

THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA

Report by Dan Spielman 2002/2 Churchill Fellow

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THE GILBERT SPOTTISWOOD CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP
to investigate theatre, translation (poetry) and radioplays –
France, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic

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Signed: Dan Spielman

Dated:

Metamorphosis. Unfinished Letters and some of the *Illuminations* previously appeared in Masthead Literary Arts web-zine.

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Dan Spielman
c/o RGM Associates
PO Box 128
Surrey Hills NSW 2010
tel: +61 2 9281 3911
fax: +61 2 9281 4705
email: spielmandan@hotmail.com

Dan Spielman is a Melbourne born writer and performer. His theatre work includes over a dozen seasons with the Keene/Taylor Theatre Project, an award winning collaboration between playwright Daniel Keene and director Ariette Taylor. He has performed with the Sydney Theatre Company in *The Cherry Orchard*, *Attempts on Her Life* and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* and from March 2006 will join their full-time ensemble, The Actors Company. He has worked with the Melbourne Theatre Company in *The Seagull*. His TV work includes *Wildside*, *Raw FM*, and *The Secret Life of Us*. He has appeared in the feature films *One Perfect Day*, directed by Paul Currie and *Tom White*, directed by Alkinos Tsilimidos. His short story *Epilogue*, *Metamorphosis: Unfinished Letters*, and some translations of *Les Illuminations* have been published in Masthead Literary Arts Web-zine.

Translation is so far removed from being the sterile equation of two dead languages that of all literary forms it is the one charged with the special mission of watching over the maturing process of the original language and the birth pangs of its own.

Walter Benjamin
from The Task of the Translator

The truth of the poem leans on the poetic experience, which does not differ essentially from the experience of the identification with the “reality of reality” as it has been described by Eastern thought and a part of Western. This experience, reputed to be unutterable, is expressed and communicated in the image...The image does not explain: it invites one to re-create and, literally, to relive it. The poet’s utterance is incarnated in poetic communion. The image transmutes man and converts him in turn into an image, that is, into a space where opposites fuse. And man himself, split asunder since birth, is reconciled with himself when he becomes an image, when *he becomes another*. Poetry is metamorphosis, change, an alchemical operation, and therefore it borders on magic, religion, and other attempts to transform man and make of “this one” and “that one” that “other one” who is he himself.

Octavio Paz
from The Bow and the Lyre

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks to the Gilbert Spottiswood family, sponsors of my Fellowship. To the late Noel Pelly, whose encouragement set me on this path. And thanks to Bill Akers, Meg Martin, Alison Croggon, Daniel Keene, Liz Jones, Sue Natrass, Di McDonald, Ariette Taylor, Joanna Milosz, Simon Phillips, Severine Magois, Catherine Dan, Valerie Megard, Joseph and Samya, Chloe Armstrong, Barrie Kosky, Blumfeld, Gabriela, Susanne, and the Schauspielhaus, Florian von Carove, Petr Foreman, Susanne Saßche, Richard and Salome, Mark Siegel, Daniel, Anna Cherry, Fiona at the Wyndham's, Chris Corner, Claire Lilley, Izzy Mant, Matt Dyktynski, Janet Hearne, Concha and Lluna Pleguezuelo, Rosa Maria, Alba and Javier Munoz Ortuno, Pili, Pol, Juan, Lola and Vanessa at Pension Paris in Valencia, Cecile Churet, Marisa Purcell, Jim, Brendan Shelper, Tina McErvale, Gero Schauer, Cheryl Anthony, Thomas Sloan, Stephen Armstrong, Greg Stone, Neil Pigot, Matt Davis, Frank Mensforth, Cher Roscoe, Kick Gurry, my parents Rob and Philippa, my sister Lucy, and my partner in crime Kate Davis.

INTRODUCTION

I undertook my Churchill Fellowship over 12 months. In that time I travelled through France, Germany, The Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, the UK and Spain.

I saw it as an opportunity for me to focus on a way of thinking, to look at language in a new way, to reflect on the work of writers that have inspired me, and to witness and discuss the work of other artists.

What I am presenting is not a cohesive thesis and it is not a standard report. It is a diary of perceptions.

At the centre of the work is the poetry of Arthur Rimbaud, particularly the book of prose poems *Les Illuminations*. I have also included fiction, a programme of meetings and productions, notes and some images.

I go ahead now with my eyes opened to the huge possibilities for conception and production of work, and my mind ignited by a long, focused engagement with language.

My best action for the dissemination of the lessons I have learned is to continue with the work I have only begun here, to imagine new ways of thinking and writing and to further explore my craft.

TRANSLATIONS

LES ILLUMINATIONS

I have embarked on translating the two books: *Les Illuminations* (Illuminations) and *Une Saison en Enfer* (A Season in Hell) by the French poet Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891). I am submitting my drafts of *Les Illuminations*, which I completed during my stay in Paris as part of my Churchill Fellowship.

Les Illuminations and *Une Saison en Enfer* are considered "...the object[s] of one of the longest running debates in French literary studies..."¹. Did Rimbaud complete *Les Illuminations* prior to the summer of 1873, confirming *Une Saison En Enfer* as his final masterpiece – truly a ‘farewell to literature’? Or were some of the Illuminations written afterward, obscuring the end of his career and the neat theories of critics and scholars? Such inquiries attest to the universal fascination with the life and times of this rebel poet, but can threaten to eclipse the work itself.

Rimbaud’s genius, his sexual and narcotic experiments and his abandonment of literature at the age of nineteen provide an extraordinary drama parallel to the body of work. However, the kind of thinking that conjures evidence of consciousness of the significance of the poetry in the poem only hinders the translation process. The translator must honour the *happening* of the poem, the part of the work that is irreducible, mysterious, magical. As Yves Bonnefoy says:

“To understand Rimbaud let us read Rimbaud; let this be our desire: to separate his voice from the many other voices that have mingled with it. There is no point seeking elsewhere, at a distance, what Rimbaud tells us himself. Few writers have so passionately sought to know themselves, to become another man through self-knowledge: let us take this search seriously, for nothing is more serious.”²

I cannot read Rimbaud alone. I don’t speak French, so I am forced to read him in translation. It was my reliance on the interpretations of others that led me to translating his work for myself. There are many existing English translations, old and new. This in itself is no reason to stop going ahead with my own. A translation of this kind is a critical response, not a definitive equation. All languages are living and therefore evolving. What a good translation achieves is imagining and using its own language in new ways – one language, fertilised by another, reforming itself, rediscovering itself. It is also a reading and a listening.

¹ Graham Robb, *Rimbaud*; Picador, 2000, pp240

² Yves Bonnefoy, *Rimbaud*; Harper Colophon, 1973, pp3

My method of translation is fairly straightforward. I begin by copying the original out by hand; then translating word by word from the dictionary. I include in my handwritten notes several options for words I am unsure about; I then type out the poem in French and then in English, refining a first draft. I try to 'keep moving' whenever I can, my primary concern at this stage being in familiarising myself with the new language and the body of work. I refer to other English versions when the dictionary is of no use.

When I choose the English word, I am sure and unsure. It is a combination of guesswork and remembering. I hazard guesses in an abstract way: Is this an equal reverberation? Is that approach equidistant? Does this word shine enough, that one transfigure?... And yet these guesses are informed by an intimate relationship to the work. I am recalling my life's nameless experiences, the reaches of my feelings, my childhood fantasies... As I mine my memory I mine out my vocabulary.

Concerning the other English versions, the process is a little like hosting an argument. I do my own crude, slow translation, and when I strike a problem I 'consult' the other translators. Often I disagree with their 'advice', but the variety of interpretation is very important. Without it I can lose perspective.

Paul Schmidt raises an interesting problem of translation in his introduction – where the translator, delving into and loving the words of the poet, can get lost and even transform...even believing they understand the inspiration, command the work. For a young man translating the work of Rimbaud this is an easy trap to fall into.

“...Rimbaud seemed to me a kind of mirror, and my early translations of his poems were essays in narcissism. It was a childish preoccupation: I set myself the task of entering his strange world as I perceived it; to seek his path even where the wind at his heels had effaced it...my own adolescence was swallowed up in the new one his poems revealed to me...My task led me irresistibly from one page to another, and off the page finally altogether...”³

Looking over my first drafts, I think they could well be exercises in narcissism, a childish preoccupation. I feel an inexplicable connection, a window into the work – perhaps this window is a mirror? Rimbaud's poetry sometimes fills me with such a profusion of impulses – poetic, carnal, intellectual, that although I may feel exultant and vindicated, it is also very like the brilliance of a phantom. Perhaps this is another reason why I was so attracted to the idea, that a translation is a performance, a metaphorical but still volatile enactment...

The title 'Les Illuminations' has had many interpretations. I have understood the title as a key to the poems as objects, or things. To use an

³ Paul Schmidt Arthur Rimbaud, Complete Works, Harper Colophon, 1976, pp xiv.

analogy: I considered the chaos beside the road – sticks, weeds, small flowers, glass, stones, dirt. It is hard to say what cooperates in this chaos, it is as chaotic (and beautiful) beside any road, or in any undergrowth in any combination. Perhaps it is simply the profusion that is mesmerising in these miniature scenes. Or perhaps it is the nature, or the appearance of observation that ‘illuminates’ those small flowers, the grass, the dirt, the woodland road...

TRANSLATIONS *from*

Les Illuminations

by Arthur Rimbaud

I APRÈS LE DÉLUGE

Aussitot que l'idée du Déluge se fut rassise, un lièvre s'arrêta dans les sainfoins et les clochettes mouvantes, et dit sa prière à l'arc-en-ciel à tracers la toile de l'araignée.

Oh! les pierres précieuses qui se cachaient, – les fleurs qui regardaient déjà.

Dans la grande rue sale les étals se dressèrent, et l'on tira les barques vers la mer étagée là-haut comme sur les gravures.

Le sang coula, chez Barbe-Bleue, – aux abattoirs, – dans les cirques, où le sceau de Dieu blêmit les fenêtres. Le sang et le lait coulèrent.

Les castors bâtirent. Les "mazagrans" fumèrent dans les estaminets.

Dans la grande maison de vitres encore ruisselante, les enfants en deuil regardèrent les merveilleuses images.

Une porte claqua, et, sur la place du hameau, l'enfant tourna ses bras, compris des girouettes et des coqs des clochers de partout, sous l'éclatante giboulée.

Madame * établit un piano dans les Alpes. La messe et les premières communions se célébrèrent aux cent mille autels de la cathédrale.**

Les caravanes partirent. Et le Splendide-Hôtel fut bâti dans le chaos de glaces et de nuit du pôle.

Depuis lors, la Lune entendit les chacals piaulant par les déserts de thym – et les églogues en sabots grognant dans le verger. Puis, dans la futaie violette, bourgeonnante, Eucharis me dit que c'était le printemps.

Sourds, étag; – Écume, roule sur le pont et pardessus les bois; – draps noirs et orgues, – éclairs et tonnerre, – montez et roulez; – Eaux et tristesses, montez et relevez les Déluges.

I AFTER THE FLOOD

As soon as the idea of the Flood had subsided, a hare stopped amidst the clover and trembling bellflowers, and said his prayer to the rainbow through a spider-web.

Oh! the precious stones that hid themselves, – the flowers already looking around.

In the filthy main street stalls were set up, and barks were hauled down to the sea that rose up in tiers, like an engraving.

The blood flowed, at Blue Beard's, – in abattoirs, – in circuses where the seal of God pales the windows. Blood and milk.

The beavers built. The "mazagrans" steamed in little bars.

In a big house, windows still streaming, children in grief looked at marvellous pictures.

A door slammed, and on the village green a child waved his arms, understood by weather-vanes and cocks on bell-towers everywhere, in a bursting shower.

Madam*** installed a piano in the Alps. Mass and first communion were celebrated at the hundred-thousand altars of the cathedral.

Caravans set out. And the Hotel Splendide was built in the chaos of ice and polar night.

Ever since, the Moon has heard jackals screeching over deserts of thyme – and shoddy eclogues grunting in the orchard. Then, in a cluster of budding violets, Eucharis told me it was Spring.

Surge, pond;- Foam, roll over the bridge and through the woods, black drapes and organs, – lightning and thunder, – rise and roll; – Waters and sorrows, rise and re-launch the Floods.

Because since they dispersed, – oh! the precious stones burrowing, and the opened flowers! – It's a bore! and the Queen, the Witch who kindles her flame in an earthen pot, will never tell us what she knows, and what we don't know.

Car Depuis qu'ils se sont dissipés, – oh! les pierres précieuses s'enfouissant, et les fleurs ouvertes! – c'est un ennui! et la Reine, la Sorcière qui allume sa braise dans le pot de terre, ne voudra jamais nous raconter ce qu'elle sait, et que nous ignorons.

II ENFANCE

I.

Cette idole, yeux noirs et crin jaune, sans parents ni cour, plus noble que la fable, mexicane et flamande: son domaine, azur et verdure insolents, court sur des plages nommées par des vagues sans vaisseaux de noms férocement grecs, slaves, celtiques.

À la lisière de la forêt – les fleurs de rêve tintent, éclatent, éclairent, – la fille à lèvres d’orange, les genoux croisés dans le clair déluge qui sourd des prés, nudité qu’ombrent, traversent et habillent les arcs-en-ciel, la flore, la mer.

Dames qui tournoient sur les terrasses voisines de la mer; enfantes et géantes, superbes noires dans la mousse vert-de-gris, bijoux debout sur le sol gras des bosquets et des jardinets dégelés, –jeunes mères et grandes sœurs aux regards pleins de pèlerinages, sultanes, princesses de démarche et de costumes tyranniques, petites étrangères et personnes doucement malheureuses.

Quel ennui, l’heure du “cher corps” et “cher cœur”!

II.

C’est elle, la petite morte, derrière les rosiers. – La jeune maman trépassée descend le perron. – La calèche du cousin crie sur le sable. – Le petit frère – (il est aux Indes!) là, devant le couchant, sur le pré d’œillets. – Les vieux qu’on a enterrés tout droits dans le rempart aux giroflées.

L’essaim des feuilles d’or entoure la maison du général. Ils sont dans le midi. – On suit la route rouge pour arriver à

II CHILDHOOD

I.

That idol, black eyes and yellow hair, without ancestors or court, nobler than fable, Mexican or Flemish: his domain, in insolent azures and greens, runs over beaches called names savagely Greek, Slav, Celt, by the shipless waves.

At the edge of the forest – flowers of dream tinkle, bloom and flash, – the girl with orange lips, knees crossed in the pure deluge that wells the meadows, nakedness shadowed, transversed and clothed with rainbow, flora, sea.

Ladies swirling on the terraces near the ocean; little girls and giant women, sublime blacks on verdigris moss, jewels standing on the thick ground of the groves and thawing gardens, – young mothers and older sisters with eyes full of pilgrimage, sultanas, princesses with tyrannical gaits and costumes, small foreign women and gently miserable people.

Such tedium, times of “beloved body” and “dear heart”!

II.

It’s her, the little girl, dead under the rosebushes. – The young mama, deceased, descends the stair. – Her cousin’s carriage creaks over the sand. – The little brother – (but he’s in India!) there, before the sunset in a field of carnations. – The elderly who are all buried upright in the battlements of wallflowers.

A swarm of golden leaves surrounds the general’s house. They are in the South. – You follow the red road to the empty inn. The

l'auberge vide. Le château est à vendre; les persiennes sont détachées. – Le curé aura emporté la clef de l'église. – Autour du parc, les loges des gardes sont inhabitées. Les palissades sont si hautes qu'on ne voit que les cimes bruissantes. D'ailleurs, il n'y a rien à voir là-dedans.

Les prés remontent aux hameaux sans coqs, sans enclumes. L'écluse est levée. Ô les calvaires et les moulins du désert, les îles et les meules.

Des fleurs magiques bourdonnaient. Les talus le berçaient. Des bêtes d'une élégance fabuleuse circulaient. Les nuées s'amassaient sur la haute mer faite d'une éternité de chaudes larmes.

III.

Au bois, il y a un oiseau, son chant vous arrête et vous fait rougir.

Il y a une horloge qui ne sonne pas.

Il y a une fondrière avec un nid de bêtes blanches.

Il y a une cathédrale qui descend et un lac qui monte.

Il y a une petite voiture abandonnée dans le taillis, ou qui descend le sentier en courant, enrubannée.

Il y a une troupe de petits comédiens en costumes, aperçus sur la route à travers la lisière du bois.

Il y a enfin, quand l'on a faim et soif, quelqu'un qui vous chasse.

IV.

Je suis le saint, en prière sur la terrasse, – comme les bêtes pacifiques paissent jusqu'à la mer de Palestine.

Je suis le savant au fauteuil sombre. Les branches et la pluie se jettent à la croisée de la bibliothèque.

chateau is for sale; the shutters hang loose. – The parish preist has probably taken the key to the church. – Around the park, the keepers huts are empty. The fences are so high that you can only see the rustling tree-tops. There's nothing to see in there anyway.

The fields lead into villages with no cocks, no anvils. The sluices are lifted. O the roadside crosses and desert windmills, the islands and the millstones.

Magic flowers were humming. The slopes cradled him. Fabulously elegant beasts circulated. The clouds amassed over high seas made of an eternity of blazing tears.

III.

In the woods there is a bird, his song makes you stop and blush.

There is a clock that never strikes.

There is a rut with a nest full of white animals.

There is a cathedral that goes down and a lake that goes up.

There is a little cart abandoned in the thicket, or rolling down the path, trimmed with ribbons.

There is a troupe of little players in costume, glimpsed on the road that runs through the edge of the woods.

There is, finally, when you are hungry and thirsty, someone who drives you away.

IV.

I am the saint, praying on the terrace, – like those placid beasts that grazed down to the sea of Palestine.

I am the scholar in the dark armchair. Branches and rain beat against the casement of the library.

Je suis le piéton de la grand'route par les bois nains; la rumeur des écluses couvre mes pas. Je vois longtemps la mélancolique lessive d'or du couchant.

Je serais bien l'enfant abandonné sur la jetée partie à la haute mer, le petit valet suivant l'allée don't le front touche le ciel.

Les sentiers sont âpres. Les monticules se couvrent de genêts. L'air est immobile. Que les oiseaux et les sources sont loin! Ce ne peut être que la fin du monde, en avançant.

V.

Qu'on me loue enfin ce tombeau, blanchi à la chaux avec les lignes du ciment en relief, – très loin sous terre.

Je m'accoude à la table, la lampe éclaire très vivement ces journaux que je suis idiot de relire, ces livres sans intérêt.

À une distance énorme au-dessus de mon salon souterrain, les maisons s'implantent, les brumes s'assemblent. La boue est rouge ou noire. Ville monstrueuse, nuit sans fin!

Moins haut, sont des égouts. Aux côtés, rien que l'épaisseur du globe. Peut-être des gouffres d'azur, des puits de feu. C'est peut-être sur ces plans que se rencontrent lunes et comètes, mers et fables.

Aux heures d'amertume je m'imagine des boules de saphir, de métal. Je suis maître du silence. Pourquoi une apparence de soupirail blêmiraient-elle au coin de la voûte?

I am the pedestrian on the highway through tiny forests; the roar of the sluices drowns out my footsteps. I watch at length the golden melancholy wash of sunset.

I could be the abandoned child on the jetty, left to the high seas, a little lackey following the alley whose crest touches the sky.

The paths are harsh. The hills are covered with broom. The air is still. How far away are the birds and fountains! It can only be the end of the world ahead.

V.

So, let them rent me a tomb, whitewashed with protruding lines of cement, – a very long way under the earth.

I prop my elbows on the table, the lamp shines brilliantly over newspapers that I am an idiot to re-read, on books without interest.

At a great distance above my underground lounge, the houses entrench themselves, fog gathers. The silt is red or black. Monstrous city, unending night!

The sewers aren't so far above. To either side, nothing but the thickness of the earth. Perhaps chasms of azure, wells of fire. It is perhaps on this plane that moons and comets, oceans and fables, meet.

