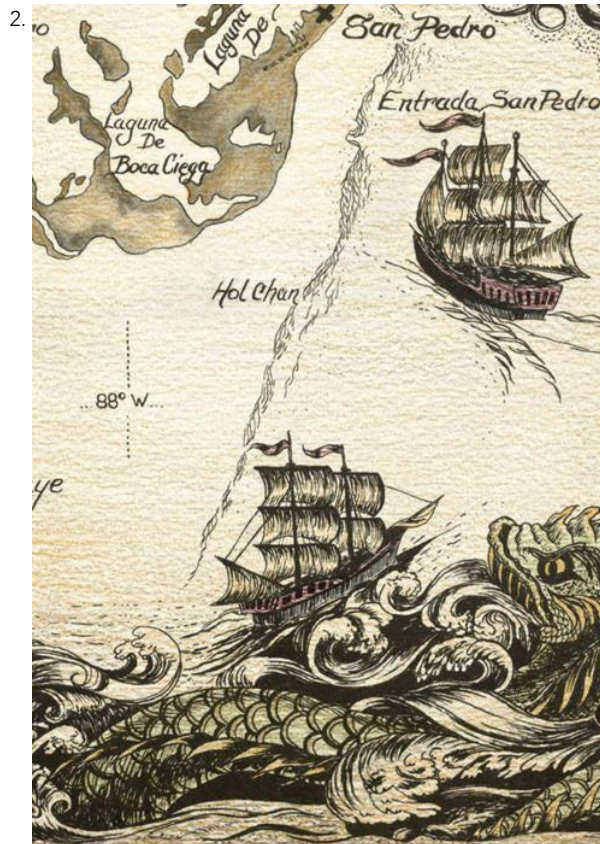


# SOURCES AND INSPIRATIONS

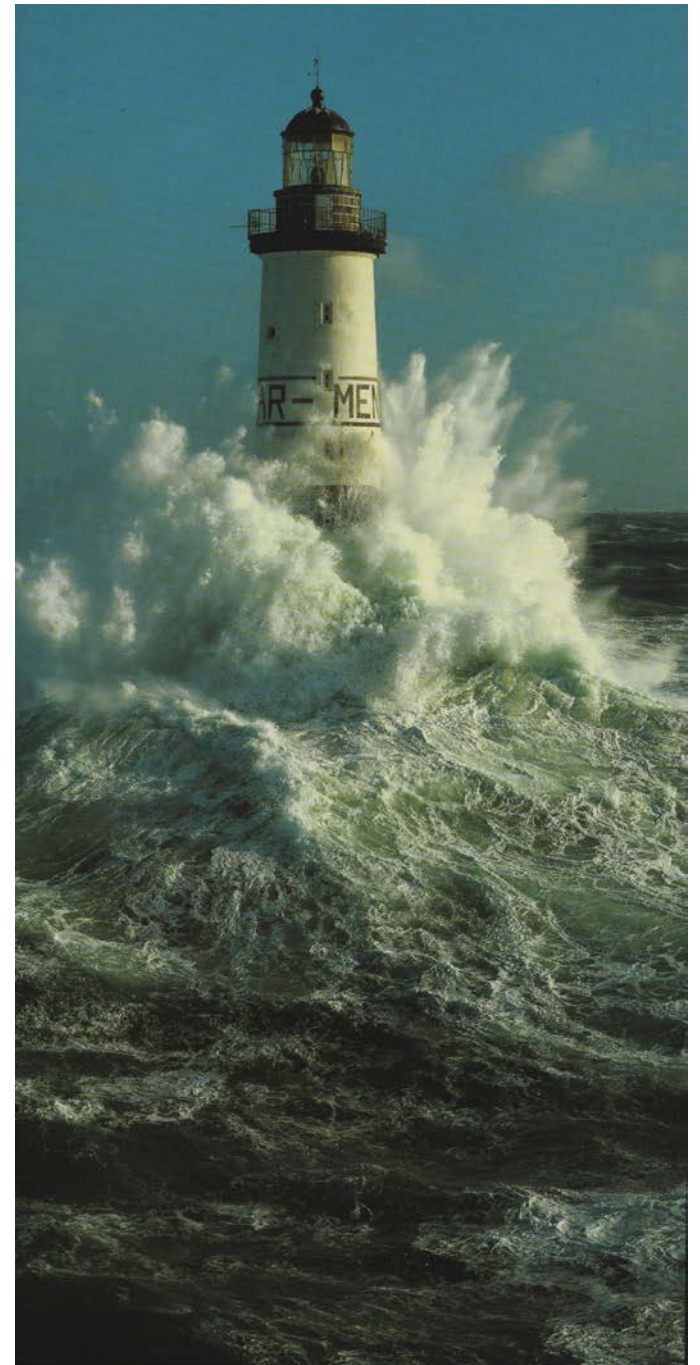
1. Illustration by G. Roux engraving by Froment, *The Lighthouse at the End of the World*, 1905, Jules Verne
2. Antique illustrated nautical chart
3. *Tout seul*, Christophe Chabouté, 2008
4. Photograph of the Ar-Men lighthouse, Philip Plisson



