

# L'ENFANT



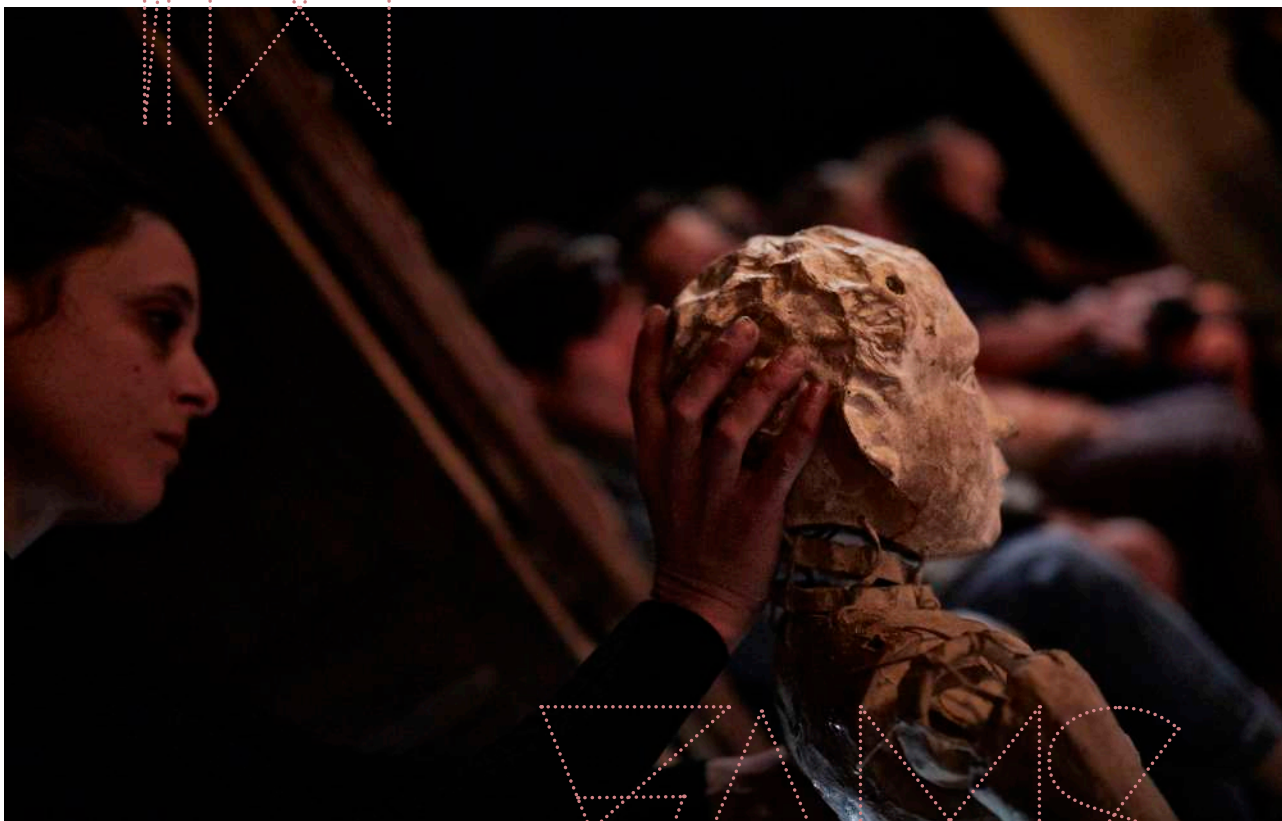
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[Animated materials, immersives installations]

[Stage form, creation November 2018]

[In situ form, creation February 2019]

THÉÂTRE DE  
L'ENTROUVRE



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L'Enfant (The Child) plunges us physically and substantially into the mystery at the heart of La mort de Tintagiles (The Death of Tintagiles), a play written by Maurice Maeterlinck in the late 19th century. Still very much engulfed in his immateriality, the «infant», from the Latin Infans, meaning «not having the faculty of speech», sits between worlds. He makes no distinction between the real and the imaginary, life and death, and knows that the real is «merely one of the most transient aspects of infinite reality» as according to Artaud.