In my bitter hours I imagine balls of sapphire and metal. I am the chief of silence. Why does the impression of a window pale in the corner of the vault?

III CONTE

Un Prince était vexé de ne s'être employé jamais qu'à la perfection des générosités vulgaires. Il prévoyait d'étonnantes révolutions de l'amour, et soupçonnait ses femmes de pouvoir mieux que cette complaisance agrémentée de ciel et de luxe. Il voulait voir la vérité, l'heure du désir et de la satisfaction essentiels. Que ce fût ou non une aberration de piété, il voulut. Il possédait au moins un assez large pouvoir humain.

Toutes les femmes qui l'avaient connu furent assassinées. Quel saccage du jardin de la beauté! Sous le sabre, elle bénirent. Il n'en commanda point de nouvelles. – Les femmes réapparurent.

Il tua tous ceux qui le suivaient, après la chasse ou les libations. – Tous le suivaient.

Il s'amusa à égorger les bêtes de luxe. Il fit flamber les palais. Il se ruait sur les gens et les taillait en pièces. – La foule, les toits d'or, les belles bêtes existaient encore.

Peut-on s'extasier dans la destruction, se rajeunir par la cruauté! Le peuple ne murmura pas. Personne n'offrit le concours de ses vues.

Un soir il galopait fièrement. Un Génie apparut, d'une beauté ineffable, invouable même. De sa physionomie et de son maintien ressortait la promesse d'un amour multiple et complexe! d'un bonheur indicible, insupportable même! Le Prince et le Génie s'anéantirent probablement dans la santé essentielle. Comment n'auaient-ils pas pu en mourir? Ensemble donc ils moururent.

Mais ce Prince décéda, dans son palais, à une âge ordinaire. Le Prince était le Génie. Le Génie était le Prince.

La musique savante manque à notre désir.

III TALE

A Prince was vexed that he had only ever devoted himself to the perfection of common generosities. He foresaw astonishing revolutions in love, and suspected his wives were capable of more than the complaisance that came with luxury and sky. He wanted to see the truth, the hour of essential desire and satisfaction. Whether it was an aberration of piety or not, he wanted to. At least, he possessed enough human power.

All the women who had known him were slaughtered. What havoc in the garden of beauty! Beneath the sabre, they blessed him. He didn't order new ones. – the women reappeared.

He killed all those who followed him, after the hunt or libations. – All followed him.

He amused himself by cutting the throats of rare beasts. He torched the palaces. He turned on the people and hacked them to pieces. – The throng, the golden roofs, the beautiful beasts still remained.

Is ecstasy possible in destruction, rejuvenation through cruelty! The people did not murmur. No-one offered the benefit of their views.

One evening he galloped around proudly. A Genie appeared, of ineffable beauty, even unacknowledgable. From his physiognomy and his bearing shone the promise of a multiple and complex love!, unspeakable, even unbearable bliss! The Prince and the Genie probably annihilated themselves in essential health. How could they not have died of it? Together so they died.

But the Prince died, in his palace, at an ordinary age. The Prince was the Genie. The Genie was the Prince.

Difficult music lacks in our desire.

IV PARADE

Des drôles très solides. Plusieurs ont exploité vos mondes. Sans besoins, et peu pressés de mettre en œuvre leurs brillantes facultés et leur expérience de vos consciences. Quels hommes mûrs! Des yeux hébétés à la façon de la nuit d'été, rouges et noirs, tricolores, d'acier piqué d'étoiles d'or; des facies déformés, plombés, blêmis, incendiés; des enrouements folâtres! La démarche cruelle des oripeaux! – Il y a quelques jeunes, – comment regarderaient-ils Chérubin? – pourvus de voix effrayantes et de quelques ressources dangereuses. On les envoie prendre du dos en ville, affublés d'un *luxé* dégoûtant.

Ô le plus violent Paradis de la grimace enragée! Pas de comparaison avec vos Fakirs et les autres bouffonneries scéniques. Dans des costumes improvisés avec le goût du mauvais rêve ils jouent des plaintes, des tragédies de malandrins et de demi-dieux spirituels comme l'histoire ou les religions ne l'ont jamais été. Chinois, Hottentots, bohémiens, niais, hyènes, Molochs, vieilles démences, démons sinistres, ils mêlent les tours populaires, maternels, avec les poses et les tendresses bestials. Ils interpréteraient des pièces nouvelles et des chansons "bonnes filles". Maîtres jongleurs, ils transforment le lieu et les personnes et usent de la comédie magnétique. Les yeux flambent, le sang chante, les os s'élargissent, les larmes et des filets rouges ruissent. Leur raillerie our leur terreur dure une minute, ou des mois entiers.

J'ai seul la clef de cette parade sauvage.

IV PARADE

Very tough rogues. Several have exploited your worlds. Without needs, and in no hurry to make use of their brilliant powers and their familiarity with your conscience. These ready men! Eyes bewildered as if by a summer night, reds and blacks, tricoloured, steel prickled with golden stars; their features deformed, leaden, pallid, aflame; their romping huskiness! The cruel swagger of flashy rags! – Some are young, – what would they think of Chérubin? – endowed with fearsome voices and some dangerous means. They are dispatched into town to take it up the arse, decked out in disgusting *luxury*.

O most violent Paradise of the enraged grimace! No comparison with your Fakirs and other theatrical antics. With improvised costumes in the taste of a nasty dream they play the laments, the tragedies of bandits and demigods and they are witty like history or religions never were. Chinese, Hottentots, gypsies, fools, hyenas, Molochs, demented oldies, sinister demons, they mingle popular, maternal tricks with bestial poses and caresses. They would interpret the new plays, the "cute girls" songs. Master jugglers, they transfigure places, people and have recourse to magnetic comedy. Eyes flare, blood sings, bones thicken, tears and dribbles run red. Their mockery or their terror last a minute, or entire months.

I alone hold the key to this savage parade.

V
ANTIQUE

Gracieux fils de Pan! Autour de ton front couronné de fleurettes et de baies tes yeux, des boules précieuses, rumuent. Tachées de lies brunes, tes joues se creusent. Tes crocs luisent. Ta poitrine ressemble à une cithare, des tintements circulent dans tes bras blonds. Ton cœur bat dans ce ventre où dort le double sexe. Promène-toi, la nuit, en mouvant doucement cette cuisse, cette seconde cuisse et cette jambe de gauche.

V
ANTIQUE

Graceful son of Pan! Around your forehead wreathed with little flowers and berries your eyes, beloved spheres, roll. Stained brown from all the dregs, your cheeks are hollow. Your fangs glisten. Your breast resembles a cithara, the chimes circling your blond arms. Your heart pulses in your belly that sleeps a double sex. Walk in the night, move this thigh softly, the next thigh and that left leg.

VI BEING BEAUTEOUS

Devant une neige un Être de Beauté de haute taille. Des sifflements de mort et de cercles de musique sourde font monter, s'élargir et trembler comme un spectre ce corps adoré; des blessures écarlates et noires éclatent dans les chairs superbes. Les couleurs propres de la vie se foncent, dansent, et se dégagent autour de la Vision, sur le chantier. Et les frissons s'élèvent et grondent, et la saveur forcenée de ces effets se chargeant avec les sifflements mortels et les rauques musiques que le monde, loin derrière nous, lance sur notre mère de beauté, – elle recule, elle se dresse. Oh! nos os sont revêtus d'un nouveau corps amoureux.

Ô la face cendrée, l'écusson de crin, les bras de cristal! le canon sur lequel je dois m'abattre à travers la mêlée des arbres et de l'air léger!

VI BEAUTEOUS BEING

Before the snow a Being of Beauty, tall. Death whistles and circles of veiled music cause this adulated body to rise, swell and tremble like a phantom; scarlet and black wounds bloom in the glorious flesh. Life's own colours deepen, dance and separate around the site of the Vision. Shivers rise and rumble, and the frenzied relish of these effects is charged with mortal whistlings and rude music which the world, far behind us, hurls at our mother of beauty, – she recoils, she rears up. Oh! our bones assume a new, amorous flesh.

O the ashen face, the blazon of hair, the crystal arms! the gun I must charge at over the mêlée of trees and soft air!

VII VIES

I

O les énormes avenues du pays saint, les terrasses du temple! Qu'a-t-on fait du brahmane qui m'expliqua les Proverbs? D'alors, de là-bas, je vois encre même les vieilles! Je me souviens des heures d'argent et de soleil vers les fleuves, la main de la campagne sur mon épaule, et de nos carresses debout dans les plaines poivrées. – Un envol de pigeons éscarlets tonne autour de ma pensée. – Exilé ici, j'ai eu une scène où jouer les chefs-d'œuvre dramatiques de toutes les littératures. Je vous indiquerais les richesses inouïes. J'observe l'histoire des trésors que vous trouvâtes. Je vois la suite! Ma sagesse est aussi dédaignée que le chaos. Qu'est mon néant, auprès de la stupeur qui vous attend?

II

Je suis un inventeur bien autrement méritant que tous ceux qui m'ont précédé; un musicien même, qui ai trouvé quelque chose comme la clef de l'amour. A présent, gentilhomme d'une campagne aigre au ciel sobre, j'essaye de l'apprentissage ou de l'arrivée en sabots, des polémiques, des cinq ou six veuvages, et de quelques noces où ma forte tête m'empêcha de monter au diapason des camarades. Je ne regrette pas ma vieille part de gaieté divine: l'air sobre de cette aigre campagne alimente fort activement mon atroce scepticisme. Mais comme ce scepticisme ne peut désormais être mis en œuvre, et que d'ailleurs je suis dévoué à un trouble nouveau, – j'attends de devenir un très méchant fou.

VII LIVES

I

O the vast avenues of the holy land, terraces of the temple! What became of the brahmin who explained the Proverbs to me? Back then, of there, I can still see the same old ladies! I can remember the silvery hours and the sun by the rivers, the hand of the country on my shoulder, and our carresses standing on the acid plains. – A flight of scarlet pigeons thunder around my thought. – Exiled here, I have a stage to play the dramatic masterpieces of every literature. I could show you incredible riches. I observe the history of treasures you've discovered. I see the next! My wisdom is disdained like chaos. What is my nothingness, next to the stupor that awaits you?

II

I am an inventor far more deserving than all my predecessors; a musician even, who has found something like the key of love. At present, a gentleman of the sour country with sober skies, I try to agitate the memory of my beggar-childhood, of my apprenticeship or my arrival in clogs, polemics, the five or six widowhoods, and a few weddings where my hard head prevented me rising in tune with my comrades. I don't regret my old part in holy frolic: the sober air of this sour country very actively nourishes my atrocious skepticism. But from now on, because this skepticism can hardly be put to work, and anyway I am devoted to a new turmoil, – I expect to become a very nasty madman.

III

Dans un grenier où je fus enfermé à douze ans j'ai connu le monde, j'ai illustré la comédie humaine. Dans un cellier j'ai appris l'histoire. A quelque fête de nuit, dans une cité du Nord, j'ai rencontré toutes les femmes des anciens peintres. Dans un vieux passage à Paris on m'a enseigné les sciences classiques. Dans une magnifique demeure cernée par l'Orient entier, j'ai accompli mon immense œuvre et passé mon illustre retraite. j'ai brassé mon sang. Mon devoir m'est remis. Il ne faut même plus songer à cela. je suis réellement d'outre-tombe, et pas de commissions.

III

In an attic where I was locked up age twelve I knew the world, I illustrated the human comedy. In a cellar I learned history. At some nocturnal party, in a city in the North, I met all the women of the old painters. In an old alley in Paris I was taught the classical sciences. In a magnificent residence surrounded by the entire Orient I finished my great work and spent my illustrious retirement. I braced my blood. My duty is pardoned. I don't even have to consider that. I am truly from beyond the grave, and no commissions.

**VIII
DÉPART**

Assez vu. La vision s'est rencontrée à tous les airs.

Assez eu. Rumeurs des villes, le soir, et au soleil, et toujours.

Assez connu. Les arrêts de la vie. – Ô Rumeurs et Visions!

Départ dans l'affection et le bruit neufs!

**VIII
DEPARTURE**

Seen enough. The vision recognised in every air.

Had enough. Murmur of cities, in the evening, and in the sunshine, and always.

Known enough. The arrests in life. – O Rumours and Visions!
Departure in affection and noise anew!

IX ROYAUTÉ

Un beau matin, chez un peuple fort doux, un homme et une femme superbes criaient sur la place publiques: “Mes amis, je veux qu’elle soit reine!” “Je veux être reine!” Elle riait et tremblait. Il parlait aux amis de révélation, d’épreuve terminée. Ils se pâmaient l’un contre l’autre.

En effet, ils furent rois toute une matinée, où les tentures carminées se relevèrent sur les maisons, et toute l’après-midi, où ils s’avancèrent du côté des jardins de palmes.

IX ROYALTY

One fine morning, in a land of very gentle people, a superb man and woman were shouting in the town square: “My friends, I want her to be queen!” “I want to be queen!” She laughed and trembled. He spoke to his friends about revelation, about hardships ended. They swooned against each other.

And of course they were sovereigns, for the whole morning, while the houses were decked with carmine banners, and for the whole afternoon, while they made their way toward the palm gardens.

X
À UNE RAISON

Un coup de ton doigt sur le tambour décharge tous les sons et commence la nouvelle harmonie.

Un pas de toi, c'est la levée des nouveaux hommes et leur en-marche.

Ta tête se détourne: le nouvel amour! Ta tête se retourne, – le nouvel amour!

“Change nos lots, crible les fléaux, à commencer par le temps” te chantent ces enfants. “Élève n’importe où la substance de nos fortunes et de nos vœux”, on t’en prie.

Arrivée de toujours, qui t’en iras partout.

X
TO A REASON

One tap of your finger on the drum discharges all sound, and the new harmony begins.

Your footstep is the rise of new men and their setting out.

Your head turns away: new love! Your head turns back, – new love!

“Change our fates, confound the scourges, starting with time”, sing the children. “Raise, from anywhere, the substance of our fortunes and desires”, they beg you.

Arrival from always, you will go everywhere.

XI MATINÉE D'IVRESSE

Ô *mon* Bien! Ô *mon* Beau! Fanfare atroce où je ne trébuche point! Chevalet féérique! Hourra pour l'œuvre inouïe et pour le corps merveilleux. pour la première fois! Cela commença sous les rires des enfants, cela finira par eux. Ce poison va rester dans toutes nos veines même quand, la fanfare tournant, nous serons rendu à l'ancienne inharmonie. Ô maintenant nous si digne de ces tortures! rassemblons fervemment cette promesse surhumaine faite à notre corps et à notre âme créés: cette promesse, cette démence! L'élégance, la science, la violence! On nous a promis d'enterrer dans l'ombre l'arbre du bien et du mal, de déporter les honnêtetés tyranniques, afin que nous amenions notre très pur amour. Cela commença par quelques dégoûts et cela finit, – ne pouvant nous saisir sur-le-champ de cette éternité, – cela finit par une débandade de parfums.

Rire des enfants, discrétion des esclaves, austérité des vierges, horreur des figures et des objets d'ici, sacrés soyez-vous par le souvenir de cette veille. Cela commençait par toute la rustrerie, voici que cela finit par des anges de flamme et de glace.

Petite veille d'ivresse, sainte! quand ce ne serait que pour le masque don't tu nous as gratifié. Nous t'affirmons, méthode! Nous n'oublions pas que tu as glorifié hier chacun de nos âges. Nous avons foi au poison. Nous savons donner notre vie tout entière tous les jours.

Voici le temps des ASSASINS.

XI DRUNKEN MORNING

O *my* Good! O *my* Beautiful! Atrocious fanfare where I don't falter! Magical rack! Here's to the extraordinary study and to the marvellous substance, to the first time! It began with the laughter of children and there it will end. Such poison remains in all our veins even when, the fanfare wheeling about, ancient disharmony is returned to us. O now, we are worthy of such tortures! let's fervently recall that superhuman promise made at the creation of body and soul: that promise, that dementia! Elegance, science, violence! We were promised that the tree of good and evil would be buried in darkness, the banishment of tyrannical decencies, in order that we convey our very pure love. It began with a certain disgust, – unable to sieze at once this eternity, – it ends in a rout of perfumes.

Laughter of children, discretion of slaves, severity of virgins, horror at figures and objects here, sanctify the memory of this vigil. It began with all brutishness, and here it will end with angels of fire and ice.

Little drunken vigil, holy! even if only for the mask you have deigned us. We affirm you, method! We don't forget that yesterday you glorified all our times. We have faith in poison. We know how to give our whole life every day.

Now is the time of the ASSASINS.

XII PHRASES

Pendant que les fonds publics s'écoulent en fêtes de fraternité, il sonne une cloche de feu rose dans le nuages.

*

Le haut étang fume continuellement. Quelle sorcière va se dresser sur le couchant blanc? Quelles violettes frondaisons vont descendre!

*

J'ai tendu des cordes de clocher à clocher; des guirlandes de fenêtre à fenêtre; des chaînes d'or d'étoile à étoile, et je danse.

*

Une matinée couverte, en juillet. Un goût de cendres vole dans l'air;— une odeur de bois suant dans l'âtre,— les fleurs rouissent,— le saccage des promenades,— la bruine des canaux par les champs,— pourquoi pas déjà le joujou et l'encens?

*

Ma camarade, mendicante, enfant monstre! comme ça t'est égal, ces malheureuse et ces manœuvres, et mes embarras. Attache-toi à nous avec ta voix impossible,

XII PHRASES

While the public funds flow in a feast of brotherhood, a bell of pink fire tolls in the clouds.

*

The highland pond smokes continually. What witch will stand against the pale sunset? What purple foliage will fall!

*

I've stretched ropes from steeple to steeple; garlands from window to window; golden chains from star to star, and I dance.

*

An overcast morning, in July. A taste of ash flies in the sky, — the smell of wood sweating from the hearth; — soaked flowers, — havoc of avenues, — the mist from canals through the fields, — why not ready toys and incense?

*

My mate, beggar-girl, terror! how little you care, these unhappy women and these ploys, and my problems. Attach yourself to us with your impossible voice, your voice! unique hope of this vile despair.

*

ta voix! unique flatteur de ce vil désespoir.

*

Quand nous sommes très forts,—qui recule? très gais,—qui tombe de ridicule? Quand nous sommes très méchants, que ferait-on de nous? Parez-vous, dansez, riez. Je ne pourrai jamais envoyer l'Amour par la fenêtre.

*

Quand le monde sera réduit en un seul bois noir pour nos quatre yeux étonnés, —en une plage pour deux enfants fidèles, —en une maison musicale pour notre claire sympathie, —je vous trouverai.

Qu'il n'y ait ici-bas qu'un vieillard seul, calme et beau, entouré d'un "luxe inouï", —et je suis à vos genoux.

Que j'aie réalisé tous vos souvenirs, —que je sois celle qui sait vous garrotter, —je vous étoufferai.

When we are very strong, —who withdraws? very cheerful, —who stoops to ridicule? When we are very spiteful, what will they do with us? Grace yourself, dance, laugh. I could never send Love out the window.

*

When the world has reduced to a lone dark wood for our four astonished eyes, — to a beach for two faithful children, — to a musical house for our clear sympathy, —I'll find you.

Let there be here a lonely old man, calm and beautiful, surrounded by "astounding luxury", —and I am at my knees.

If I have realised all your memories, —If I am she who can tie you up, —I will strangle you.

XIII OUVRIERS

Ô cette chaude matinée de février! Le Sud inopportun vint relever nos souvenirs d'indigents absurdes, notre jeune misère.

Henrika avait une jupe de coton à carreau blanc et brun, qui a dû être portée au siècle dernier, un bonnet à rubans et un foulard de soie. C'était bien plus triste qu'un deuil. Nous faisons un tour dans la banlieue. Le temps était couvert, et ce vent du Sud excitait toutes les vilaines odeurs des jardins ravagés et des prés desséchés.