1.



3.



4.

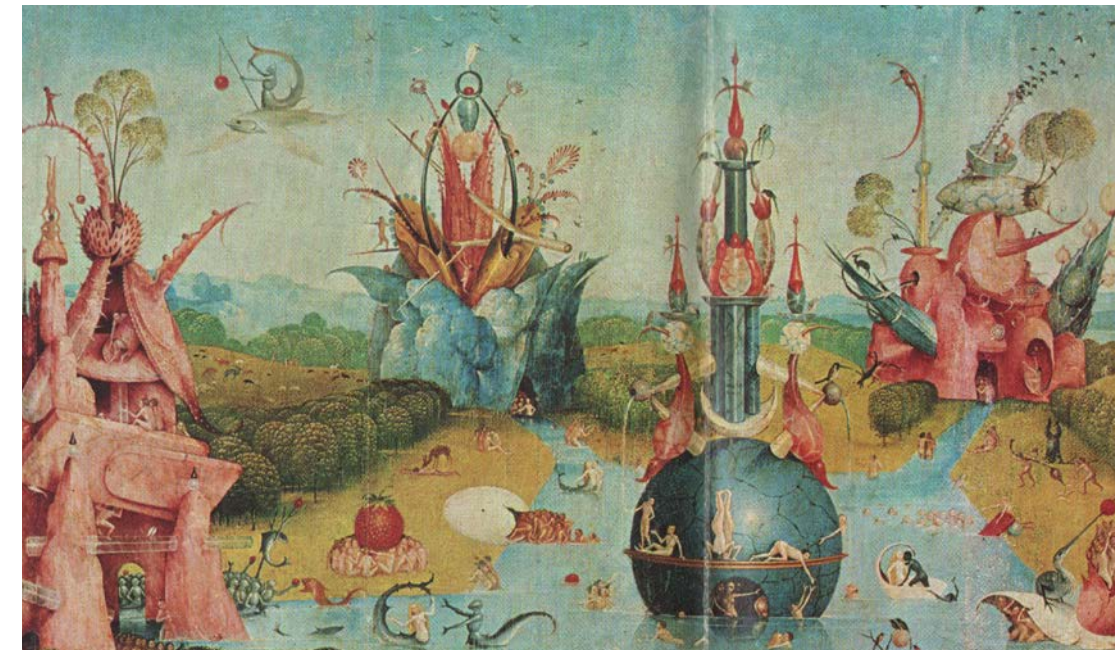
5.



6.



7.