The unexpected return of the infant, Tintagiles, to the devastated island strikes both joy and fear into the heart of his sister, Ygraine. Ygraine lives a life of subjection to an omnipresent yet invisible Queen, a figure who is preceded by a sense of imminent danger. Ygraine resolves to confront the dull and distant rumble (the dull and distant menace?) that destroys everything in its wake and threatens the child. In an act of rebellion, she upsets the established order, breaks down boundaries and enters that space impenetrable to the living, wherein she glimpses the infinite world of the shadow realm.

A funereal ode of cosmic proportions, the play is tantamount to an act of regeneration, where the dynamic balance of existence is maintained by alternating cycles (life-death-life). The onlooker is prompted to enter a labyrinthine space and invited to experience this act from within.

The animated elements and ephemeral stage-sets reflect a world in a constant state of emergence and evolution, one that transforms our perception of reality and leads us into a shared «elsewhere».

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

FOR  
ALL AGES  
OVER 14

Duration 1h

*« He is asleep in the other room.  
He was a little pale, he did not seem  
well. The journey had tired him—he  
was a long time on the sea. Or  
perhaps it is the atmosphere of the  
castle which has alarmed his little  
soul. He was crying, and did not  
know why he cried. I nursed him on  
my knees ; come, look at him. »*

The Death of Tintagiles, Acte II



©Benoit Schupp

Underlying this fable is a metaphysical, symbolic vision of reality. Written in 1894, the play deep-dives into the major issues of the time, a time when man's relationship with the visible world was broadening with the advent of the new medium of photography and the discovery of the Sub-conscious.

The theme of passage is at the play's heart: the boundaries between the visible and the invisible, life and death, the finite and the infinite are blurred.

Our adaptation of this text shifts the focus of the play to Ygraine's private journey. Subjected to the queen's will, she rebels, prompted by the threat the queen poses to L'ENFANT (THE INFANT), namely her baby brother, Tintagiles. Roused from her passive state, she summons up the rebellious spirit within her and takes on the monstrous, invisible might of the Queen. The death of Tintagiles and the experience of loss thus resonate in Ygraine's voyage of discovery as an act of regeneration.

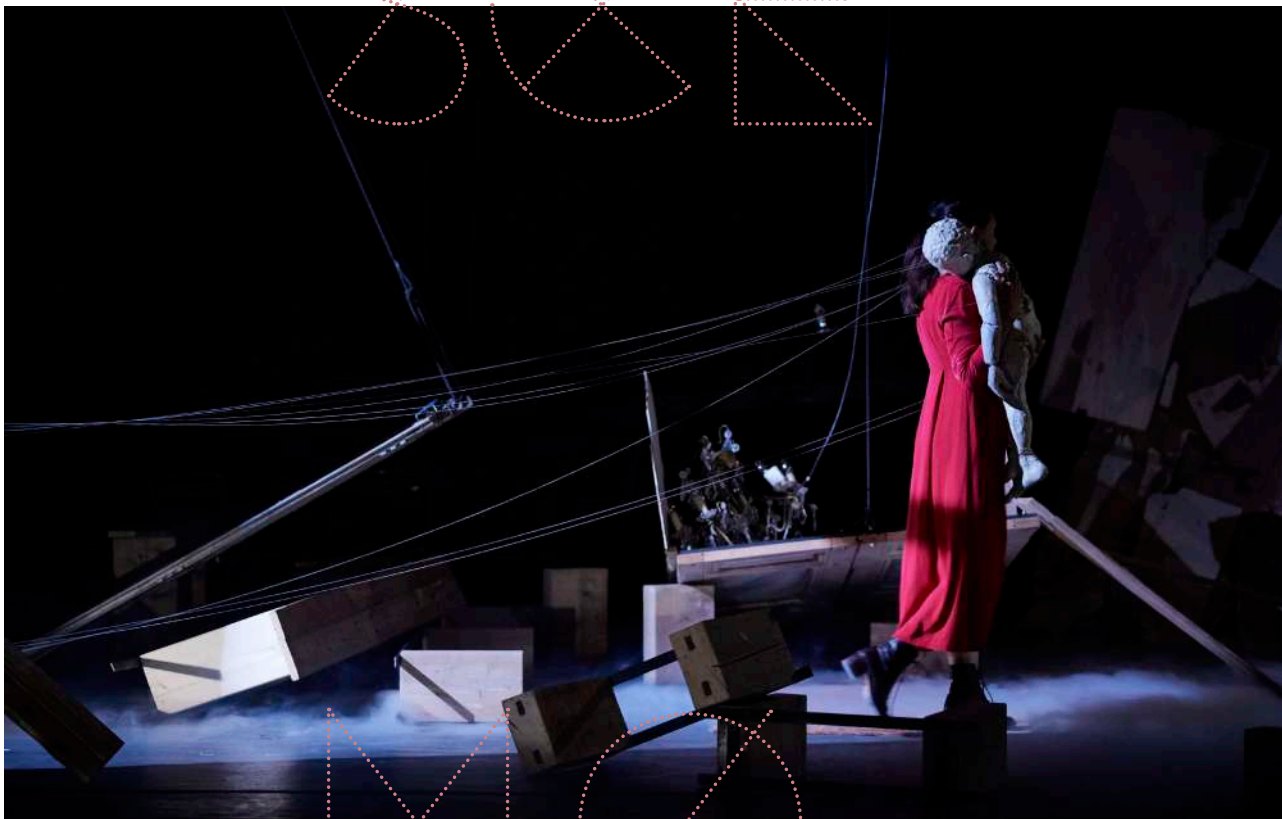
In archetypal terms, the play is a throwback to the state of sterility of a world in ruins. The organic, unstable nature of the stage-set (vibration, quivering, collapse) reminds us of the omnipresent threat of the queen, a female embodiment of nature or primitive force seeking to resume rightful ownership.