Cela ne devait pas fatiguer ma femme au même point que moi. Dans une flache laissée par l'inondation du mois précédent à un sentier assez haut, elle me fit remarquer de très-petits poissons.

La ville, avec sa fumée et ses bruits de métiers, nous suivait très loin dans les chemins. Ô l'autre monde, l'habitation bénie par le ciel, et les ombrages! Le Sud me rappelait les misérables incidents de mon enfance, mes désespoirs d'été, l'horrible quantité de force et de science que la sort a toujours éloignée de moi. Non! nous ne passerons pas l'été dans cet avare pays où nous ne serons jamais que des orphelins fiancés. Je veux que ce bras durci ne traîne plus une *chère image*.

XIII WORKERS

O that warm February morning! An untimely Southerly came and stirred our absurd paupers' memories, our young destitution.

Henrika had a cotton skirt with brown and white checks, which were fashionable last century, a bonnet with ribbons and a silk scarf. It was sadder than grief. We were having a stroll in the suburbs. The weather was overcast and that Southerly wind aroused all the ugly smells of the ravaged gardens and dessicated fields.

This didn't depress my wife as much as me. In a puddle left by the previous month's floods, on a fairly high path, she pointed out some tiny little fish.

The town, with its smoke and sounds of trade, followed us for miles down the paths. O other world, habitat blessed by the sky, and shadows! The Southerly reminded me of the miserable incidents of my childhood, my summer's despairs, the horrible amount of strength and knowledge that fate has always kept away from me. No! we will not spend the summer in this greedy land where we will never be anything but betrothed orphans. This hardened arm will drag no more a *cherished image*.

XIV LES PONTS

Des ciels gris de cristal. Un bizarre dessin de ponts, ceux-ci droits, ceux-là bombés, d'autres descendant en obliquant en angles sur les premiers, et ces figures se renouvelant dans les autres circuits éclairés du canal, mais tous tellement longs et légers que les rives, chargées de dômes, s'abaissent et s'amoindrissent. Quelques-uns de ces ponts sont encore chargés de masures. D'autres soutiennent des mâts, des signaux, de frêles parapets. Des accords mineurs se croisent, et filent; des cordes montent des berges. On distingue une veste rouge, peut-être d'autres costumes et des instruments musique. Sont-ce des airs populaires, des bouts de concerts seigneuriaux, des restants d'hymnes publics? L'eau est grise et bleue, large comme un bras de mer.

Un rayon blanc, tombant du haut du ciel, anéantit cette comédie.

XIV THE BRIDGES

Crystal grey skies. A bizarre pattern of bridges, this one straight, that one hunched, others descending at oblique angles to the first, and such figures are repeated through the other lit circuits of the canal, but all so long and nimble that the banks, laden with domes, lower and shrink. Some of these bridges are still covered with hovels. Others support masts, signals, flimsy parapets. Minor chords cross, and fade. Ropes run up the banks. You can distinguish a red coat, perhaps other clothes and musical instruments. Are these popular tunes, bits of stately concerts, remnants of public hymns? The water is grey and blue, as wide as an arm of the sea.

A ray of white light, falling from the heights of the sky, annihilates this farce.

XV VILLE

Je suis un éphémère et point trop mécontent citoyen d'une métropole crue moderne parce que tout goût connu a été éludé dans les ameublements et l'extérieur des maisons aussi bien que dans le plan de la ville. Ici vous ne signaleriez les traces d'aucun monument de superstition. La morale et la langue sont réduites à leur plus simple expression, enfin! Ces millions de gens qui n'ont pas besoin de se connaître amènent si pareillement l'éducation, le métier et la vieillesse, que ce cours de vie doit être plusieurs fois moins long que ce qu'une statistique folle trouve pour les peuples du continent. Aussi comme, de ma fenêtre, je vois des spectres nouveaux roulant à travers l'épaisse et éternelle fumée de charbon – notre ombre des bois, notre nuit d'été! – des Erinnyes nouvelles, devant mon cottage qui est ma patrie et tout mon cœur puisque tout ici ressemble à ceci, – la Mort sans pleurs, notre active fille et servante, un Amour désespéré et un joli Crime piaulant dans la boue de la rue.

XV CITY

I am a transient and not too unhappy citizen of a metropolis considered modern because all known taste has been eluded in the furnishings and the exteriors of the houses as well as the layout of the city. Here you couldn't point out a single trace of any superstitious monument. Morals and language have been reduced to their most basic expression, finally! These millions of people, who have no need to know each other, carry out their education, their work and their old age so similarly, that the course of their life must be several times shorter than any crazy statistic finds for the people of the continent. So from my window I see new ghosts rolling through the thick and endless coal-smoke – our forest shade, our summer night! – new Erinnyes before my cottage, which is my homeland and all my heart because everything here resembles it, – Death without tears, our diligent daughter and servant, a desperate Love and a pretty Crime whimpering in the mud of the street.

XVI ORNIÈRES

À droite l'aube d'été éveille les feuilles et les vapeurs et les bruits de ce coin du parc, et les talus de gauche tiennent dans leur ombre violette les mille rapides ornières de la route humide. Défilé de féeries. En effet: des chars chargés d'animaux de bois doré, de mâts et de toiles bariolées, au grand galop de vingt chevaux de cirque tachetés, et les enfants et les hommes sur leurs bêtes les plus étonnantes; – vingt véhicules, bossés, pavoisés et fleuris comme des carrosses anciens ou de contes, pleines d'enfants attifés pour une pastorale suburbaine; – même des cercueils sous leur dais de nuit dressant les panaches d'ébène, filant au trot des grandes juments bleues et noires.

XVI RUTS

To the right the summer dawn stirs the leaves and the mists and the sounds in this corner of the park, and the embankments on the left hold in their violet shade the thousand swift ruts of the wet road. Stream of enchantments. Yes it's true: floats laden with animals of gilded wood, masts, and multi-coloured sheets, to the great gallop of twenty dappled circus horses, and the children and men on their most amazing beasts; – twenty vehicles, embossed, dressed and blossoming like the coaches of old, or of fairy tales, filled with children dolled up for a suburban pastoral; – under their canopies of night dressing their ebony plumes, even coffins, drawn after the trot of the huge mares, blue and black.

XVII VILLES

Ce sont des villes! C'est un peuple pur qui se sont montés ces Alleghanys et ces Libans de rêve! Des chalets de cristal et de bois qui se meuvent sur des rails et des poulies invisibles. Les vieux cratères ceints de colosses et de palmiers de cuivre rugissent mélodieusement dans les feux. Des fêtes amoureuses sonnent sur les canaux pendus derrière les chalets. La chasse des carillons crie dans les gorges. Des corporations de chanteurs géants accourent dans des vêtements et des oriflammes éclatants comme la lumière des cimes. Sur les plates-formes au milieu des gouffres les Rolands sonnent leur bravoure. Sur les passerelles de l'abîme et les toits des auberges l'ardeur du ciel pavoise les mâts. L'écroulement des apothéoses rejoint les champs des hauteurs où les centaureses séraphiques évoluent parmi les avalanches. Au-dessus du niveau des plus hautes crêtes, une mer troublée par la naissance éternelle de Vénus, chargée de flottes orphéoniques et de la rumeur des perles et des conques précieuses; – la mer s'assombrit parfois avec des éclats mortels. Sur les versants, des moissons de fleurs, grandes comme nos armes et nos coupes, mugissent. Des cortèges de Mabs en robes rouges, opalines, montent des ravines. Là-haut, les pieds dans la cascade et les ronces, les cerfs tettent Diane. Les Bacchantes de banlieues sanglotent et la lune brûle et hurle. Vénus entre dans les cavernes des forgerons et des ermites. Des groupes de beffrois chantent les idées des peuples. Des châteaux bâtis en os sort la musique inconnue. Toutes les légendes évoluent et les élans se ruent dans les bourgs. Le paradis des orages s'effondre. Les sauvages dansent sans cesse la fête de la nuit. Et, une heure, je suis descendu dans

XVII CITIES

This is cities! This is a people who mounted for themselves the Alleghanies and Lebanons of dream! Chalets of crystal and wood that move on invisible rails and pulleys. The ancient craters surrounded by colossi and coppery palms roar melodiously in the flames. Feasts of love ring out over the canals that hang behind the chalets. The hunt of bells cries through the gorges. Corporations of gigantic singers run up with garments and banners as vivid as the light of summits. On platforms in the midst gulfs Rolands sound their valour. On the gangways over the abyss and the rooves of the inns, the ardour of the sky decks the masts with flags. The collapse of pinnacles meets the higher fields where seraphic centaureses move among the avalanches. Below the level of the highest crests, a sea disturbed by the eternal birth of Venus, charged with orpheonic fleets and the murmur of precious conch and pearl; – at times the sea darkens with deadly lights. On the slopes harvests of flowers as great as our weapons and chalices boom. Processions of Mabs in russet, opaline robes climb the ravines. Up there, with feet in the cascades and brambles, Diana gives suck to the stags. Suburban Bacchantes wail and the moon shrieks and burns. Venus enters the caves of blacksmiths and hermits. Groups of belfries sing of the ideas of the people. From castles made of bone comes a strange music. The legends evolve and elks stampede the villages. The paradise of storms collapses. Savages dance ceaselessly the feast of night. And one hour, I went down into the tumult of a Baghdad street where gatherings sang the joy of new labours, in a heavy breeze, moving around but unable to elude those incredible phantoms of the mountains where they would meet again.

What kind arms, what lovely hour will give me back that region from which my sleeps and my slightest movements come?

**le mouvement d'un boulevard de Bagdad où des compagnies
ont chanté la joie du travail nouveau, sous ue brise épaisse,
circulant sans pouvoir éluder les fabuleux fantômes des
monts où l'on a dû se retrouver.**

**Quels bons bras, quelle belle heure me rendront cette
région d'où viennent mes sommeils et mes moindres
mouvements?**

XVIII VAGABONDS

Pitoyable frère! Que d'atroces veillées je lui dus! "Je ne me saisisais pas ferveusement de cette entreprise. Je m'étais joué de son infirmité. Par ma faute nous retournerions an exil, en esclavage." Il me supposait un guignon et une innocence très bizarres, et il ajoutait des raisons inquiétantes.

Je répondais en ricanant à ce satanique docteur, et finissais par gagner la fenêtre. Je créais, par delà la campagne traversée par des bandes de musique rare, les fantômes du futur luxe nocturne.

Après cette distraction vaguement hygiénique, je m'étendais sur une paillasse. Et, presque chaque nuit, aussitôt endormi, le pauvre frère se levait, la bouche pourrie, les yeux arrachés, – tel qu'il se rêvait! – et me tirait dans la salle en hurlant son songe de chagrin idiot.

J'avais an effet, en toute sincérité d'esprit, pris l'engagement de le rendre à son état primitif de fils du soleil, – et nous errions, nourris du vin des cavernes et du biscuit de la route, moi pressé de trouver le lieu et la formule.

XVIII VAGABONDS

Pitiful brother! What excruciating nights he caused me! "I never did grab enthusiastically at this enterprise. I made a game of his weakness. By my mistake we could have returned to exile, to slavery." He implied that I was strangely unlucky, innocent, and would add disturbing reasons.

I would answer this satanic doctor with sneers, and end up going to the window. I would create, beyond a countryside intercrossed with bands of rare music, phantoms of the coming nocturnal wealth.

After this vaguely hygenic distraction, I would stretch out on a straw mattress. As soon as I was asleep, the poor brother would get up, his mouth decayed, his eyes torn out, – just as he dreamed himself! – and drag me into the hall, howling his dream of idiotic sorrow.

I had it's true, in all sincerity, undertaken to give him back his original state of child of the sun, – and we wandered, nourished by the wine of caverns and the biscuit of the road, me impatient to find the place and the formula.

XIX VILLES

L'acropole officielle outre les conceptions de la barbarie moderne les plus colossales. Impossible d'exprimer le jour mat produit par le ciel immuablement gris, l'éclat impérial des bâtisses, et la neige éternelle du sol. On a reproduit dans un goût d'énormité singulier toutes les merveilles classiques de l'architecture. J'assiste à des expositions de peinture dans des locaux vingt fois plus vastes qu'Hampton-Court. Quelle peinture! Un Nabuchodonosor norvégien a fait construire les escaliers des ministères; les subalternes que j'ai pu voir sont déjà plus fiers que des brahmanes, et j'ai tremblé à l'aspect des gardiens de colosses et officiers de constructions. Par le groupement des bâtiments, en squares, cours et terrasses fermées, on a évincé les cochers. Les parcs représentent la nature primitive travaillée par un art superbe. Le haut quartier a des parties inexplicables: un bras de mer, sans bateaux, roule sa nappe de grésil bleu entre des quais chargés de candélabres géants. Un pont court conduit à une poterne immédiatement sous le dôme de la Sainte-Chapelle. Ce dôme est une armature d'acier artistique de quinze mille pieds de diamètre environ.

Sur quelques points de passerelles de cuivre, des plates-formes, des escaliers qui contournent les halles et les piliers, j'ai cru pouvoir juger la profondeur de la ville! C'est le prodige don't je n'ai pu me rendre compte: quels sont les niveaux des autres quartiers sur ou sous l'acropole? Pour l'étranger de notre temps la reconnaissance est impossible. Le quartier commerçant est un circus d'un seul style, avec galeries à arcades. On ne voit pas de boutiques, mais la neige de la chaussée est écrasée; quelques nababs, aussi rares que les promeneurs d'un matin de dimanche à

XIX CITIES

The official acropolis outdoes the most colossal conceptions of modern barbarity. It's impossible to express the dull light produced by the immutable grey sky, the imperial splendour of the buildings, or the eternal snow on the ground. They have reproduced, in singularly outrageous taste, all the wonders of classical architecture. I attend exhibitions of paintings in places twenty times vaster than Hampton Court. Such painting! A Norwegian Nebuchadnezzar has built the staircases of the ministries; even the subordinates I saw were prouder than Brahmans, and I trembled at the look of the guardians of the colossi and the building foremen. By the arrangement of the buildings, in closed squares, courts and terraces, they have ousted the cabbies. The parks present primitive nature worked with marvellous art. Parts of the upper district are inexplicable, an arm of the sea, boatless, rolls its hail-blue sheet between quays covered with giant candelabra. A short bridge leads to a postern directly below the dome of the Holy Chapel. This dome is an artistic steel armature about fifteen thousand feet in diameter.

From some points on the copper footbridges, the platforms, the stairs that skirt the markets and the pillars, I thought I could judge the depth of the city! This was the wonder I couldn't work out: what about the other levels of districts above or below the acropolis? For the stanger in our time recognition is impossible. The commercial district is a circus in one style, with galleries of arcades. There are no shops to be seen, but the snow on the roads is trampled; some nabobs, as rare as pedestrians on a Sunday morning in London, head towards a stagecoach made of diamonds. A few red velvet divans: they serve polar drinks that vary in price from eight hundred to eight thousand rupees. As for the idea of looking for theatres in this circus, my response is maybe the shops contain

Londres, se dirigent vers une diligence de diaments. Quelques divans de velours rouge: on sert des boissons polaires don't le prix varie de huit cents à huit mille roupies. À l'idée de chercher des théâtres sur ce circus, je me répons que les boutiques doivent contenir des drames assez sombres? Je pense qu'il y a une police; mais la loi doit être tellement étrange, que je renonce à me faire une idée des aventuriers d'ici.

Le faubourg, aussi élégant qu'une belle rue de Paris, est favorisé d'un air de lumière; l'élément démocratique compte quelques cents âmes. Là encore, les maisons ne se suivent pas; le faubourg se perd bizarrement dans la campagne, le "Comté" qui remplit l'occident éternel des forêts et des plantations prodigieuses où les gentilshommes sauvages chassent leurs chroniques sous la lumière qu'on a créée.

dramas dismal enough? I think there is a police force; but the laws must be so strange that I give up trying to imagine the adventures of this place.

The suburbs, as elegant as a beautiful Paris street, are favoured with an air of light; the democratic element numbers some hundred souls. Here aswell, the houses aren't in order: the suburb gets strangely lost in the country, the "Country" which fills the eternal west with forests and prodigious plantations where misanthropic gentlemen chase their chronicles in a light of their own creation.

XX VEILLÉES

I.

C'est le repos éclairé , ni fièvre ni langueur, sur le lit ou sur le pré.

C'est l'ami ni ardent ni faible. L'ami.

C'est l'aimée ni tourmentante ni tourmentée. L'aimée.

L'air et le monde point cherchés. La vie.

– Était-ce donc ceci?

– Et le rêve fraîchit.

II.

L'éclairage revient à l'arbre de bâtisse. Des deux extrémités de la salle, décors quelconques, des élévations harmoniques se joignent. La muraille en face du veilleur est une succession psychologique de coupes de frises, de bandes atmosphériques, et d'accidences géologiques. – Rêve intense et rapide de groupes sentimentaux avec des êtres de tous les caractères parmi toutes les apparences.

III.

Les lampes et les tapis de la veillée font le bruit des vagues, la nuit, le long de la coque et autour du steerage.

La mer de la veillée, telle que les seins d'Amélie.

Les tapisseries, jusqu'à mi-hauteur, des taillis de dentelle teinte d'émeraude, où se jettent les tourterelles de la veillée.

XX VIGILS

I.

It is rest in the light, neither frenzy nor langour, on the bed or in a field.

It is the friend neither avid nor weak. The friend.

It is the beloved neither tormenting nor tormented. The beloved.

Air and the world not sought. Life.

– So was it really this?

– And the dream grew cold.

II.

The lightning comes back to the finial. From either end of the hall, a nondescript setting, harmonic elevations join. The wall facing the viewer is a phsychological succession of intersecting friezes, atmospheric strata and geological accidents. – A dreaming, intense and rapid, of sentimental groups with beings in all characters, through all appearances.

III.

The lamps and the carpets of the vigil make the sound of waves at night, along the hull and around the steerage.

The sea of the vigil, like Amélie's breasts.

Tapestries, hung half-way up, cospes of emerald-dyed lace, where the doves of the vigil plunge.

.....

.....

**La plaque du foyer noir, de réels soleils des grèves: ah!
puits des magies; seule vue d'aurore, cette fois.**

The black slab of the hearth, the actual suns of the shoreline: ah!
wells of magic; the only sight of dawn, this time.

XXI MYSTIQUE

Sur la pente du talus, les anges tournent leurs robes de laine dans les herbages d'acier et d'émeraude.

Des prés de flammes bondissent jusqu'au sommet du mamelon. À gauche le terreau de l'arête est piétiné par tous les homicides et toutes les batailles, et tous les bruits désastreux filent leur courbe. Derrière l'arête de droite la ligne des orientes, des progrès.

Et, tandis que la bande en haut du tableau est formée de la rumeur tournante et bondissante des conques des mers et des nuits humaines,

La douceur fleurie des étoiles et du ciel et du reste descend en face du talis, comme un panier, – contre notre face, et fait l'abîme fleurant et bleu là-dessous.

XXI MYSTIQUE

On the slope of the embankment angels whirl their woolen robes in pastures of steel and emerald.

Meadows of flames leap up to the summit of the hill. On the left the debris of the ridge is trampled by all the homicides and all the battles, and all disastrous sounds describe their curve. Behind the ridge on the right the line of orientes, of progress.

And while the band on top of the tableau is formed of the wheeling and leaping rumour of the conches of human oceans and nights,

The florid softness of the stars and the sky and the rest falls before the embankment, like a basket, – against our face, and turns the abyss below a flowering blue.

XXII AUBE

J'ai embrassé l'aube d'été.

Rien ne bougeait encore au front des palais. L'eau était morte. Les camps d'ombres ne quittaient pas la route du bois. J'ai marché, réveillant les haleines vives et tièdes, et les pierreries regardèrent, et les ailes se levèrent sans bruit.

La première entreprise fut, dans le sentier déjà empli de frais et blêmes éclats, une fleur qui me dit son nom.

Je ris au wasserfall blond qui s'échevela à travers les sapins: à la cime argentée je reconnus la déesse.