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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Alain Bombard, *Naufragé volontaire*, 1953
- Italo Calvino, *Marcopolo*, 1963; *Invisible Cities*, 1972
- Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865
- Louis Cozan, *Un feu sur la mer*, 2010
- Thor Heyerdahl, *The Kon-Tiki Expedition*, 1948
- Homère, *The Odyssey*, 8<sup>th</sup> century BC
- Bernard Moitessier, *The Long Way*, 1971
- Paolo Rumiz, *Il Ciclope*, 2015
- Lucien de Samosate, *True History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> century
- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 1721
- Jules Verne, *Five Weeks in a Balloon*, 1863; *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, 1864; *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, 1869-1870...

## ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

- Mitsumasa Anno, *Ce jour là...*, 1978
- Christophe Chabouté, *Tout seul*, 2008
- Winsor McCay, *Little Nemo*, 1910
- François Place, *The Last Giants*, 1992

## FILMOGRAPHY

- Jean Epstein, *Le tempestaire*, 1947
- Jean Painlevé, films about the marine world from 1934 onwards
- Richard Fleischer, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, 1954

5. Engraving by E. Riou, 1867, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, Jules Verne

6. Dragon puppet, shadow theatre, China

7. Illustrated plate of shells

8. Detail from *The Garden of Delights*, Hieronymus Bosch, 1503-1505

# THE COMPANY



Created in 2009, Les ombres portées is a shadow theatre company composed of a collective of artists and technicians from a diverse range of backgrounds. For any given project, up to twenty members come together pooling their various expertises (music, stage design, construction, drawing, lighting, writing, etc.) to create a singular production.

Revisiting the art of shadow theatre, the company produces original creations for audiences of all ages. Performed both on the traditional stage and in public spaces, the shows interweave dynamic visual elements with live music. Each project is an opportunity to develop a new narrative approach, unique scenographic device and distinct musical score in line with the themes and ideas being explored and defended.

The shows *Pekee-nuee-nuee* (2011), *Les Somnambules* (2015),

*Natchav* (2019) and *La Renverse* (2024) have been performed throughout France and abroad.

In addition to producing shows, the company offers a wide range of outreach activities for all types of audiences, as well as scenographic projects.

The company is an associated artist with the Théâtre-Sénart (2024 to 2026) and the cultural centre Houdremont in La Courneuve (2025-2026). Previously, the company was an associated artist at La Faiencerie-Théâtre de Creil (2020 to 2023) and the recipient of a territorial residence with PIVO (2024 to 2025).

The company has been supported by the DRAC Île-de-France since 2020 and its activities have been funded by the Région Île-de-France since 2024.



# PRODUCTION & TOURING

## SCHEDULE

- end of 2024: scenographic research and rewriting for the indoor creation
- spring and autumn 2025: technical construction and rehearsals
- December 2025: **premiere** at Théâtre-Sénart, scène nationale
- 1<sup>st</sup> semester 2026: **touring** at Théâtre André Malraux de Chevilly-Larue and Théâtre de Poissy

## SUPPORTS FOR THE CREATION IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

**Co-productions and residencies:** Espace d'Albret, City of Nérac • Espace Périphérique, La Villette and City of Paris • La Faïencerie, théâtre de Creil • La Lisière, lieu de création en Île-de-France pour les arts de la rue et les arts dans et pour l'espace public, Bruyères-le-Châtel • Le Sablier, Centre national de la marionnette, Iles et Dives-sur-mer • Le Théâtre-Sénart, scène nationale • Les Tombées de la Nuit, Rennes • Nil Obstrat, centre de création de Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône • PIVO, Pôle itinérant en Val d'Oise with Points communs, scène nationale de Cergy-Pontoise/Val d'Oise • Risotto, réseau pour l'essor des arts de la rue et de l'espace public en Île-de-France

**Grants:** Ministry of Culture - National grant for creations in street and circus arts (2024) • Touring grant from the City of Paris

## SUPPORTS FOR THE INDOOR CREATION

**Co-productions and residencies:** Le Théâtre-Sénart, scène nationale • Houdremont, cultural center, La Courneuve • Théâtre André Malraux de Chevilly-Larue

**Grants:** Département de la Seine-Saint-Denis



**We are still looking for supports,  
do not hesitate to contact us!**

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