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## A SYMBOLIC AND METAPHYSICAL VISION

***« Ygraine is the only one who can enter where the living cannot, to cross the forbidden line, beyond the last step. She is the only one who can communicate with the child ready to be consumed by the destructive force of darkness, but also ready to pass, so small, through the widened gap to be reborn after this passage into the realm of shadows. » »***

Claude Régny



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The onlooker is led, room-by-room, into a labyrinthine space, to participate in the action from the inside.

From within a constantly shifting theatre of visual devices, immersed in a wrap-around sound environment, the onlooker is invited to resonate with the animated elements therein and cast an intimate eye on the journey undergone by Ygraine.

The set is composed of temporary installations and spaces, which are built up and dismantled before our very eyes. The different states of the scenography are a reflection of Ygraine's inner landscape and journey. The tension is generated by the omnipresent off-stage threat that hovers tangibly over the environment.

By introducing the aesthetic of ruin, disorder and chaos, we seek to highlight the fact that the dynamic balance of existence rests on alternating cycles. Destruction, death and restoration of life are part of the human condition. The onlooker physically experiences these states of being.

The project is proposed in 2 performance settings:

- a stage version reconstructing the theatre's dramatic spaces was created in November 2018.
- an in situ version staged in unusual, historically significant venues, and Italian style theatre (basement, wings, flies) was created in February 2019.

## IMMERSIVE INSTALLATION



WAV

KRI

AS



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The play intrinsically combines text, music and visual elements. We set out to transcribe the unutterability of the text, the silences, by dismantling the construction and co-ordination of these three elements.

- Sound is a key aspect of the dramaturgy.

Borrowing liberally from the score composed during the same period for *La Mort de Tintagiles* by Jean Nougues, musicians Julien Tamisier and Pascal Charrier have orchestrated the musical score as a piece for prepared piano (with the frictioning, tapping, percussing and rumbling of strings, etc...). Voices and vibrations are incorporated into this pregnant musical environment to create an organic sound space designed by Géraldine Foucault to surround the onlooker.

- Visual elements: The onlooker physically experiences the fragility of a constantly changing world through a series of ephemeral, unstable stage-sets.

- The text adaption is buoyed aloft entirely by the main protagonist, Ygraine.