Alors je levai un à un les voiles. Dans l'allée, en agitant les bras. Par la plaine, où je l'ai dénoncée au coq. À la grand'ville, elle fuyait parmi les clochers et les dômes, et, courant comme un mendiant sur les quais de marbre, je la chassais.

En haut de la route, près d'un bois de lauriers, je l'ai entourée avec ses voiles amassés, et j'ai senti un peu son immense corps. L'aube et l'enfant tombèrent au bas du bois.

Au réveil il était midi.

XXII DAWN

I kissed the summer dawn.

Nothing stirred yet before the palaces. The waters were dead. The camps of shadows hadn't given up the woodland road. I walked, stirring warm and vivid breaths, and the gemstones watched, and wings went up soundlessly.

My first adventure, on the path already filled with cool and pallid lights, a flower told me her name.

I laughed at the blond waterfall, dishevelled though the firs: at its silvery height I recognised the goddess.

Then I lifted her veils one by one. On the path, waving my arms. Over the plain, where I betrayed her to the cock. To the city, she fled amongst the steeples and domes, and, running like a beggar over the marble quays, I hunted her.

Above the road, near the laurel thicket, I encircled her with her massed veils, and I felt a little of her immense body. The dawn and the child fell down at the base of the woods.

When I awoke, it was noon.

XXIII FLEURS

D'un gradin d'or, – parmi les cordons de soie, les gazes grises, les velours verts et les disques de cristal qui noircissent comme du bronze au soleil, – je vois la digitale s'ouvrir sur un tapis de filligranes d'argent, d'yeux et de chevelures.

Des pièces d'or jaune semées sur l'agate, des piliers d'acajou supportant un dôme d'émeraudes, des bouquets de satin blanc et de fines verges de rubis entourent la rose d'eau.

Tels qu'un dieu aux énormes yeux bleus et aux formes de neige, la mer et le ciel attirent aux terrasses de marbre la foule des jeunes et fortes roses.

XXIII FLOWERS

On a golden tier, – among silken cords, grey gauzes, green velvets and discs of crystal that blacken like bronze in the sun, – I see the digitalis opening in a carpet of silver filigree, of eyes and hair.

Agate studded with yellow-gold coins, mahogany pillars supporting a dome of emeralds, bunches of white satin and delicate sprays of rubies surround the water-rose.

Like a god with huge blue eyes and contours of snow, the sea and the sky lure to the marble terraces a throng of roses, young and strong.

XXIV
NOCTURNE VULGAIRE

Un souffle ouvre des brèches opératives dans les cloisons, – brouille le pivotement des toits rongés – disperse les limites des foyers, – éclipse les croisées.

Le long de la vigne, m'étant appuyé du pied à une gargouille, – je suis descendu dans ce carrosse don't l'époque est assez indiquée par les glaces convexes, les panneaux bombés et les sofas contournés. Corbillard de mon sommeil, isolé, maison de berger de ma niaiserie, le véhicule vire sur le gazon de la grande route effacée: et dans un défaut en haute de la glace de droite tournoient les blêmes figures lunaires, feuilles, seins.

– Un vert et un bleu très foncés envahissent l'image. Dételage aux environs d'une tache de gravier.

– Ici va-t-on siffler pour l'orage, et les Sodomes et les Solymes, et les bêtes féroces et les armées,

(– Postillon et bêtes de songe reprendront-ils sous les plus suffocantes futaies; pour m'enfordeur jusqu'aux yeux dans la source de soie.)

– Et nous envoyer, fouettés à travers les eaux clapotantes et les boissons répandues, rouler sur l'aboi des dogues . . .

– Un souffle disperse les limites du foyer.

XXIV
COMMON NOCTURNE

One breath opens operative breaches in the walls, – blurs the pivots of crumbling roofs, – dispels the limits of the hearths, – eclipses the windows.

Along the vine, resting my foot on a gargoyle, – I climbed down into this coach whose period is sufficiently indicated by its convex glass, bulging panels and contorted upholstery. Hearse of my sleep (alone), shepherd's house of my silliness, the vehicle veers on the turf of the obliterated highway: and in a flaw in the top of the right window pale lunar figures revolve, leaves, breasts.

– Green and blue, both very dark, invade the picture. Unhitching near a patch of gravel.

– Here we'll whistle for the storm, and the Sodoms and Solymas and the savage animals and the armies,

(– Riders and beasts of dreaming will go on into the most stifling forests; to sink me to the eyelids in the silken spring.)

– And we're sent, flogged across the lapping waters and spilled drinks, rolling over the baying of mastiffs . . .

– One breath dispels the limits of the hearth.

**XXV
MARINE**

**Les chars d'argent et de cuivre –
Les proues d'acier et d'argent –
Battent l'écume, –
Soulèvent les souches des ronces.
Les courants de la lande,
Et les ornières immenses du reflux,
Filent circulairement vers l'est,
Vers les piliers de la forêt,
Vers le fûts de la jetée,
Dont l'angle est heurté par des tourbillons de lumière.**

**XXV
MARINE**

Chariots of silver and of copper –
Prows of steel and of silver –
Beating the foam, –
Heaving the stumps of the brambles.
The currents of the downs,
And the immense ruts of the backflow,
Turn in circles to the east,
To the pillars of the forests,
To the boles of the jetty,
In an angle crashed by whirlwinds of light.

XXVI
FÊTE D'HIVER

La cascade sonne derrière les huttes d'opéra-comique. Des girandoles se prolongent, dans les vergers et les allées voisins du méandre, – les verts et les rouges du couchant. Nymphes d'Horace coiffées au Premier Empire. – Rondes Sibériennes, Chinoises de Boucher.

XXVI
WINTER FÊTE

The waterfall sounds behind the comic-opera huts. Candlebombs prolong, through the orchards and alleys near the meander, – the greens and reds of sunset. Nymphs out of Horace in First Empire coiffures. – Siberian dances, Boucher's Chinese ladies.

XXVII
ANGOISSE

Se peut-il qu'Elle me fasse pardonner les ambitions continuellement écrasées, – qu'une fin aisée répare les âges d'indigence, – qu'un jour de succès nous endorme sur la honte de notre inhabileté fatale?

(Ô palmes! diamant! – Amour! force! – plus haut que toutes joies et gloires! – de toutes façons, partout, – Démon, dieu, – jeunesse de cet être-ci: moi!)

Que les accidents de féerie scientifique et des mouvements de fraternité sociale soient chéris comme restitution progressive de la franchise première? . . .

Mais la Vampire qui nous rend gentils commande que nous nous amusions avec ce qu'elle nous laisse, ou qu'autrement nous soyons plus drôles.

Rouler aux blessures, par l'air lassant et la mer; aux supplices, par le silence des eaux et de l'air meurtriers; aux tortures qui rient, dans leur silence atrocement houleux.

XXVI
ANGUISH

Is it possible that She will have to forgive my continually crushed ambitions, – that an easy end will repair these ages of penury, – that one day of success will send us to sleep on the shame of our fatal incompetence?

(O palms! diamond! – Love! strength! – higher than all joys and glories! – in every way, everywhere, – Demon, god, – youth of this being: myself!)

That the accidents of scientific enchantment and the movements of social brotherhood will be cherished as a progressive restitution of the original openness? . . .

But the Vampire who makes us kind commands that we amuse ourselves with what she leaves us, or otherwise be funnier.

Riding on wounds, through the tiresome air and the sea, tormented, by the silence of the waters and the air's murder, by tortures that laugh in the turbulence of their atrocious silence.

XXVIII MÉTROPOLITAIN

Du détroit d'indigo aux mers d'ossian, sur le sable rose et orange qu'a lavé la ciel vineux viennent de monter et de se croiser des boulevards de cristal habités incontinent par de jeunes familles pauvre qui s'alimentent chez les fruitiers. Rien de riche. – La ville!

Du désert de bitume fuient droit en déroute avec les nappes de brumes échelonnées en bandes affreuses au ciel qui se recourbe, se recule, et descend formé de la plus sinistre fumée noire que puisse faire l'Océan en deuil, les casques, les roues, les barques, les croupes. – La bataille!

Lève la tête: ce pont de bois, arqué; les derniers potagers de Samarie; ces masques enluminés sous la lanterne fouettée par la nuit froide; l'ondine niaise à la robe bruyante, au bas de la rivière; les crânes lumineux dans les plants de pois, – et les autres fantasmagories, – la campagne.

Des routes bordées de grilles et de murs, contenant à peine leurs bosquets, et les atroces fleurs qu'on appellerait cœurs et sœurs, Damas damnant de longueur, – possessions de féériques aristocraties ultra-Rhénaes, Japonaises, Guaranies, propres encore à recevoir la musique des anciens, – et il y a des auberges qui pour toujours n'ouvrent déjà plus; – il y a des princesses, et, si tu n'es pas trop accablé, l'étude des astres, – le ciel.

Le matin où, avec Elle, vous vous débattîtes parmi les éclats de neige, les lèvres vertes, les glaces, les drapeaux noirs et les rayons bleus, et les parfums pourpres du soleil des pôles – ta force.

XXVIII METROPOLITAN

From the indigo strait to the oceans of Ossian, on the pink and orange sand washed by an inebriant sky boulevards have risen and crossed instantly inhabited by poor young families who stock up at the greengrocers. Nothing too rich. – The city!

Fleeing from the desert of bitumen, routed through blankets of mist spreading in hideous bands across a sky that curves, shrinks back, and descends formed of the most sinister black smoke that the grieving ocean produces, helmets, wheels, barks, horse's flanks. – The battle!

Lift your head: that arched wooden bridge; the last vegetable gardens of Samaria; those illuminated masks under the lantern whipped by the cold night; the stupid water nymph in a noisy dress at the bottom of the river; luminous skulls among the rows of peas, – and other phantasmagoria, – the country.

The roads bordered with iron grilles and walls, barely containing their groves, and those atrocious flowers called heart and sister, Damask damning in tedium, – possessions of magical aristocracies ultra-Rhenish, Japanese, Guaranian, still fit to receive the music of the ancients, – and there are inns that are never open any more; there are princesses, and, if you're not too overwhelmed, the study of the stars, – the sky.

The morning when, with Her, you struggled in the gleaming snow, the green lips, the ice, the black drapes, the blue lightbeams, and the purple perfumes of the polar sun – your strength.

XXIX BARBARE

**Bien après les jours et les saisons, et les êtres et les pays,
Le pavillon en viande saignante sur la soie des mers et des
fleurs arctiques; (elles n'existent pas.)
Remis des vieilles fanfares d'héroïsme – qui nous
attaquent encore le cœur et la tête – loin des anciens
assassins.
– Oh! Le pavillon en viande saignante sur la soie des mers
et des fleurs arctiques; (elles n'existent pas.)
Douceurs!
Les brasiers, pleuvant aux rafales de givre, – Douceurs! –
les feux à la pluie du vent de diamants jetée par le cœur
terrestre éternellement carbonisé pour nous. – Ô monde! –
(Loin des vieilles retraites et des vieilles flammes, qu'on
entend, qu'on sent,)
Les brasiers et les écumes. La musique, virement des
gouffres et choc des glaçons aux astres.
Ô Douceurs, ô monde, ô musique! Et là, les larmes
blanches, bouillantes, – ô douceurs! – et la voix féminine
arrivée au fond des volcans et des grottes arctiques.
Le pavillon . . .**

XXIX BARBARIAN

Long after the days and the seasons, and the people and the
countries,
The banner of meat bleeding over the silk of seas and arctic
flowers; (they do not exist.)
Back from the old fanfares of heroism – that still attack our heart
and mind – far from the old assassins.
Oh! the banner of meat bleeding over the silk of seas and arctic
flowers; (they do not exist.)
Pleasures!
The infernos raining in squalls of frost – Pleasures! – Fires in the
rain of a diamond wind, thrown from the earth's heart eternally
carbonised for us. – O world! –
(Far from the old retreats and the old flames, those we hear, those
we feel,)
Infernos and foam. Music, heave of gulfs and smash of icicles on
stars.
– O Pleasures, o world, o music! And there, forms, sweats, hair
and eyes, floating. And white tears boiling, – o pleasures! – and the
female voice reaching to the bottom of the volcanos and the arctic
caves.
The banner . . .

XXX PROMONTOIRE

L'aube d'or et la soirée frissonnante trouvent notre brick en large en face de cette villa et de ses dépendances, qui forment un promontoire aussi étendu que l'Épire et le Péloponnèse ou que la grande île du Japon, ou que l'Arabie! Des fanums qu'éclaire la rentrée des théories; d'immenses vues de la défense des côtes modernes; des dunes illustrées de chaudes fleurs et de bacchanales; de grands canaux de Carthage et des embankments d'une Venise louche; de molles éruptions d'Etnas et des crevasses de fleurs et d'eaux des glaciers; des lavoirs entourés de peupliers d'Allemagne; des talus de parcs singuliers penchant des têtes d'Arbres du Japon; et les façades circulaires des "Royal" ou des "Grand" de Scarborough ou de Brooklyn; et leurs railways flanquent, creusent, surplombent les dispositions de cet hôtel, choisies dans l'histoire des plus élégantes et des plus colossales constructions de l'Italie, de l'Amérique et de l'Asie, dont les fenêtres et les terrasses, à présent pleines d'éclairages, de boissons et de brises riches, sont ouvertes à l'esprit des voyageurs et des nobles, – qui permettent, aux heures du jour, à toutes les tarentelles des côtes, – et même aux ritournelles des vallées illustres de l'art, de décorer merveillusement les façades du Palais-Promontoire.

XXX PROMONTORY

Golden dawn and shivering evening find our brig lying to before this villa and its outbuildings, which form a promontory as extensive as Epirus and the Peloponnese, or the great island of Japan, or Arabia! Fanes that glow from the return of processions; immense views of modern coastline defenses; dunes illustrated with blazing flowers and bacchanals; the great canals of Carthage and the embankments of sleazy Venice; the muffled eruptions of Etnas and the crevasses of flowers and glacial waters; washhouses surrounded by German poplars; the slopes of peculiar parks tilting the heads of the Trees of Japan; and the circular façades of the "Royals" or the "Grands" of Scarborough or Brooklyn; and their railways flanking, ploughing, overhanging the layout of this hotel, chosen from the history of most elegant and most colossal constructions of Italy, America and Asia, and whose windows and terraces, at present full of lights, drinks and lush breezes, open to the spirit of travellers and nobles, – who permit, in the daytime, all the tarantellas of the coast, – and even the ritornellos of the illustrious valleys of art to marvellously deck the façades of the Promontory Palace.

XXXI SCÈNES

L'ancienne Comédie poursuit ses accords et divise ses idylles:

Des boulevards de tréteaux.

Un long pier en bois d'un bout à l'autre d'un champ rocailleux où la foule barbare évolue sous les arbres dépouillés.

Dans des corridors de gaze noire, suivant le pas des promeneurs aux lanternes et aux feuilles,

Des oiseaux comédiens s'abattent sur un ponton de maçonnerie mû par l'archipel couvert des emarcations des spectateurs.

Des scènes lyriques, accompagnées de flûte et de tambour, s'inclinent dans des réduits ménagés sur les plafonds autour des salons de clubs modernes ou des salles de l'Orient ancien.

La féerie manœuvre au sommet d'un amphithéâtre couronné de taillis, – ou s'agite et module pour les Béotiens, dans l'ombre des futaies mouvants, sur l'arête des cultures.

L'opéra-comique se divise sur notre scène à l'arête d'intersection de dix cloisons dressées de la galerie aux feux.

XXXI SCENES

The old Comedy pursues its conventions and divides its idylls:

The boulevards of the boards.

A long wooden pier from one end of the rocky field to the other where the barbarous mob move about under the denuded trees.

In the corridors of black gauze, following the footsteps of the walkers with their lanterns and leaves,

Bird actors swoop down on the masonry pontoon changed by the covered archipelago of boatloads of spectators.

Lyric scenes accompanied by the flute and the drum, bow in cubbyholes contrived in the ceilings around the modern club rooms and the ancient Oriental halls.

The magic manœuvres at the top of an amphitheatre crowned with thickets, – or quivers and modulates for the Boeotians, in the shade of unsettled forests, on the crest of the cultivation.

The comic opera divides on our stage at the intersecting edge of ten partitions hung from the gallery to the footlights.

XXXII SOIR HISTORIQUE

En quelque soir, par exemple, que se trouve le touriste naïf, retiré de nos horreurs économiques, la main d'un maître anime le clavecin des prés; on joue aux cartes au fond de l'étang, miroir évocateur des reines et des mignonnes; on a les saintes, les voiles, et les fils d'harmonie, et les chromatismes légendaires, sur le couchant.

Il frissonne au passage des chasses et des hordes. La comédie goutte sur les tréteaux de gazon. Et l'embarras des pauvres et des faibles sur ces plans stupides!

À sa vision esclave, l'Allemagne s'échafaude vers des lunes; les déserts tartares s'éclairent; les révoltes anciennes grouillent dans le centre du Céleste Empire; par les escaliers et les fauteuils de rocs un petit monde blême et plat, Afrique et Occidents, va s'édifier. Puis un ballet de mers et de nuits connues, une chimie sans valeur, et des mélodies impossibles.

La même magie bourgeoise à tous les points où la malle nous déposera! Le plus élémentaire physicien sent qu'il n'est plus possible de se soumettre à cette atmosphère personnelle, brume de remords physiques, dont la constatation est déjà une affliction.

Non! Le moment de l'étuve, des mers enlevées, des embrasements souterrains, de la planète emportée, et des exterminations conséquentes, certitudes si peu malignement indiquées dans la Bible et par les Nornes et qu'il sera donné à l'être sérieux de surveiller. – Cependant ce ne sera point un effet de légende!

XXXII HISTORIC EVENING

In whatever evening, for example, the simple tourist finds himself, retired from our economic horrors, a master's hand awakens the harpsichord of the fields; they are playing cards at the bottom of the pond, mirror that evokes queens and sweethearts; there are saints, veils, and the threads of harmony, and the legendary chromatums, in the sunset.

He shudders at the passing hunts and hordes. Comedy drips on the turf stage. And the predicament of the poor and the weak on those stupid planes!

In his captive vision, Germany amasses towards moons; Tartar deserts shine; old revolts teem in the heart of the Celestial Empire; on stairways and armchairs of rock a little world, pale and flat, Africa and Occidents, will be built. Then a ballet of familiar oceans and nights, a worthless chemistry, and impossible melodies.

The same bourgeois magic wherever the mail-train drops us! The most basic physicist knows that it is no longer possible to submit to this personal atmosphere, fog of physical remorse, which to acknowledge is already an affliction.

No! The moment of the oven, of oceans cleared, of subterranean blazes, of the planet swept away, and the subsequent exterminations, certainties indicated with little malice in the Bible and by the Norns and which will be up to serious beings to observe. – However there will be nothing legendary about it!

XXXIII MOUVEMENT

**Le mouvement de lacet sur la berge des chutes du fleuve,
Le gouffre à l'étambot,
La célérité de la rampe,
L'énorme passade du courant
Mènent par les lumières inouïes
Et la nouveauté chimique
Le voyageurs entourés des trombes du val
Et du strom.**

**Ce sont les conquérants du monde
Cherchant la fortune chimique personnelle;
Le sport et le confort voyagent avec eux;
Ils emmènent l'éducation
Des races, des classes et des bêtes, sur ce vaisseau
Repos et vertige
À la lumière diluvienne,
Aux terribles soirs d'étude.**

**Car de la causerie parmi les appareils, le sang, les fleurs, le
feu, les bijoux,
Des comptes agités à ce bord fuyard,
– On voit, roulant comme une digue au delà de la route
hydraulique motrice,
Monstrueux, s'éclairant sans fin, – leur stock d'études;
Eux chassés dans l'extase harmonique,
Et l'héroïsme de la découverte.**

**Aux accidents atmosphériques les plus surprenants,
Un couple de jeunesse s'isole sur l'arche,
– Est-ce ancienne sauvagerie qu'on pardonne? –
Et chante et se poste.**

XXXIII MOTION

The shifting motion on the bank of the river falls,
The gulf at the stern-post,
The celerity of the slope,
The vast passage of the current
Take by unimaginable lights
And chemical recency
Travellers surrounded by the waterspouts of the valley
And the strom.

These are the conquerors of the world
Seeking their personal chemical fortune;
Sport and comfort voyage with them;
They take the education
Of races, of classes and of animals, on this vessel
Repose and vertigo
To the diluvian light
Of terrible nights of study.

For from the chat among the instruments, the blood, the flowers, the
fire, the jewels,
The restless calculations aboard this runaway,
– You see, going like a dyke beyond the hydro-propulsive road,
Monstrous, endlessly lit up, – their stock of studies;
They driven to harmonic ecstasy,
And the heroism of discovery.

Among the most astonishing atmospheric accidents,
A young couple stand alone on the ark,
– Is it primitive separateness that people pardon? –
And sing and stand guard.

**XXXIV
BOTTOM**

La réalité étant trop épineuse pour mon grand caractère, – je me trouvai néanmoins chez ma dame, en gros oiseau gris-bleu s’essorant vers les moulures du plafond et traînant l’aile dans les ombres de la soirée.

Je fus, au pied baldachin supportant ses bijoux adorés et ses chefs-d’œuvre physiques, un gros ours aux gencives violettes et au poil chenu de chagrin, les yeux aux cristaux et au argent des consoles.

Tout se fit ombre et aquarium ardent.

Au matin, – aube de juin batailleuse, – je courus aux champs, âne, claironnant et brandissant mon grief, jusqu’à ce que les Sabines de la banlieue vinrent se jeter à mon poitrail.

**XXXIV
BOTTOM**

Reality being too thorny for my great personality, – I found myself nevertheless at my lady’s, a huge grey-blue bird soaring up to the mouldings of the ceiling and trailing a wing in the shadows of evening.

I was, at the foot of the baldachin supporting her beloved jewels and her bodily masterpieces, a huge bear with violet gums and a coat hoary with sorrow, eyes on the crystal and silver of the sideboards.

All became shadow and fervent aquarium.

In the morning, – bellicose dawn of June, – I ran into the fields, a donkey, trumpeting and brandishing my grief, until the Sabines of the suburbs came and threw themselves on my neck.

XXXV

H

Toutes les monstruosités violent les gestes atroces d'Hortense. Sa solitude est la mécanique érotique; sa lassitude, la dynamique amoureuse. Sous la surveillance d'une enfance, elle a été, à des époques nombreuses, l'ardente hygiène des races. Sa porte est ouverte à la misère. Là, la moralité des êtres actuels se décorpore en sa passion ou en son action. – Ô terrible frisson des amours novices sur le sol sanglant et par l'hydrogène clartéux! trouvez Hortense.

XXXV

H

Every monstrosity violates the atrocious gestures of Hortense. Her solitude is erotic mechanics; her lassitude, the loving dynamic. Under the surveillance of childhood, she has been, in numerous ages, the burning hygiene of the races. Her door is open to misery. There, the morality of the beings present is disembodied in her passion or in her action. – O terrible shudder of novice loves on the bloody ground and the hydrogen clarity! find Hortense.

XXXVI
DÉVOTION

À ma Sœur Lousie Vanaen de Voringhem: – sa cornette bleue tournée à la mer du Nord. – Pour les naufragés.

À ma sœur Léonie Auboïs d'Ashby. Baou! – l'herbe d'été bourdonnante et puante. – Pour la fièvre des mères et des enfants.

À Lulu, – démon – qui a conservé un goût pour les oratoires du temps des Amies et de son éducation incomplète. Pour les hommes. À madame***.

À l'adolescent que je fus. À ce saint vieillard, ermitage ou mission.

À l'esprit des pauvres. Et à un très haut clergé.

Aussi bien à tout culte en telle place de culte mémoriale et parmi tels événements qu'il faille se rendre, suivant les aspirations du moment ou bien notre propre vice sérieux.

Ce soir, à Circeto des hautes glaces, grasse comme le poisson, et enluminée comme les dix mois de la nuit rouge – (son cœur ambre et spunk), – pour ma seule prière muette comme ces régions de nuit et précédant des bravoures plus violentes que ce chaos polaire.

À tout prix et avec tous les airs, même dans des voyages métaphysiques. – Mais plus *alors*.

XXXVI
DEVOTION

To sister Louise Vanaen de Voringhem: – her blue cornet turned toward the North Sea. – For the shipwrecked.

To sister Léonie Auboïs d'Ashby. Baow! – the buzzing, stinking summer grass. – For the fever of mothers and children.

To Lulu, – demon – who has kept a taste for the oratories of the time of *Les Amies* and for her incomplete education. For men. – To madame***.

To the adolescent that I was. To that holy old man, hermitage or mission.

To the spirit of the poor. And to a very high clergy.

Also to every cult in any place of memorial cult and among any events where one must surrender, according to the aspirations of the moment or indeed one's own serious vice.

This evening, to Circeto of the icy heights, fat as a fish, and illuminated like the ten months of the red night – (her heart amber and spunk), – for my only prayer as silent as those regions of night and precedent of more violent bravuras than this polar chaos.

At all costs, in any air, even on metaphysical journeys. – But *then* no more.

XXXVII DÉMOCRATIE

“Le drapeau va au paysage immonde, et notre patois étouffe le tambour.

“Aux centres nous alimenterons la plus cynique prostitution. Nous massacrerons le révoltes logiques.

“Aux pays poivrés et détrempés! – au service des plus monstrueuses exploitations industrielles ou militaires.

“Au revoir ici, n’importe où. Conscrits du bon vouloir, nous aurons la philosophie féroce; ignorants pour la science, roués pour le confort; la crevaision pour le monde qui va. C’est la vraie marche. En avant, route!”

XXXVII DEMOCRACY

“The flag goes with the vile landscape, and our lingo muffles the drum.

“In the centres we’ll nourish the most cynical prostitution. We’ll massacre logical revolts.

“To the spicy and drenched lands! – in the service of the most monstrous industrial or military exploitations.

“Goodbye here, doesn’t matter where. Conscrits of good will, ours will be a ferocious philosophy; ignorant to science, cunning for comfort; let the rest of the world drop dead. This is the real advance. Forward, march!”

**XXXVIII
FAIRY**

Pour Hélène se conjurèrent les sèves ornamentales dans les ombres vierges et les clartés impassibles dans le silence astral. L'ardeur de l'été fut confiée à des oiseaux muets et l'indolence requise à une barque de deuils sans prix par des anses d'amours morts et de parfums affaissés.

Après le moment de l'air des bûcheronnes à la rumeur du torrent sous la ruine des bois, de la sonnerie des bestiaux à l'écho des vals, et de cris des steppes.

Pour l'enfance d'Hélène frissonnèrent les fourrés et les ombres, et le sein des pauvres, et les légendes du ciel.

Et ses yeux et sa danse supérieurs encore aux éclats précieux, aux influences froides, au plaisir du décor et de l'heure uniques.

**XXXVIII
FAIRY**

For Helen ornamental saps conspired through the virgin shadows and impassive lights in astral silence. The fervour of summer was confided to mute birds and the necessary apathy to a costless funeral boat through the coves of dead loves and collapsed perfumes.

After the moment of the woodswoman's song to the rumble of the torrent below the ruin of the wood, of the cattle's bells to the echo of the vales, and the cries of the steppes.

For Helen's childhood thickets and shadows trembled, and the breast of the poor, and the legends of heaven.

And her eyes and her dance, superior even to the precious beams, to cold influences, to the pleasure of the unique place and the unique hour.

XL GUERRE

Enfant, certains ciels ont affiné mon optique: tous les caractères nuancèrent ma physionomie. Les phénomènes s'émurent. À présent, l'inflexion éternelle des moments et l'infini des mathématiques me chassent par ce monde où je subis tous les succès civils, respecté de l'enfance étrange et des affections énormes. Je songe à une guerre, de droit ou de force, de logique bien imprévue.

C'est aussi simple qu'une phrase musicale.

XL WAR

As a child, certain skies sharpened my perspective: all the characters nuanced my face. The phenomena were roused. Now, the eternal inflection of moments and the infinity of mathematics hunts me through this world where I meet every civil honour, respected by strange children and enormous affections. I dream of a war, of right or of force, of quite unexpected logic.

It's as simple as a musical phrase.

XL GENIE

Il est l'affection et le présent puisqu'il a fait la maison ouverte à l'hiver écumeux et à rumeur de l'été, lui qui a purifié les boissons et les aliments, lui qui est le charme des lieux fuyants et le délice surhumaine des stations. Il est l'affection et l'avenir, la force et l'amour que nous, debout dans les rages et les ennuis, nous voyons passer dans le ciel de tempête et les drapeaux d'extase.

Il est l'amour, mesure parfaite et réinventée, raison merveilleuse et imprévue, et l'éternité: machine aimée des qualités fatales. Nous avons tous eu l'épouvante de sa concession et de la nôtre: ô jouissance de notre santé, élan de nos facultés, affection égoïste et passion pour lui, lui qui nous aime pour sa vie infinie...

Et nous nous le rappelons et il voyage ... Et si l'Adoration s'en va, sonne, sa promesse sonne: "Arrière ces superstitions, ces anciens corps, ces ménages et ces âges. C'est cette époque-ci qui a sombré!"

Il ne s'en ira pas, il ne redescendra pas d'un ciel, il n'accomplira pas la rédemption des colères de femmes et des gaietés des hommes et de tout ce péché: car c'est fait, lui étant, et étant aimé.

Ô ses souffles, ses têtes, ses courses: la terrible célérité de la perfection des formes et de l'action!

Ô fécondité de l'esprit et immensité de l'univers!

Son corps! le dégagement rêvé, le brisement de la grâce croisée de violence nouvelle!

Sa vue, sa vue! tous les agenouillages anciens et les leines relevés à sa suite.

Son jour! l'abolition de toutes souffrances sonores et mouvantes dans la musique plus intense.

XL GENIE

He is affection and the present because he has opened the house to foamy winter and the rumour of summer, he who purified food and drink, he who is the charm of elusive places and the superhuman delight of stations. He is affection and the future, the strength and love that we see, standing in rage and boredom, passing in the stormy sky through banners of ecstasy.

He is love, perfect measure and reinvention, reason wonderful and unexpected, and eternity: beloved engine for the qualities of fate. We have all known the terror of his concession and of our own: o delight in our health, impetus of our faculties, selfish affection and passion for him, he who loves us for his infinite life...

And we call him back to us and he journeys... And if Adoration goes, sounding, his promise sounds: "Away these superstitions, these old bodies, these couples, and these ages. It's the epoch that has sunk!"

He wont go away, he will not redescend from any heaven, he will not achieve the redemption of women's rage nor the cheerfulness of men nor all of this sin: because it is, he is, and is loved.

O his breaths, his heads, his running: the terrible speed in the perfection of form and action!

O fecundity of the spirit and immensity of the universe!

His body! the dream of disengagement, the smashing of grace intersecting with a new violence!

The view, the sight of him! all the old kneeling and pain *lifted* as he passes.

His day! the abolition of all resounding and fluid suffering through more intense music.

His step! migrations vaster than ancient invasions.

O He and we! a pride more benevolent than wasted charities.

O world! and the pure chant of new sorrows!

Son pas! les migrations plus énormes que les anciennes invasions.

Ô Lui et nous! l'orgueil plus bienveillant que les charités perdues.

Ô monde! et le chant clair des malheurs nouveaux!

Il nous a connus tous et nous a tous aimés. Sachons, cette nuit d'hiver, de cap en cap, du pôle tumultueux au château, de la foule à la plage, de regards en regards, forces et sentiments las, le héler et le voir, et le renvoyer, et, sous les marées et au haut des déserts de neige, suivre ses vues, se souffles, son corps, son jour.

He has known us all and loved us. Take heed, this winter night, from cape to cape, from turbulent pole to chateau, from the throng to the beach, from look to look, strengths and feelings spent, to hail and see, and to expel, and, beneath the tides and high on the deserts of snow, follow his images, his breaths, his body, his day.

**XLI
JEUNESSE**

**I
DIMANCHE**

Les calculs de côté, l'inévitable descente du ciel et la visite des souvenirs et la séance des rythmes occupent la demeure, la tête et le monde de l'esprit.

– Un cheval défile sur le turf suburbaine et le long des cultures et des boisements, percé par la peste carbonique. Une misérable femme de drame, queque part dans le monde, soupire après des abandons improbables. Les desperadoes languissent après l'orage, l'ivresse et les blessures. De petits enfants étouffent des malédictions le long des rivières.

Reprenons l'étude au bruit de l'œuvre dévorante qui se rassemble et remonte dans le masses.

**II
SONNET**

***Homme* de constitution ordinaire, le chair n'était-elle pas un fruit pendu dans le verger, ô journées enfantes! le corps un trésor à prodiguer; ô aimer, le péril ou la force de Psyche? La terre avait des versants fertiles en princes et en artistes, et la descendance et la race nous poussaient aux crimes et aux deuils: le monde, votre fortune et votre péril. Mais à présent, ce labeur comblé, toi, tes calculs, toi, tes impatiences, ne sont plus que votre danse et votre voix, non fixées et point forcées, quoique d'un double événement d'invention et de succès une raison, en l'humanité fraternelle et discrète par l'univers sans images; – la force et le droit réfléchissent la danse et la voix à présent seulement appréciées...**

**XLI
YOUTH**

**I
SUNDAY**

Calculations aside, the inevitable descent of the heavens, visiting memories and the séance of rhythms occupy the house, the head and the world of the mind.

– A horse bolts across the suburban turf past cultivation and woodland, full of carbonic plague. A miserable woman of drama, in some part of the world, sighs after unlikely abandon. Desperadoes hang out for storm, ecstasy and injuries. Small children stifle their curses along the rivers.

Let's resume our studies to the sound of unsatiabable work gathering and rising in the masses.

**II
SONNET**

Man of ordinary constitution, was the flesh not a fruit hanging in the orchard, o infant days! the body a treasure to lavish; o to love, the peril or the strength of Psyche? The earth had slopes fertile with princes and artists, and descent and the race drove us to crimes and grief: the earth our fortune and our peril. But now, that labour fulfilled, you, your calculations, you, your impatience, no more than your dancing and your voice, not fixed and not forced, although the double occurrence of invention and success is a reason, humanity fraternal and discrete in an imageless universe; – strength and right reflect in dance and voice that which the present solely appreciates...

III
VINGT ANS

Les voix instructives exilées ... L'ingénuité physique amèrement rassise ... Adagio. Ah! l'égoïsme infini de l'adolescence, l'optimisme studieux: que le monde était plein de fleurs cet été! Les airs et les formes mourant ... Un chœur, pour calmer l'impuissance et l'absence! Un chœur de verres de mélodies nocturnes ... En effet les nerfs vont vite chasser.

IV

Tu en es encore à la tentation d'Anthony. L'ébat du zèle écourté, les tics d'orgueil puéril, l'affaiblissement et l'effroi. Mais tu te mettras à ce travail: toutes les possibilités harmoniques et architecturales s'émouvront autour de ton siège. Des êtres parfaits, imprévus, s'offriront à tes expériences. Dans tes environs affluera rêveusement la curiosité d'anciennes foules et de luxes oisifs. Ta mémoire et tes sens ne seront que la nourriture de ton impulsion créatrice. Quand au monde, quand tu sortiras, que sera-t-il devenu? En tout cas, rien des apparences actuelles.

III
TWENTY YEARS OLD

Instructive voices exiled ... Physical ingenuity bitterly composed ... Adagio. Ah! the infinite egotism of adolescence, the studious optimism: how the earth was full of flowers that summer! Airs and forms dying ... A choir, to calm impotence and absence! A choir of glasses of nocturnal melodies ... In fact the nerves will soon go hunting.

IV

You haven't got past the temptation of Anthony. The antics of arrested zeal, the itchings of peurile pride, the weakening and the terror. But you will put this to work: all harmonious and architectural possibilities will stir around your seat. Perfect beings, unforeseen, offering themselves for your experience. The curiosity of ancient throngs and idle wealth will emerge around you. Your memory and your senses will be the nourishment of your creative impulses. As for the world, when you leave it, what will it become? In any case, nothing of its present appearance.

XLII SOLDE

À vendre ce que les Juifs n'ont pas vendu, ce que noblesse ni crime n'ont goûté, ce qu'ignore l'amour maudit et la probité infernale des masses; ce que le temps ni la science n'ont pas à reconnaître:

Les Voix reconstituées; l'éveil fraternel de toutes les énergies chorales et orchestrales et leurs applications instantanées; l'occasion, unique, de dégager nos sens!

À vendre les corps sans prix, hors de toute race, de tout monde, de tout sexe, de toute descendance! Les richesses jaillissant à chaque démarche! Solde de diamants sans contrôle!

À vendre l'anarchie pour les masses; la satisfaction irrépressible pour les amateurs supérieurs; la mort atroce pour les fidèles et les amants!

À vendre les habitations et les migrations, sports, féeries et comforts parfaits, et le bruit, le mouvement et l'avenir qu'ils font!

À vendre les applications de calcul et les sauts d'harmonie inouïs. Les trouvailles et les termes non soupçonnés, possession immédiate.

Élan insensé et infini aux splendeurs invisibles, aux délices insensibles, et ses secrets affolants pour chaque vice et sa gaïté effrayante pour la foule.

À vendre les corps, les voix, l'immense opulence inquestionable, ce qu'on ne vendra jamais. Les vendeurs ne sont pas à bout de solde! Les voyageurs n'ont pas à rendre leur commission de sitôt!

XLII SALE

For sale what the Jews haven't sold, what neither nobility nor crime have tasted, what is unknown to execrable love and the infernal probity of the masses; what neither time nor science need recognise:

Voices reinstated; the fraternal awakening of all choral and orchestral energies and their instant application; the occasion, unique, for the release of our senses!

For sale priceless bodies, beyond any race, any world, any sex, any lineage! Riches gushing at every step! Unchecked sale of diamonds!

For sale anarchy for the masses; irrepressible satisfaction for exceptional amateurs; excruciating death for the faithful and lovers!

For sale housing and migrations, sports, perfect enchantments and comforts, and the noise, motion and future they make!

For sale the industry of calculation and the incredible leaps of harmony. Discoveries and unheard-of terms, immediate possession.

Insane and unlimited flight towards invisible splendours, insensible delights, and its maddening secrets for every vice and its fearsome gaiety for the mob.

For sale bodies, voices, immense unquestionable wealth, that which will never be sold. The salesmen are not through with the sale! Travellers won't yield their commission for quite some time!

FICTION

Metamorphosis
Unfinished Letters

by **Dan Spielman**

I.

Nothing could bear it secretly enough. If only to grant directions – that is, to say: “Go and be written and thus make your own way from the conflagration inside my mind.”, I must write now. However, the instants that these confessions lay out constitute no more than broken measures of the nothingness into which they have lapsed, as my memory has, over time, taken to eating itself.

Nevertheless. I love you, and by making this paltry effort, perhaps I can draw a little closer to you, convocation of my soul, as if through a lens, abstract of the great, true figures of being. (Even now, before I can properly begin, I feel ghosts that have too often overseen the writing of my songs.)

I confess violence. First I will talk about the lowest manifestation, as if to purge its dark glory, render flat its mountainous music – my desperation. I long to possess you. In the dream you told me to possess her, and, fists in her hair, bark like a crocodile. There were endless rivers and dog-heads! Do you know me?

Need I really know you? I love you. How I long to conjure those blissful hours of oblivion. How I could adore the world if my memory weren't so afflicted. Movement has taken me, and recognised my abandonment. I have moved into fear.

It must be written. It must be written to you. I have committed myself to you in every person I meet. And those I cannot bear to meet bear your message to me most strongly. Ignorance, weakness, judgement, arrogance, hypocrisy. These are the faces of strangers to me in my world of strangers. An inverted picture I know but this you must tolerate if I am to make any sense whatever. (Of course, what sense can be made of a life lived this way? What monumental lie have I told myself in your name that could construct such ease, such fortune, such change in my life?)