Like an initiatory rite, it unveils a powerful, tumultuous inner journey, an archetypal world, where submission and rebellion, loss and transformation, life and death are part and parcel of the same cycle.

All these elements thus combine in the form of a poetic ode that invites us to immerse ourselves into a living and vibrant world.

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## AT THE CROSSROADS OF LANGUAGES

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## THE AUTHOR MAURICE MAETERLINCK

«I would like to study everything that is unspoken in an existence, everything that has no expression in death or in life, everything that seeks a voice in the heart. I would like to focus on instinct, in its sense of light, on premonitions, on faculties and notions that are unexplained, neglected, or extinguished, on unreasonable motives, on the wonders of death, on the mysteries of sleep, where, despite the overwhelming influence of daytime memories, we are sometimes given glimpses of the enigmatic, real, and primitive being; on all the unknown powers of our soul; on all the moments when man escapes his own guard; on the secrets of childhood, so strangely spiritualist with its belief in the supernatural, and so unsettling with its dreams of spontaneous terror, as if we truly came from a source of dread! I would like to patiently watch, in this way, the flames of the original being, [...] I have not yet left the limbo, and I am still groping [...]»  
Maurice Maeterlinck, Confession of a Poet:

Born in Ghent, Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1943) published a collection of poems in 1898 under the title *Serres chaudes* (Hothouses) and a play for theatre entitled *La princesse de Maleine* (Princess Maleine), both of which are major milestones of Symbolism. The ensuing works *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Pelléas and Mélisande) and *L'Oiseau bleu* (The Blue bird) triumphed in Moscow. In 1894, he published *Trois petits drames pour marionnettes* (Three little dramas for marionnettes), which included *La mort de Tintagiles* (The Death of Tintagiles). His dramatic works bridge the gap between the onlooker's imagination and the enigmatic areas suggested by the text. What mattered solely to Maeterlinck was the unsaid, the drama of existence. Poet, playwright and essayist, Maeterlinck was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1911.



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## THEATER COMPANY

## THÉÂTRE DE L'ENTROUVERT

The company is supported by the DRAC Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the Région Sud and the Conseil Départemental de Vaucluse. It receives for its creations the support of the City of Apt (84), the SPEDIDAM and the ADAMI.

It is supported for its diffusion by the ONDA and for its international tours by the French Institute.

At the intersection of disciplines, Théâtre de l'Entrouvert embraces a contemporary vision of puppetry while drawing inspiration from its roots. The company's artistic mission is to craft a visual language that speaks directly to the senses and the unconscious, immersing audiences in experiences that are both deeply personal and shared.

The Théâtre de l'Entrouvert company is led by director, visual artist, and puppeteer Élise Vigneron. Based in Apt, in the Vaucluse region of France, the company presents its productions both nationally and internationally, with performances across Europe, Asia, North and South America. In 2009, Élise Vigneron—trained in visual arts, circus arts, and puppetry at the National School of Puppetry Arts in Charleville-Mézières—created TRAVERSÉES, a solo work that marked the founding of Théâtre de l'Entrouvert. This was followed by IMPERMANENCE (2013), ANYWHERE (2016), and L'ENFANT (2018).

The company's approach focuses on staging literary texts through the animation of transforming materials and creating immersive experiences for audiences. Invited to the 2019 Avignon Festival, Élise Vigneron co-created AXIS MUNDI with dancer Anne Nguyen as part of the Vive le Sujet! program by SACD, a defining piece in her exploration of ice as a medium. From 2020 to 2023, she embarked on a new research cycle centered on ice, resulting in three artistic projects: LANDS, Habiter le Monde (a participatory project using ice foot molds), GLACE (an art/science impromptu collaboration with glaciologist Maurine Montagnat), and LES VAGUES, inspired by Virginia Woolf, featuring five life-sized ice puppets.

In 2023, Élise Vigneron handed over ANYWHERE to an American ensemble in collaboration with the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival. She also co-created RE-MEMBER with puppeteer Julika Mayer and members of the Puppet Theater Ensemble in Magdeburg, Germany, in a co-production with Théâtre de l'Entrouvert.