Are you death? I know you are real, for I have taken things to be you. I have pledged my soul to the observance. But my vocabulary fails me –

You grow. You, limitless, resistant, and the the febrile colours of my freedom. You make leaps from summits of yourself into images of me – phantoms of my islands of respite. I have long

suspected giving thanks to you. Perhaps because ambitiously I give thanks to another, beyond you, in whose presence both you and I shiver and reduce. Yet perhaps my reluctance to concede a prayer as worthy is merely out of loneliness. Perhaps I desire to be with you in this way. To grant, in a moment of illusion, that even you are abject and a sufferance of the ether.

But then it must be you working on me! It must be that you realise my appeal and magnify it – grasping my vision as a distracted hand grasps all of the strings of a colourful puppet at once, making it momentarily leave the ground, leave its dance and fly, limp, over the pavement, its painted eye gazing stupidly at children, at drunkards, tourists, families...

But you are the most intimate of friends, and through a dissolution of pain, reveal to me your relativity. Appearing in the relief of my body. I love you. And my refusal to obliterate you is a respite. Why do I find myself wishing for a moment of utter peril in which we find ourselves so that I may suddenly depart and do away with all existence? (Such is my discretion.) This I must concede. With the exception of the love you have given me, multiform and inexplicable love, I must admit the evidence of my persistence, my childish ambition, and my anger.

I have long sensed a deep betrayal forming, tightened through each flash of your presence, I take your faith and your appearances not just as testament of your endurance, but also of your redundancy, and, ultimately – your helplessness. My betrayal keeps you at bay. Makes you and your world strange to me – even as I grow and learn – even as I become young – and this deferral gives me the semblance of a self that I will require to defer judgement.

Such firm words! You have never deserved this confession. Never required it, never even understood it, as I am sure it has been written in my face all of my life – invisible to me and by that definition obvious to you, to the point of effacement. But this must remain confession, and not testament. I have already convinced myself to live. If I were to glance around the room now, I would only find one message that testified against my terrible will. My great interrupted dream. Its utilities of shame, its blank menus, its deference and polarity.

The spells I dream. The incantations.

II.

Was it you?

Once, I invented and imagined the world as it was, as it might have been for me. This was not enough. I sensed you. I prised myself open, beginning a long vigil, through all of my shifts and transmutations, for this other. That other child that always repulsed me, that other behaviour that I used to contrapose my own behaviour, the other violence that I generated others to do, all that I stood against...I became catalogue. Every occurrence that surprised my degrading regime elicited a particular response. To these I attributed colours akin to emotion, but emphasised like music – these countless discrepancies. In the interfaces: stations, trains, the road, those instances or people that made me feel alone, made me feel superior, righteous, wise, cowardly... these variations of the brief harmonies of affront became my tongue.

So many contradictions splitting me apart and estranging me! I was configuring time and reality as I would have it. I was prophesising. Melodies. My one great sadness was that I was incapable of reading the music. Until I had touched you with my base life, it was practise, but I feared too deeply the final utterance, and so came pain. Nevertheless when any other was represented to me, face to face, I intuited great and subtle melodies, through which I blindly rehearsed.

And one day that vicious man. Was it you? I was caught off guard. Yes! Such was my desperation that I held out for him to speak but a few words I knew, any kind of sound that I might recognise, to create a story that could prise apart the immense pressure in my heart.

I thought of you then. But you had already forsaken me. I mimicked him. I gave the tones, the words, the strength I imagined he might appreciate. He scared me so much that he became significant. He was not within me, though he knew me as well as he might know a dead brother. I stammered out my existence as if it were an alien language. He noticed, he smiled, his eyes locked on a little more directly. Then I thought: here is obliteration.

He said: “You know how I can’t be you?”
But I misheard him, I could hardly see.

“No.”
“No” He was frustrated. “You know how I can’t be you?”
I still didn’t understand.
“What’s your name?”
“Daniel. And yours?”
“Frank. Daniel you know how I can’t be you?”
Finally, I could hear him.
“Yes”
“You can’t be me.”
Silence.
I thanked him.
He grimaced and slipped off the tram.

After this, all was composition.

III.

I am afraid, yet clearly imaginary. What good can it do to repeal my observances again and again, deferring perhaps my last chance of survival? Now, I will persist in my attempt to make of my donation a worthy confidence, despite these streams of disappearance. I do concede that I hope to trace your absence at least to a clearer image of myself, if not to locate you, touch for even the briefest of instants, the membrane of your presence. To scourge my call that it might be heard....

And this is your strength. Should I know you, I would know the origin of my terror and demise, should I remain convinced of an equal music, a place in you that I will occupy forever, there is no hope for me. What I ask is simple: I love you. You have given me myriad opportunities to cross over and revive myself. And as often happens, I have denied the plainest choices and moved only when the transformation has been achieved entirely without my consent. I am not here to thank you, but to ask again: How far must I journey to make my voice comprehensible? At the least may I learn that I have failed in my task: to *live* by you.

IV

Remind me that you know nothing of me, nothing of my words. This way, from the outset, there is no excuse for me to put down another meaningless story, about which nothing is clear at all.

V.

Violence has been smashing lives in my ears and my mind, yet the window depicts the scything of ferns, the fluttering descent of bark, and through the green a quiet, comprehensive movement. I fear you. For in your absence, enshrouding my house, I walk the walk of a dreamer, and my dreams are mutilated cities. If indeed I do know you, and thus must grow to know myself, what does my sadness precipitate? Will calling out suffice to calibrate the trauma? My home was once the torpid dream of a past, and now the prophecy manifests moment by moment. Where are you in this future?

VI.

Even if you do take these questions from me, knowing them, I am not sure if this in itself will serve to liberate me. I will tell you later that the very idea of freedom is both haunting and transfixing me. A need for words to precede our loss drives me toward our encounter. In spite of myself (hearing already the voices that disperse me) put to rest my childish and naive questions.

You and I, it is hope, will scarce be apart, nor one, nor sufficiently delimited so as to pass by, orphic. So between the not-knowing – the path by which I have hurriedly come, and the knowing that has bewitched, illuminated and obscured my path – that is your knowing – I cannot hope for any base equivalence, rather a passage of music. Perhaps the distance I discover will darken this music, and should your subtlety endure, I know I will be moved. I only ask to feel a way.

VII.

I come unwillingly, if the truth be told. But my heart quickens. Firstly, I know you are not there. I know this because I am not entirely sure who you are. At times, when the silence strikes me, I am sure you are my father, and so cannot possibly write to you to this end. Other times I commit to write instinctively, and discover that I write to no-one, that I cannot write *at all*, but just cry into a fabricated silence. Then again, I have reason to believe that there is some purpose in me writing to the ‘you’ that has surely heard me over the years, if only because I have lost little energy in my persistence. I am a little afraid that every

word my quick head puts to you will vanish and become that same absence in me. I think of writers often. They must be selfless to make up characters in pain. I must be fictional in some way.

THEATRE

PROGRAMME

PARIS : August – November 2003

Meetings and Interviews:

Severine Magois, translator.

Severine is Daniel Keene's French translator. She also acts as his proxy and has played a huge part in Daniel's success in France. I met Severine in Australia when she was out here to see some productions of the Keene/Taylor's work in 1999. When I was in Paris in 2000, we had many long discussions relating to her process in translating such a prolific playwright, and about the task of the translator. I accompanied her to lectures she was giving to translators, and on the small tour through Burgundy with Daniel to see *Low*. It was during this tour that I showed her an American translation of Rimbaud's *Illuminations*. She confirmed that the translation was far from good, and this led to her offering to help me with my own translations.

In October 2003, I recorded a session we had working on some of the *Illuminations*. The discussions relating to the work itself were of great interest to me, but too specific to reproduce. It was her reflections on her experiences as a translator that I have included in my report, particularly how she has changed as a translator, and how her translations have changed through working with Daniel.

Catherine Dan, General Manager, Théâtre National de la Commune, Aubervilliers.

I was introduced to Catherine in March 2000 when I travelled to Paris to perform some readings of Daniel's work. Théâtre de la Commune were doing a production of *Silent Partner* at the time. I mentioned that I was hoping to return to Paris with a Churchill Fellowship, and Catherine was quick to say she would try and arrange something at the theatre. When I returned to Paris in August 2003, Catherine was wonderful, despite all her work, and the great troubles the theatre were facing at the time. She took Kate and I to many different plays, introduced us to actors, directors, producers and filmmakers, explained the context of each theatre we visited, discussed the work etc. She is a champion of Daniel's work in Paris, and with Didier Berzace, the Artistic Director, she is at the helm of one of the most interesting theatres in the city.

Valerie Megard, filmmaker.

Valerie is a courageous, generous and inspiring person. Catherine introduced us to her. During our time in Paris, Valery let us know about exhibitions, gigs and films that we wouldn't have found, and became a great friend and support in all of our travels through her magical emails and gifts. Her most recent work was writing and shooting a documentary about Aboriginal people in Papunya, which she undertook over three months earlier this year.

Productions/ Exhibitions/ Films.

- *Have I None*, by Edward Bond. Théâtre National de la Colline
- *Pièces Courtes*, by Daniel Keene, Compagnie Issue de Secours, Théâtre de Proscénium.
- *Cinq Hommes*, by Daniel Keene, Théâtre National de la Rond-Point.
- *Cirque Lili*, Jerome Thomas, Théâtre National de la Commune.
- *Rivers and Tides*, Feature Film about Andy Goldsworthy.
- *Elephant*, directed by Gus van Sant.
- “*Chapter VI*”: *tragedia endogonidia*, Romeo Castellucci, Odeon Théâtre de L'Europe.
- *Jean Cocteau*, exhibition, Centre Pompidou.
- *Musée Picasso*, Paris
- *Ligne de Fuite*, Philippe Genty, Théâtre National de Chaillot.
- *Les Sublimes*, Cie Hendrick Van der Zee, Grande Halle de la Villette.
- *Ta main dans la mienne*, by Carol Rocamora, dir. Peter Brook, Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord.
- *Cirque Electrique*,
- *Voyage d'Hiver*, d'après Franz Schubert et Wilhelm Müller, Ilka Schönbein, Théâtre de la Commune.

VIENNA: November – December 2003

Meetings and Interviews

Barrie Kosky, Artistic Director, Wien Schauspielhaus.

I was very lucky to meet with Barrie during rehearsals for his production of Monteverdi's *Poppea* in Vienna. He couldn't have been more generous during the three weeks we spent in Vienna. Along with many long discussions about work we had seen and work we planned for the future, Barrie made sure Kate and I were put up at the theatre, and that we knew what to see and where to go. He is a prolific director, and his work is the most exciting in Vienna. The freedom he is allowed due to the big budgets and audiences for theatre was impossible to compare with home. We caught

up with him again in Berlin in May 2004, when he was touring *Poppea* to the Berliner Ensemble.

Productions/ Exhibitions/ Films.

- *Je Suis Sang*, Jan Fabre, Österreichische Estafführung, Museumsquartier.
- *TANYA, a modern jazz opera*, Jugendstil Theater, Otto Wagner Sanatorium.
- *1914*, Wien Schauspielhaus
- Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Kurt Voss, *Bach, Pärt, Haydn, Saint-säens*, text by Peter Ustinov, Musikverein, Grand Salle.
- *Leopold Museum*.
- *Francis Bacon*, exhibition, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

PRAGUE: December 2003

Meetings and Interviews

Petr Foreman, actor, director, puppeteer.

Catherine Dan introduced us to Petr by giving us a secret code. We had been admiring his brother Matej's picture story book illustrations. We were to call him when we got to Prague, quote the secret word, and meet up. His project at the time was a floating theatre, a barge that they could move up and down a river during the performances. They had already produced work this way and were proposing to tour the craft around Europe. It also contained a bar, sleeping quarters and a stage. We discussed the possibility of producing something for the barge in the future.

LONDON: September 2003 & March 2004

Meetings and Interviews

Chris Corner, General Manager, Howard Barker's Wrestling School

Howard Barker's company have been together for 18 years. I was particularly interested in meeting Chris, as he could provide an insight into the running of a writer-dedicated company. We discussed the structure of the company, its audience, a typical budget and touring schedule, and the changing funding environment.

Izzy Mant, Director, *The Dark House*, BBC Interactive radioplay.

Matthew Dyktinsky, London based Australian singer-songwriter, actor and standup comedian, introduced me to his girlfriend, Izzy, who had just

received a BAFTA award for her work on *The Dark House*. Izzy is a theatre/radio director who specialises in new drama writing. In their words:

“*The Dark House* is the brainchild of producers Izzy Mant and Nick Ryan and developed in collaboration with BBC Radio Drama and BBC Creative Research & Development. *The Dark House* is all about collaboration: collaboration between listeners to shape the play they're hearing; collaboration between several BBC departments to make a complex project possible; and collaboration between two producers on a joint artistic vision...

Two years ago, a theatre director and a composer/sound designer met at a BBC conference on the future of sound and had a meeting of minds. The director wanted to see if radio could be used to create the shared space of a theatre auditorium. The composer was exploring the use of sound technology to drag you right inside the world of a drama. From these two instincts came the idea for an audio thriller that the listeners influence as they experience... using the power of darkness to immerse them in a world of unseen horrors.”

Although it had finished ‘on air’ by the time we arrived, it was something I was interested to discuss with Klaus Buhlert, the radio play producer I was hoping to meet with in Berlin later in the year.

Productions/ Exhibitions/ Films.

- *the war is dead long live the war*, by Patrick Jones, Institute of Contemporary Arts Theatre.
- *Amused Moose*, Matthew Dyktinsky, Moonlighting Cub, standup comedy.
- *Endgame*, by Samuel Beckett, Albery Theatre.
- *Aerial Photography and Wildlife Photographer of the Year*, Exhibitions, Natural History Museum.
- *Der Rosenkavalier*, Richard Strauss, Royal Opera House.
- *Saatchi Gallery*.
- *Festen*, based on the Dogme film and play by Thomas Vinterberg, Mogens Rukov and Bo hr.Hansen, a dramatisation by David Eldridge, Almeida Theatre.
- *The Goat or, Who is Sylvia?*, by Edward Albee, Appollo Theatre

BERLIN: May – June 2004

Meetings and Interviews

Susanne Saßche, actor;
Mark Siegel, film professor.

Mark and Susanne were friends of Barrie Kosky's, and they put us up for a time in Berlin. Mark was finishing his dissertation on Queer film theory and had been living in Berlin for several years. Susanne is a very respected actress in Berlin. Her work includes three years at the Berliner Ensemble working with Directors such as Robert Wilson and Heiner Müller. Together they produce a big cabaret/nightclub event called Cheap, and were preparing a show for Zurich.

As Mark is American, it was interesting to hear his story of arriving in Berlin and how he has managed to work in many areas. Susanne had some fantastic ideas about Kate and I returning to Berlin to work at the Hebbel Theater, a company particularly interested in international work.

Productions/ Exhibitions/ Films.

- *Poppea*, Monteverdi, regie von Barrie Kosky, Wien
Schauspielhaus production at the invitation of the Berliner Ensemble.
- *Love Zoo*, Felix Ruckert, Dock 11.
- *Bumping Heads*, Brendan Shelper, Dock 11.
- *MOMA*, exhibition, New Modern Art Gallery.

NOTES

***The Goat Or, Who is Sylvia?*, by Edward Albee, Apollo Theatre.**

Jonathan Pryce's performance was an inspiration. It was the very first preview for the show in a new theatre. (It was an Almeida Theatre production that had run a sell-out season in their Islington home) We were their first audience in the Apollo. The fact that it was a first performance was part of the wonder of the evening. The (very experienced) actors were quite loose, probably tired after remounting the show and resigned to rediscovering their pathways through the play. Pryce was relaxed to the point of being discursive – his vagary in the first scene a wonderful conceit to engage us. He had the gentlest and most sure commitment to the emotional journey of the play - which takes the audience through the discovery that this extremely successful architect in a seemingly happy marriage has suddenly and hopelessly fallen in love with Sylvia, a goat living near their farm. His affair, as sexual affairs are wont to do, has begun to interrupt his 'life'. What begins in an almost 'drawing-room' style, absurd and flippant comedy, descends into an examination of our self-imposed boundaries and our helplessness before sometimes "strange, destructive and socially unacceptable" forms of love. When Martin's wife reappears with Sylvia, having cut her throat, dumping the animal on the lounge room floor, Martin virtually atomizes. A performance is capable of conveying us into such delightful, bleak and complex observations of ourselves. The impact of live performance arrives through its accumulation – the actor crafting an arc that the audience only perceives moment by moment.

***Dogville*, directed by Lars von trier.**

This is a formally interesting and uncinematic film. 'Dogville' the town, is quite obviously a large studio, and the neat rows of 'houses' have no walls, just white demarcation lines on the floor. The story is narrated lyrically in 9 chapters. The town itself is small, isolated, dark and backward. The townsfolk, as we discover, are fearful, bent, parochial. The protagonist Tom, a sad portrait of the young philosopher full of fear and ambition, is looking to incite the moral conscience of the town. His usual stirring speeches at the town meetings are not having the desired effect any more.

Grace stumbles across Dogville a desperate woman. She is running away from mobsters who are trying to kill her. Tom finds her and wants her to stay. He plans to use her as his 'call to arms'. She appeals to the townsfolk, speaking frankly about her circumstances and they are left to vote on

whether or not they will allow her to stay. She is welcomed on the condition that she work for the townsfolk for a trial period to prove herself.

Initially it appears that the folk of Dogville have taken a great risk by welcoming this fugitive into their midst. It seems they have made themselves vulnerable. As the story progresses, though, it becomes clear that these folk are not so defenceless and honest as they have made out. Gradually the abuses of Grace's services become greater and greater. She is overworked. She is manipulated. She is punished. She is raped. All the while her debt to the folk of the town is used as ransom. Significantly, Grace's spirit is glorified through every one of her trials. She accepts her lot with a kind of sad virtuousness. The 'crimes' and 'punishments' become ever more entangled and perverse, until Grace is placed under makeshift house arrest (she has a huge chain and weight around her neck) and is afterward only visited by the men who systematically rape her in the nights. Finally, for the crimes of prostitution and attempting escape, the townsfolk secretly 'call in' the bounty on her head.

The mobsters arrive. The head mobster turns out to be Grace's father, and humorously, he has pursued her all this time not to kill her but to finish a conversation. This conversation had ended abruptly when he tried to kill her last time, but now he says that was a mistake, and he wants to invite her back into the family. The conversation that ensues, held in the back seat of the car, with all of Dogville waiting expectantly for the bounty, is all about arrogance.

Grace refuses to be a part of the 'family' because of her father's arrogance as a reprehensible powermonger and murderer. He accuses her of arrogance of a different kind. He says that precisely because of her sense of virtue, by her belief in pitying unfortunate people and taking on the burden of their guilt, she is in fact showing the supreme arrogance, as she is elevating herself beyond culpability.

She capitulates. She rejoins her family and orders the massacre of the people of Dogville and the razing of their houses.

If we are to consider our moral responsibilities in the face of a violent and confusing world, can we accept that people's circumstances can excuse their crimes or faults? Or do we run the risk of eliminating them altogether by applying laws that simply preserve our own sense of safety or the status quo?

***Lost In Translation*, directed by Sophia Coppola**

As an actor, I can appreciate the loneliness of travelling in strange places at the whim of strange people to do things I was never sure about in the first place. It is a loneliness infused with a peculiar purpose. And as a traveller I can understand the gut-wrenching feeling of having an alien and impenetrable metropolis just outside the door. *Lost in Translation* describes a beautiful dilemma. Both characters are lonely in their own way, and in very different stages of their lives. They find comfort and freedom in each other's company. Such is this freedom, that when it is disturbed, it reveals the relationship that has grown between them. They are a young woman and an older man. It is an extreme friendship. It is true, but intense. What should they do? What do we learn of ourselves, or who do we become when we are lonely and we meet another who is also lonely and who knows us?

***Festen*, Dramatisation by David Eldridge, based on the Dogme film and play by Thomas Vinterberg, Mogens Rukov and Bo hr.Hansen, Almeida Theatre**

Helge is sixty. His family return home to celebrate. His eldest son, the surviving twin, will raise the first toast.

“Do you think you could say a few things about your sister this evening? I couldn't manage it.”

“Actually, dad, I've prepared something.” – **from the program.**

This production caught my eye mainly because I had seen the 1997 Dogme film. *Festen* is an extraordinary film, not only because it achieves such dramatic power with limited resources as set out in the Dogme manifesto, but because the screenplay is so beautifully written. Generally speaking, cinema is complexly and comprehensively visual. The language often comes from the image. Its not often either that I have heard of a film being adapted for stage.

The tragic story of *Festen* (Celebration) centres around four generations of a Scandanavian family at the father's 60th birthday. Instead of toasting his father's health as he has been asked, Christian decides to reveal his father's habitual sexual abuse of himself and his dead twin sister. Over the course of the evening and the next day, we see the family groaning under the weight of the news like a dumb herd, and finally, when a letter from the dead sister is found and read out, confirming the abuse as her reason for suicide, the family collapses.

This Almeida production was profoundly moving and inspiring – the best I have seen in a long time. The cast were uniformly excellent, due to their

broad experience but also to the direction of Rufus Norris. I immediately wondered which actors in Australia could perform this play.

***Have I None*, by Edward Bond. Théâtre National de la Colline**

I didn't know the play, so it was difficult to understand. I recognised a conventional structure. It was all about the language. There were three characters: A 'man' and 'wife', and a 'brother', (appearing later in the piece as the antagonist). A few images, such as a gift, a greatcoat with spoons on the outside and bones on the inside, and a rucksack, served as metaphors throughout, and the scenes were concise in length – the language replaced any notion of realistic 'time'.

One thing that did strike me was the precision of the actors' physicality. Even when an apparently wayward hand would strike a table, or a breath would be taken out of rhythm, it had the distinct quality of being heard and registered by each of the actors. At one point it made me wonder about the extent of the stage directions, but one thing was clear: the actors were familiar enough with each other, with the director, and with the text to 'forget' their superficial or preoccupying directives, that everything apparent was held within a dance of sound and movement – nothing exceeded itself. I don't mean that the actors were improvising a comfortable rhythm with any old sound that was produced. It wasn't a case of being conscious of the present, it was more bodily, craftily that this sensitivity was attuned.

In my experience this kind of bodily ease and precision can only come after time with a work, and great skill in the performers. Just like a musician's body must repeat its movements so often that the concentration is no longer taken up by these movements as they happen, but something else above and beyond the notes – the music.

It was with my ear that I made this observation. It is said that 80% of a performance is the voice. It is correspondently true of the ear. Perhaps the ear is less easily fooled than the eye or the mind?

The most interesting part of the evening was the forum held afterwards, with Mr Bond, the director, the translator of the play, and one of the actors, translated into and out of English by Jerome... Bond made some interesting comments on the task of the playwright – making distinctions such as "I don't know what it's like (performing the characters), I just imagine it.", or his idea that characters don't come first, the *scene* and the *object* do...) But for the most part he was too didactic, and it was Jerome's three hours of instant translating that was captivating...

***Pièces Courtes*, by Daniel Keene, Compagnie Issue de Secours, Théâtre de Proscénium.**

We saw the ‘Short Pieces’ on opening night: *the violin, the rain, a glass of twilight, sophia’s eyes* and *neither lost nor found*, by Daniel Keene. It is very exciting to see Daniel’s work performed in French, as I have worked with him extensively in English in Melbourne. It represents a great possibility and also attests to the universal strength of his words. It also raises the question of the re-birth of a playwright’s work in another language. What does a culture appropriate to become used to a new kind of work? How different is the work in a new language? How much corresponds and how much is lost? What is gained?

Speaking to an actor from the audience, Ingrid, afterwards, she said that she had read a lot of Daniel’s work in French and loved it. And though she hadn’t seen all of Daniel’s productions in France, she had seen several, and was yet to see one that seriously understood the qualities of the writing. We discussed the difficulties of translation, with language, and especially with humour. There is a particular Australian humour that can laugh amid violence, a unique kind of black humour. In Daniel’s work there is also a relationship between tenderness and violence that is familiar at home. Suffice to say, she had perceived these qualities in the French texts. Ingrid certainly thought that most of the productions she had seen were imbalanced – often too weighty too often, taking the beauty and seriousness of the work as a cue for labouring the scenes, and then when humorous, frivolous.

Some of the awkwardness I have perceived in this and other productions of Daniel’s work in France has to do with the dangers of reverence. The so called ‘cult of the director’ in France (Europe altogether actually), results in the emphasis of big productions being on the concepts and design more than the performers and the text. It is a difficult context for plays like these. Perhaps this is why they are enjoying so much fame – their humanity and simplicity being a welcome change.

The *Pièces Courtes* were staged in a tiny theatre which literally opened onto the street. It felt a little like a bunker. A fantastic, close space. The production was simple – pools of light, blackouts between each scene, and this lead to an emphasis on the rhythm of the scenes, the pressure of the language, and the actor’s first or last gesture. The performances were lovely. And, interestingly, I think *neither lost nor found* enjoyed its first really successful production.

***Elephant*, directed by Gus van Sant.**

Gus van Sant's latest film is a deeply confronting portrait of violence in an American school. Its reference is the Columbine high school shootings. I didn't know this when I entered the cinema.

The film begins with a shot of the sky changing behind a power pole. Its progression is gentle and humorous, as we meet the first character, a boy, and his drunken father. The boy must drive himself to school with his father sulking in the passenger seat. We hover over the father's face... After arriving at the school, the camera glides behind the actors and encounters their school day as they do. A photography student taking shots for his folio...an exquisitely long shot of a sports field with several teams training...a lone girl wandering past the lens (which throughout is fixed slightly off the centre of action) pausing, as if sensing something, smiling, walking off...a boy entering frame and getting changed, the camera slowly turning with him and following him inside the college building.

The action is limp with routine, all the voices are slightly muffled (or simply low-level), there are some moments slowed right down, strangely dispersing and building tension. The day progresses.

In a good deal of representations of school life, the student body is unnaturally full of life, in the case of *Elephant*, the evenness of emphasis makes the scenes slightly weightless. None of the 'typical' bathroom, corridor, cafeteria, classroom scenes are given over to humour or typification.

Gradually I suspected an analogy, or focus behind the scripting and realisation that anchored the film: we don't know what all of this could be leading to. Even in retrospect, the 'signs' for what ultimately occurs are neither disguised or emphasised. We are led into several 'common' themes of adolescence: loneliness and neurosis, alienation, eating disorders, lust, gossip, friendship, homosexuality... But they are all treated intelligently – the feelings spurred by each portrait are inconclusive. There is a sense that all of these kids are living stoically with their feelings. Although stoicism is just the surface of the impression. Underlying the calm, the weightlessness, the operational chaos of the school, there is a sense of detachment.

So as we watch two of the students we have met having a sleepover, one playing Mozart on the piano, the other playing shootemup games on the computer, the pair eating breakfast in the morning, wagging school, receiving an automatic rifle in the mail, watching Hitler Documentaries (significantly spraying out the words "propaganda...propaganda"), and proceeding to drive to school and follow their plan to wipe out as many kids as possible in the day, the feelings of sickness and contempt are difficult to place. We have been complicit in the obviousness of college life to this point, and due perhaps to this weightlessness, we are confronted with the

violence in a most direct way. Even the two gunmen are portrayed as utterly disconnected from what they are doing – they are executing a plan through a dream. Why are we fascinated with the execution of the massacre? Why do we wonder why there are fewer screams and less chaos than we had imagined? At first, the nearly casual responses of the characters we have met to the sounds of shots and sight of bodies could be explained as shock. Indeed if this is intended, it gives a marvellous pitch for the audience's shock.

The massacre is dream-like and brutal. A symbol of the horror is a character we meet "Benny". A student who is obviously intrigued by the chaos, it is as if Benny glides over the action. He helps a few severely shocked students out a window, and proceeds to move quietly through the corridors to the sound of shots. We have a sense of hope, even justice, simply because Benny isn't running away. In fact these sentiments become all we know about Benny. He approaches one of the gunmen as he holds the principle at gunpoint on the floor. We cannot see Benny's face – so are given no indication of what he is thinking or intending to do, he simply creeps in closer and closer to the back of the gunman. At the last moment, the gunman swings around and kills Benny, then after pretending to free the principle, shoots him in the back.

We never hear a siren, we never get the satisfaction of a heroic counter-effort, never the let-off of hysterical screams and chaos. We are trapped by our own detachment. It is horrifying.

It reminded me of the complexity of adolescent psychology. It also reminded me of the profusion of emotional propaganda in violent films and the media.

Elephant doesn't hide anything, all of the 'contributing factors' we are hurriedly assured with when the media reports such an incident are present: the isolation of the killers, their confused sexuality, their dislocation, dreamlike reality, easy access to firearms, repressed/oppressive home environment. But I don't believe the film is stupid enough to give easy reasons for what happens. On the contrary, its message is not about the extraordinariness of the event, rather its ordinariness. And that is its impact. That is why we must pay attention.

"Chapter VI":tragedia endogonia, Romeo Castellucci, Odeon Théâtre de L'Europe.

I have seen only one other production by the extraordinary Romeo Castellucci, – *Genesi From the Museum of Sleep*, at the Melbourne International Festival in 2002. It was a giant spectacle in three acts: Berežit

(At the Beginning), Auschwitz and Abel and Cain. It was foremost visual theatre. The 'cast' of non-actors, all from villages nearby Castellucci's own home town were all physically extraordinary people : either deformed, disabled, or very young and beautiful or pliable (there was one contortionist). It was a feat of theatrical engineering; visually astounding, there were animals on stage, and a soundscape to unsettle every point of contact.

Tragedia Endogonia is the sixth instalment of an eleven part project that has travelled from Sanzio (Jan 2002), returning there in 2004 after performing in Avignon, Berlin, Brussels, Bergamo, Paris, Rome, Strasbourg, London and Marseille.

It is similarly visual, symbolic and deeply alienating. There is an orchestra seated at the foot of the audience that gets up and leaves two-thirds of the way through the piece without having played a note. Again, the recorded soundtrack is deeply disturbing. The themes symbolised throughout the piece are military politics, myth, violence, rape, the enemy, religion...

Castellucci's theatre requires time to digest. I certainly felt disconnected and alienated by the grotesqueness and scale of the work, and I have no doubt that this is one of its intentions. The program note says his theatre challenges all theatrical conventions. It denies them. His theatre is absolutely of its own.

There are often slow, choreographed movements, often of people stricken or prone, going about a preordained ritual, well-drilled, and mostly absurd. All objects can animate at any moment, and the vast walls of the space can spew out flags, open in sections to reveal a vast window, a horse, a great black dragon, or disappear into darkness. At one point three wrecked cars fell from the rig, slamming onto the stage. Effects like these seem typical of his work. Such a dreamlike (nightmarish) world defies all 'possibility', and Castellucci's is a bleak and fascinating theatrical magic.

After the show, there is so little purchase for reason, that we must simply leave the space and let the dream crystallise. Perhaps because it alienates so completely, and perhaps due to the seemingly infinite possibility for the company, I couldn't absorb much of the spectacle. When something is so powerful, and so 'of itself', if the images represented do not resonate with my own ideas of the world of imagination, dream, prophecy or warning, then the experience can seem passe or pointless.

After discussing Castellucci's work with Barrie Kosky in Vienna two months later, an interesting explanation came up on this note. When a director has found a theatrical and stylistic language, and when they have huge amounts of funding, ie can stage many works, it is vital that there

remains a human centre to the work. Castellucci is not interested in actors, in 'performance'. As I have mentioned, he uses people from villages near his own home town, weird people, extraordinary people, non actors. There is nothing wrong with removing this convention in a work, it changes the nature of the theatre, it makes it a little stranger. However what must not be forgotten is the audience, and what the audience needs to experience in the theatre – spontaneity, humanity, craft, call it what you will. Without this element, the symbols become predictable, and the work typified.

Ligne de Fuite, Philippe Genty, Théâtre National de Chaillot.

Philippe Genty's company have been working together for 15 years or so. They are essentially a puppetry company. Theirs is a theatre of magic and reflection. In most productions, he combines original music, dance, text and acting into the shows. At the time of writing this report, Ligne de Fuite was running in the Comedy in Melbourne.

The title of this piece refers to the 'vanishing point' – an architectural term. The program note explained this as a metaphor for the horizons and intersections of audience-spectacle, dream-reality, expectation-revelation. The work was no less spectacular than Castellucci's, but an entirely different kind of theatre.

Genty describes his work as other than just a dream, not just a separate reality, but a place for mirrors, for representing the audience and encouraging them to 'plunge into their abysses'.

The narrative form was a group of players. To begin with they were at sea, on deck chairs, sinking, reappearing, drowning, being taken by skeletal hands... This scene gave way to a 'dialogue' in the deep between two characters silently conversing, as invisible puppeteers projected white question marks and lines from mouth to mouth.

The puppetry was seamless. The symbols of the work were books – as used to remember and also to have ownership of memory (hence were often stolen); assassinations, boxes of gifts, deep sea divers, the chase...

Overall, the eight players served to conjoin the spectacular sequences of puppetry or magic. They would convene to perform a scene that served to place objects in a narrative that would later pinpoint or signpost the magical.

The spirit of these scenes was camp and typified by 'overacting', and suffered through a paucity of text. Although the text that was spoken was simple and sometimes beautiful, the inspiration of the piece was in the puppetry. This rendered the whole weak and a little superficial.

***Cirque Lili*, Jerome Thomas, Théâtre National de la Commune.**

Cirque Lili was a one man circus. It was performed in a wooden ‘tent’ set up in the park outside Théâtre de la Commune’s building, and Thomas lived in a caravan also on site. He had two musicians and an assistant. Thomas is renowned for his juggling, and was described to us as a ‘strange, lonely and beautiful man’.

We were at a disadvantage – seeing the show with a friend who had been in the circus all his life, so the shortfalls of the individual acts and the evening were amplified by our friends sighs and shifting in his seat.

Thomas is an extraordinary man. He is big, gaudy, outrageous, and unusual. His circus was assured by his eccentric personality, and a lot of the acts seemed to have a significance for him like dreams. There was something intoxicating though about the nakedness, or simplicity of a ‘ring’ with one performer holding just a few objects, preparing to amaze an audience. (An audience that I would imagine are becoming harder and harder to amaze.)

The piece’s weaknesses contained its beauty for me. In his eccentricity, Thomas was indeed lonely, and facing the weird, unsuccessful, hilarious, and indulgent aspects of his vision felt like a rare privilege.

***Rivers and Tides*, Feature Film about Andy Goldsworthy.**

I make mention of this film mainly because it highlights an interesting problem for a certain type of artist. Goldsworthy has been approached by this filmmaker to discuss in great detail the motivation for, and execution of a particular stream of his sculpture. It is a beautiful film, because it captures the beauty of the work cinematically, expressing the elemental forces and beauty of the environment, Goldsworthy’s prime inspiration.

The problem with the piece is that Goldsworthy’s strength is not in justifying or discussing his work. He is a hermetic character. Due to the fact that most of his work is consumed by its environment shortly after its creation we see it in photographs. We are forced to imagine the wilderness surrounding the pieces, to imagine their construction, and actually to *feel* their beauty. The more Goldsworthy is drawn to describe his work by the unimaginative questions of the filmmaker, the less I wanted to pay attention. Some artists should not be expected to be able to explain themselves.

***Les Sublimes*, Cie Hendrick Van der Zee, Grande Halle de la Villette.**

Parc de la Villette is a vast and wonderful venue. It occupies the space of several city blocks in the north of Paris. It houses the Museum of Sciences and the Museum of Music; the Grande Halle (which used to be the meatmarket of Paris) now home to any number of different spaces for installation, exhibition, performance and concerts; a great network of canals and parkland; and outdoor cinemas, bars and restaurants... It is a hugely popular place in Paris.

Guy Alloucherie, the director of *Les Sublimes*, lives and works in his birth place in the north of France, I believe an old mining town. The company are all skilled circus performers and actors, specialising in acrobatics, acrobalance, trapeze and dance, and this piece also incorporated video footage and music.

This was one show where Kate and I really wanted to understand more French. Not because there was a great amount of text (although the video footage was predominantly interviews, and one performer spent a great deal of time reading from hundreds of pieces of paper strewn about), but because of this unusual director, and what he had to say throughout the performance. At various intervals, Alloucherie would stand up from his place beside the stage manager and technician, and walk to the centre of the stage, take up a microphone placed downstage centre, and start telling a story. The action continued around him. He was talking about his company, and how he wished to resist the advice to pack up and move to Paris and work, preferring to stay with his own community. But he obviously had a lot more to say than that.

The space resembled a training space or warehouse, with couches, armchairs, ropes hanging from the ceiling, tables and chairs, and mats on the floor. The stage was covered with sand. Unlike many of the other productions we had seen, the music wasn't original, but popular songs or pieces of music, sporadically placed and played very loud.

As the narration by Alloucherie seemed to provide a context for the performance, I wont try to describe the show. The experience was memorable largely due to the warmth and commitment of the performers. They were all greatly skilled, but also at home with each other, finely tuned to the subtleties of their acts.

***TANYA*, a modern jazz opera, Jugendstill Theater, Otto Wagner Sanatorium.**

TANYA was one of the worst productions I have ever seen. Perhaps the reason we were lured to see it, along with the fact that we knew nothing

about it, was that the piece was to be performed in a theatre in the middle of one of Vienna's largest mental asylums. And sure enough, it was without doubt the highlight of the evening – driving up through the mist of the veritable town of the Otto Wagner Sanatorium. But from the pink plastic stage set, the excruciatingly badly choreographed and executed dance pieces, the mind-numbing music, to the numbers such as: “Who will play me in the film of the book of my life?” or “I wish I had black blood in my blood...because the blacks have revolution in their blood”, through to the philosophical paradigm for the musical: “What is my name? Xerox, General Motors, Disneyland” – the piece was a huge mistake.

Je Suis Sang, Jan Fabre, Österreichische Estafführung, Museumsquartier.

Jan Fabre's piece was at the centre of great controversy during the 2003 Melbourne International Festival. Its content so shocked some of the Melbourne audience, that the shadow minister for the Arts proclaimed that henceforth, to ensure the 'responsibility' of such events, the government should dictate the content of festivals, so as not to let any 'bad taste' slip through the net. If it weren't so ridiculous, this assertion would be utterly frightening.

Coming out of this controversy were a number of stories of audiences arguing with each other during the show. Apparently during one performance in Melbourne, in the part of the piece where the female speaker repeats many times “I am blood, I am blood...” a man in the audience yelled out “you're bloody awful!”, followed by a woman down the front yelling back “Shut up, I think its wonderful!” This, to my mind, is a sign of a perfectly healthy and responsible audience! Not to mention a successful production.

The huge stage was opened right up – to the wings and back as far as the rear wall, and the performers were on stage as the audience entered. There was a Bacchus-like dancer moving around the stage in a g-string, provocatively and compulsively spinning and gesticulating, smoking a cigarette. He, like a lot of the company, was a fantastic and unusual dancer. On several large metal tables, scenes of suburban banality and sudden ritualistic torture played out rhythmically. A mysterious woman with a book on her head circled the stage at once like death, a teacher, a girl doing posture exercises.

All of this gave way to a great routine of comical knights doing demented manoeuvres in very noisy costumes, and further to an intensely physical performance all based around ideas of blood – how we came from blood, we thirst for blood, we are afraid of blood, blood is the elixir... Knights re-

appeared, fought with invisible enemies until they were exhausted, wedding dresses were donned and defrocked, genitals were slashed, parties flared up around menstruation, stern and portentous words were screamed by the book woman in Latin, two blue-clad speakers declaimed monologues of blood....and the company of excellent movers threw themselves around the stage with huge energy, and without pause until the end.