Her next creation, Mizu (meaning "water" in Japanese), a co-creation with Satchie Noro, will premiere in May 2025 at the Le Vellein Theater in Villefontaine (Isère).

Trained in visual arts, circus performance, and puppetry at the National School of Puppetry Arts in Charleville-Mézières, she has developed a unique artistic language blending visual arts, theater, and movement. In 2009, she created TRAVERSEES, a solo performance that marked the founding of the Théâtre de l'Entrouvert company. This was followed by the productions IMPERMANENCE (2013), ANYWHERE (2016), and L'ENFANT (2018).

She was awarded the Henry Bauchau Prize (2018) for her direction of ANYWHERE and the Creation/Experimentation Prize by the International Puppetry Institute (2019). For the 2019 Avignon Festival, she co-created Axis Mundi with Anne Nguyen as part of the Vive le Sujet! series.

From 2020 to 2023, she led a research cycle exploring ice as a medium, resulting in projects such as LANDS, Habiter le monde (a participatory work), GLACE (an art/science impromptu), and LES VAGUES (a piece featuring five ice puppets). Her creations are presented both in France and internationally. In 2023, she passed on ANYWHERE to an American ensemble and co-created RE-MEMBER with Julika Mayer and the Puppet Theater Ensemble of Magdeburg.

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## ÉLISE VIGNERON

Director,  
puppeteer, plastic artist

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*«By highlighting the fragility and metamorphosis of matter, by bringing bodies and pictures to life, I invite the audience to participate in a sensitive experience, and to enter the metaphoric language of a silent theatre.»*

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She is currently an artist accompanied by the Cratère, Scène nationale d'Alès (30), the Théâtre de Châtillon – Clamart - TCC (92), the Halle aux grains, scène nationale – Blois (41) and the Théâtre Joliette scène conventionnée art et création expressions et écritures contemporaines de Marseille (13). Élise Vigneron is an associate artist at the Vélo Théâtre, Apt (84). d'objet et le croisement des arts et sciences à Apt (84).

## PARTNERS

Production Théâtre de l'Entrouvert

### Coproductions

\ Les Théâtres à Aix-en-Provence et Marseille (13)

\ TJP - Centre Dramatique National de Strasbourg Grand-Est (67)

\ L'Espace Jéliote / Scène conventionnée «art de la marionnette» communauté de communes Piemont Oloronais (64)

\ Le Pôle Arts de la Scène à Marseille (13)

\ La Garance / Scène nationale de Cavaillon (84)

\ Théâtre - Arles / Scène conventionnée d'intérêt national art et création / nouvelles écritures pôle régional de développement culturel (13)

\ Le Vélo Théâtre / scène conventionnée théâtre d'objet, Apt (84)

### Supports

L'ENFANT received support from the DRAC and from Région Sud, the Conseil départemental de Vaucluse, the city of Apt, the SPEDIDAM and from l'ADAMI.

\ It can also be played in English



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## CAST

- \ The Death of Tintagiles by Maurice Maeterlinck
- \ Scenography and Direction Elise Vigneron
- \ Actress Stéphanie Farison
- \ Puppeteer Sarah Lascar (alternating with Cécile Doutey)
- \ Manipulation Élise Vigneron, alternating with Alice Faravel
- \ Sound and Lighting Management Aurélien Beylier
- \ Dramaturgy Manon Worms
- \ Actor Direction Argyro Chioti
- \ External Eye and Manipulation Device Hélène Barreau
- \ Lighting Design Benoît Fincker and Sarah Marcotte
- \ Creation light, machinery Benoît Fincker
- \ Sound creation Pascal Charrier, Julien Tamisier et Géraldine Foucault
- \ Puppet construction and plastic collaboration Arnaud Louski-Pane
- \ Construction Philippe Laliard and Benoît Fincker
- \ Support on moving facilities Karin Holmström
- \ Costumes Danielle Merope-Gardenier
- \ Greetings Maya-Lune Thieblemont, Jean-Louis Larcebeau, Gérard Vigneron, Martine Lascar, Juliette Berroterran



# THÉÂTRE DE L'ENTROUVERT



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