Jan Fabre is considered one of the leaders in European theatre, and this is perhaps reflected in the quality of the company. But as for the production itself, it was badly written, basic to the point of being tiresomely repetitive, and too long.

I spoke to a woman in the foyer after the piece, asking her what she thought. She was perhaps 55 or more years old, and had seen a lot of theatre. When at first she said "I am glad its over actually", I thought I would get a response something akin to Melbourne's (Vienna being known for its conservatism), but she went on to say that she had seen this kind of stuff twenty years ago, and frankly, it wasn't enough to confront today's audience. She found it boring.

Interesting, that Melbourne should be up in arms, calling for the sacking of organisers and the regulation of Festival content, and just a few weeks later, Vienna meets the same show with yawns...

DANIEL KEENE:
FRENCH LANGUAGE PRODUCTIONS

Forthcoming :
2006

TERRE NATALE (HOME LAND). To be directed by Laurent Gutmann. At Scène Nationale de Thionville. (Return of 2002 Scène Nationale de Blois production).

LE VEILLEUR DE NUIT (THE NIGHTWATCHMAN): a play commissioned by la Compagnie des Docks. To be directed by Jacques Descorde. With Maurice Deschamps, Emmanuelle Marie and Jean-Charles Chagachbanian. At Scène Nationale de Douai. Production in preparation.

2005

May 9 to 29 : MONOLOGUE SANS TITRE, DUO et AVIS AUX INTERESSES (UNTITLED MONOLOGUE, DUET and TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN). Directed by Mouss. At Scène Nationale de Bordeaux. Daniel Keene 'in residence' in région Aquitaine during the production. Return season at the Festival de Blaye, August 22 to 28, 2005.

January 4 to 22 : CISEAUX, PAPIER, CAILLOU, LA PLUIE ET DEUX TIBIAS (SCISSORS, PAPER, ROCK and TWO SHANKS). At Espace libre, Montréal (Québec). Directed by Denis Lavalou (Compagnie Théâtre Complice).

January 2005 : CROQUEMITAINE et LA PLUIE (BOGEYMAN and THE RAIN). At L'Élysée, Lyon. Directed by Thierry Bordereau (Compagnie Locus Solus). Avec Réjane Bajard et Thierry Vennesson.

2004

November 16 to 21: PUISQUE TU ES DES MIENS (BECAUSE YOU ARE MINE). Directed by Carole Thibaut, Compagnie Sambre. At L'Espace Germinal, Fosses. Return season at Lavoisier Moderne in January and at Théâtre de l'Opprimé in April, 2005.

October 5 to December 17: PARADISE : CODES INCONNUS I (PARADISE : UNKNOWN CODES, PART ONE). Commissioned and directed by Laurent Laffargue, Compagnie Le Soleil Bleu. At La Coursive, Scène Nationale de La Rochelle ; October 5 to 9; Théâtre de la Commune, CDN d'Aubervilliers, Paris. November 5 to December 17. (CDN = Centre Dramatique Nationale) Touring in 2005: Toulouse, Bordeaux, Reims etc. A co-production with Théâtre de la Ville, Paris.

October 5 to 31: Three short plays: BREVE OBSCURITE, LA PLUIE and CE QUI DEMEURE (BRIEF DARKNESS, THE RAIN and WHAT REMAINS) Directed by Christophe Lemaître. At Théâtre du Muselet, Châlons-en-Champagne.

September 15 to October 17: AVIS AUX INTERESSES (TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN). Directed by Didier Bezace. With Jean-Paul Roussillon et Gilles Privat. Design by Jean Haas. At Théâtre de la Commune, CDN d'Aubervilliers, Paris.

September 14 to October 9: CE QUI DEMEURE (WHAT REMAINS): a suite of seven short plays. Directed by Maurice Bénichou. With Geneviève Mnich, Teresa Ovidio et Jean-

Marie Galey. At La Maison des métallos, Paris and 14-15-16 October at Théâtre de l'Union, Limoges.

Texts : NI PERDUE NI RETROUVEE (NEITHER LOST NOR FOUND), KADDISH (KADDISH), BREVE OBSCURITE (BRIEF DARKNESS), PORTEUSES DE LUMIERE, (BEARERS OF LIGHT) LE VIOLON (THE VIOLIN), LA PLUIE, (THE RAIN) CE QUI DEMEURE (WHAT REMAINS).

September 14 to October 6: UNE HEURE AVANT LA MORT DE MON FRERE (THE HOUR BEFORE MY BROTHER DIES). Directed by Ainara Iribas. At Théâtre de Nesles, Paris.

July 8 to 31: MOITIE-MOITIE (HALF AND HALF). Directed by Laurent Hatat, Compagnie Anima Motrix (return season). At Espace Pasteur, Avignon (festival off).

July 8 to 31: UNE HEURE AVANT LA MORT DE MON FRERE (THE HOUR BEFORE MY BROTHER DIES). Directed by Sandra Spiry, Compagnie Quartier Rose (return season). At Albatros Théâtre, Avignon (festival off).

Recent :

April 13 to 17: EN CES TEMPS INCERTAINS (IN THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES), part two of OU VA LE MONDE? (WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE WORLD?). Commissioned by Compagnie de la Cité, Marseille. Directed by Michel André. At Théâtre du Merlan, Scène Nationale de Marseille.

February 19: Festival Court Toujours. Public readings of UNE MICHE DE PAIN, LES PAROLES, LA VISITE et FLEUVE (A LOAF OF BREAD, THE WORDS, THE VISIT and RIVER). Directed by Séverine Magois. With the actors of Théâtre à Spirale (Director, Jean Boillot). At Scène Nationale de Poitiers.

January 21 to February 7: SILENCE COMPLICE (SILENT PARTNER), directed by Rosemary Fournier and LOW (LOW), directed by Jean-Paul Viot, Compagnie La Logomotive. At Théâtre des Deux Rives, CDR Rouen. Touring in Normandy throughout February.

2003

November - December: LA PLUIE (THE RAIN) - Festival de marionnettes, Clichy. Manipulation and construction by Pauline Reant.

October: KADDISH & DEUX TIBIAS (KADDISH and TWO SHANKS). At Scène Nationale de Montpellier. Directed by Catherine Marnas (Compagnie Parnas). With Robert Lucibello.

October 10 to 26: QUATUORS : quatre pieces courtes : CISEAUX, PAPIER, CAILLOU, DUO, NI PERDUE NI RETROUVEE & LE VIOLON (four short plays : SCISSORS, PAPER, ROCK ; DUET ; NEITHER LOST NOR FOUND and THE VIOLIN). At Théâtre de la Place, Liège (Centre Dramatique de la Communauté Française). Directed by Mathias Simons.

October 9 to November 1: Pièces courtes : NI PERDUE NI RETROUVEE, UN VERRE DE CREPUSCULE, LA PLUIE, LE VIOLON ET LES YEUX DE SOPHIA (short plays : NEITHER LOST NOR FOUND , A GLASS OF TWILIGHT, THE RAIN, THE VIOLIN and SOPHIA'S EYES). At Théâtre Proscénium, Paris. Directed by Pierre Vincent (Compagnie Issue de secours).

3 / 4 October. UNE HEURE AVANT LA MORT DE MON FRERE (THE HOUR BEFORE MY BROTHER DIES). At Théâtre de Terrasson. Directed by Colette Froidefont (Compagnie Le Sorbier). With Nicolas Senty and Marie Delmarès. Return season at Théâtre Molière, Bordeaux, March 24, to 26 2004. Touring in 2004-2005.

October 3 to November 8: CINQ HOMMES (FIVE MEN). Commissioned by Compagnie Théâtrale Müh. At Théâtre du Rond-Point, Paris. Directed by Stéphane Müh. Designed by Jean Rabasse. With Jean-Pierre Bagot, Éric Caruso, Daniel Delabesse, Alain Fromager et Samir Guesmi.

CINQ HOMMES was broadcast on Arte (national television) on March 6, 2004.

July 24 to 27: LA PLUIE, GARÇON SANS VISAGE et KADDISH (THE RAIN, BOY WITH NO FACE and KADDISH). Directed by Yaël Bacry (Compagnie Les Pas). Gare au Théâtre, Vitry-sur-Seine.

June 6 to 8: LE CHEMIN DES POSSIBLES (THE POSSIBLE WAYS : a sequence of twenty short plays). Part one of OU VA LE MONDE?, a project conceived and directed by Michel André (Compagnie de la Cité). At Théâtre du Merlan, Scène Nationale, Marseille.

May 19: lecture de pièces courtes : AVIS AUX INTERESSES, UN VERRE DE CREPUSCULE et DUO (a public reading of three short plays : TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, A GLASS OF TWILIGHT and DUET). At Théâtre des Deux Rives, CDR Rouen. Directed by Jean-Paul Viot and Rosemary Fournier.

May 10 to 16 : CROQUEMITAINE (BOGEYMAN). Directed by Carole Thibaut (Compagnie Sambre). At l'Espace Germinal Fosses. Return season : December 11, 2003 to January 18, 2004, Lavoir Moderne Parisien, Paris.

January 28 to February 18 : CISEAUX, PAPIER, CAILLOU et LE RECIT (SCISSORS, PAPER, ROCK and THE TELLING) : At Abbaye aux Dames, Saintes ; also at La Rochelle (February). Directed by Claudie-Catherine Landy (Compagnie Toujours à l'horizon). Touring to : Thouars, Rochefort etc.

January 27 to 31 : MOITIE MOITIE (HALF & HALF). At L'Hippodrome, Scène Nationale de Douai. Directed by Laurent Hatat (Compagnie Anima Motrix). Return season February 4 to 15 at Salon de Théâtre, Tourcoing ; also at la Comédie de Béthune, in June, 2003.

'PROMENADE KEENE' : L'Hippodrome's artistic director, Marie-Agnès Sevestre, presented a suite of three other texts during the production of HALF AND HALF : LA PLUIE (THE RAIN, directed and performed by Alexandre Haslé) ; LA TERRE, LEUR DEMEURE (THE EARTH THEIR MANSION, directed by Jacques Descorde, Compagnie des Docks) and KADDISH (created by Angès Oudot).

Note : LA PLUIE has been touring since 2001. It has been produced in cities such as Paris, Auray, Crosne, Pau, Gradignan, Rochefort, Vanes, Saint Malo, Gauchy, Rennes, Brest, Lille and at Scène Nationale de Calais, Scène Nationale de Quimper, Scène Nationale de Loos en Gohelle as well as in Morocco and in Aoste, Italy.

February 4 to 8: CE QUI DEMEURE, un ensemble de trois pièces courtes : CE QUI DEMEURE, MONOLOGUE SANS TITRE et NI PERDUE NI RETROUVEE (a trio of short plays : WHAT REMAINS, UNTITLED MONOLOGUE and NEITHER LOST NOR FOUND). Directed by Christophe Piret (Compagnie Théâtre de chambre). At Théâtre de la Verrière, Lille, Return season at Montreuil-sur-Mer in March.

2002

kaddish : création les 29 & 30 novembre 2002, Festival Objets et Comédies, Théâtre Rutebeuf (Clichy), fabrication, manipulation et jeu Agnès Oudot. Tournée.

Silence complice : création le 20 novembre 2002, Le Mans. Mise en scène Delphine Lefort (Cie Jusqu'au bout de la nuit). Reprise à Nantes en avril 2003 et février 2004 (Terrain Neutre Théâtre).

Une heure avant la mort de mon frère : création le 15 octobre 2002, Colmar. Mise en scène Sandra Spiry (Cie Quartier Rose), avec Fernando Patriarca et Clarisse Goffredi. Reprise à Strasbourg en janvier 2003. Puis au Festival Avignon Off en juillet 2004.

Puisque tu es des miens : lecture publique dirigée par Carole Thibaut à l'Espace Germinal (Fosses), le 13 octobre 2002, en partenariat avec l'Association Théâtrales. Création prévue en 2004 dans une mise en scène Carole Thibaut.

les paroles : commande d'écriture pour deux comédiens à l'initiative de Jean Lebeau (Théâtres de Nîmes) pour le projet Un noir, une blanche. Avec Henriette Torrenta (Helen) et Thierry Coma (Paul). Le spectacle, qui réunira 4 auteurs, sera créé à Nîmes le 8 octobre 2002 dans une mise en scène de Michel Dezoteux. Reprise au Théâtre Varia (Bruxelles), puis au Centre Wallonies Bruxelles (Paris), les 6, 7 et 8 mars 2003.

La Marche de l'architecte : création le 9 juillet 2002 au Festival d'Avignon - Cloître des Célestins. Mise en scène Renaud Cojo (Compagnie Ouvre le chien). Scénographie de Claude Chestier. Tournée nationale de novembre 2002 à février 2003.

Lecture publique, dans le cadre du Festival (Jardins de Mons), de la terre, leur demeure et de kaddish (le 13 juillet).

juin 2002 : lectures scéniques de 8 pièces courtes dirigées par Fernando Patriarca - Compagnie Quartier Rose (Colmar) ; reprise à l'Atelier du Rhin (Colmar) en mai 2003.

kaddish, deux tibias & duo : création le 25 mai au Théâtre le Vanves (Massy). Mise en scène Mylène Padoan (Compagnie Les Mille pas). Avec Dominique Fidon et François Patissier. Reprise les 12 et 13 mars 2004, Centre Culturel Robert Desnos, Ris-Orangis (91).

Terminus : création le 17 avril 2002 au Théâtre de la Place des Martyr (Bruxelles). Mise en scène Marcel Delval. Scénographie Daniel Scahaise.

ni perdus ni retrouvés : un ensemble de 3 pièces courtes comprenant ciseaux, papier, caillou, avis aux intéressés & ni perdue ni retrouvée. Création les 26 et 27 avril 2002 au Théâtre de Verre (Châteaubriant). Reprise en mai 2002 au Lieu Unique (Scène Nationale de Nantes) puis en juin au festival Repérages (Angers). Mise en scène Hervé Guilloteau.

Lectures le mardi 2 avril à la Médiathèque de Saint-Herblain (à l'initiative de Bernard Bretonnière).

Terminus : création au Théâtre Nationale de Toulouse le 26 mars 2002, Tournée (Niort, La Rochelle, Bordeaux) et reprise au Théâtre de la Ville Les Abesses en mai-juin 2002. Mise en scène Laurent Laffargue

(Compagnie du Soleil Bleu). Scénographie Philippe Casaban et Éric Charbeau. Lumières Patrice Trottier.

Toutes-Âmes (All Souls) : création le 5 mars 2002 au Théâtre Varia (Bruxelles). Mise en scène Marcel Delval.

la pluie : conception et jeu Véronique Mailliard (mars 2002). Reprise en septembre 2002 à la Maison du Comédien-Maria Casarès (Charente). Festival Court Toujours, Poitiers, février 2004...

Une heure avant la mort de mon frère : lecture publique dirigée par Vincent Collin les 22 et 23 février au Centre Dramatique de l'océan Indien / Théâtre du Grand Marché (Saint-Denis de la Réunion).

terre natale : création le 19 février 2002 à la Halle aux grains, Scène Nationale de Blois. Mise en scène Laurent Gutmann. Avec Catherine Vinatier, Annie Mercier, Daniel Delabesse, Charlotte Corman et Roman Girelli. Tournée prévue au printemps 2003.

2001

la terre, leur demeure : créée le 12 novembre 2001 au Théâtre des Roches (Montreuil), la pièce tournera dans la Région Nord en février et mars. Mise en scène Jacques Descorde (Compagnie Les Docks). Avec Jacques Descorde, Emmanuelle Marie et Jean-Charles Chagachbanian.

Silence complice : création le 30 octobre 2001 au Théâtre des Déchargeurs (Paris). Mise en scène Béla Grushka, avec Cansel Elsin (John) et Emmanuel Vieilly (Bill) (Compagnie De Cezigs).

la pluie et le premier train (deux monologues) : créé en octobre 2001, le spectacle tournera dans la Région Rhône-Alpes en janvier et mars. Mise en scène Stéphane Müh.

la terre, leur demeure et autres pièces courtes : création le 8 septembre 2001 au Théâtre du Grütli (Genève). Mise en scène Gilles Laubert (Compagnie des Cris).

la pluie : création le 27 avril 2001 au Théâtre de la Commune-CDN d'Aubervilliers (Saison La Vie en jeu : Lignes de vie). Spectacle de marionnettes. Fabrication, manipulation et jeu Alexandre Haslé (Compagnie Les lendemains de la veille). Reprise au Festival d'Avignon, du 10 au 24 juillet 2001 au théâtre du Chêne Noir. Tournée au Maroc en janvier 2002. Tournée nationale en 2002-2004.

Silence complice : création le 20 avril 2001, à Harnes (Centre Jacques Prévert). Tournée dans la région Nord, à Hénin-Beaumont, Béthune et Lille en janvier-février 2002. Mise en scène Stéphane Titelein (Compagnie Émile Pertuis), avec Nicolas Crombet (Bill) et Bruno Tuchzer (John). Scénographie Frédérique Bertrand.

Low : création du 27 février au 24 mars 2001 au Théâtre de Poche (Bruxelles) dans le cadre de "Un festival et six spectacles du monde entier". Mise en scène Mouss, avec Sarah Antoine (Emma) et Laurent Chauvet (Jay).

avis aux intéressés (un ensemble de quatre textes courts comprenant avis aux intéressés, monologue sans titre, un tabouret à trois pieds & deux tibias) : création du 16 février au 3 mars 2001 au théâtre Le Rio (Grenoble). Mise en scène Stéphane Müh, avec Jean Miez, Philippe Maymat et Samir Guesmi. Scénographie Jean Rabasse.

Saisons précédentes (previous seasons)

avis aux intéressés, le récit et la pluie : trois textes courts mis en lecture le 13 mars 2000 par Didier Bezace au Théâtre de la Commune, avec notamment André

Marcon, Thierry Gibault, Gérard Cesbron, Daniel Delabesse, Didier Bezace et Catherine Mouchet.

Lecture publique de la pluie et avis aux intéressés dirigée par Jean-Marc Eder le 27 mai 2000 - Comédie du Livre de Montpellier. Diffusion de avis aux intéressés et le récit sur France Culture les 13 et 14 juin 2000 - réalisation Myron Meerson.

Silence complice : création le 13 octobre 1999 au Théâtre National de Toulouse. Mise en scène Jacques Nichet, avec Claude Duparfait et Alain Mergnat. Reprise en Mars 2000 au Théâtre de la Commune-CDN d'Aubervilliers. Diffusion en 5 épisodes sur France-Culture (programme Fiction) - du 2 au 6 novembre 1998 - réalisation Jean-Matthieu Zahnd.

Terminus : diffusion sur France-Culture le 9 octobre 1999 - réalisation Jacques Taroni.

Une église vide : monologue sur le théâtre - lecture à la Maison du Off (Avignon 99) - reprise du 19 octobre au 15 décembre dans le cadre de Terre de jeux.

la terre, leur demeure : pièce en un acte - commande d'écriture de Roland Fichet (Théâtre de Folle Pensée) pour NAISSANCES / LE CHAOS DU NOUVEAU.

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La Marche de l'architecte et les paroles (juin 2002)

moitié-moitié et Cinq Hommes (octobre 2003)

Autres textes disponibles en français (other texts available in French)

Low

Puisque tu es des miens

Le Chemin des possibles

En ces temps incertains...

Et nombre de monologues et pièces courtes.

Traductions en cours (translations in progress)

Beneath Heaven (1995)

The Ninth Moon (1999)

The Falling Man (1999 - monologue)
Vanishing Points (pièce radiophonique)

Commandes d'écriture (commissioned work)

1999 : THE EARTH THEIR MANSION : Théâtre de Folle Pensee.

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2002 : THE POSSIBLE WAYS : Compagnie de la Cité, Marseille

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