



Friday, November 7, 2014, 8pm
Saturday, November 8, 2014, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Théâtre de la Ville-Paris in
Six Characters in Search of an Author



Jean-Louis Fernandez

by Luigi Pirandello

Translation and Adaptation by François Regnault

Direction by Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota

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Six Characters in Search of an Author

by Luigi Pirandello

CREATIVE TEAM

Director Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota
Assistant Director Christophe Lemaire
Artistic Collaborator François Regnault
Set and Lighting Design Yves Collet
Music Jefferson Lembeye
Costumes Corinne Baudelot
Makeup Catherine Nicolas

CAST

The Characters

The Father Hugues Quester
The Step-daughter Valérie Dashwood
The Mother Sarah Karbasnikoff
The Son Stéphane Krähenbühl
The Teenager Walter N'guyen
The Little Girl Anna Spycher
Madame Pace Céline Carrère

The Director Alain Libolt
The Actors Charles-Roger Bour, Sandra Faure,
Olivier Le Borgne, Gaëlle Guillou
The Stage Manager Gérard Maillet
The Carpenter Pascal Vuillemot
The Assistant Jauris Casanova

PRODUCTION

Théâtre de la Ville-Paris in co-production with Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg

To be performed in French with English surtitles.

U.S. tour produced by David Eden Productions, Ltd.

The U.S. tour of Théâtre de la Ville is supported by the French-American Fund for Contemporary Theater, a program of FACE; Mairie de Paris; Institut Français; Vivendi; and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States.

LOOKING FOR ANY DRAMA

AN EMPTY THEATER, a bare stage, no need to pretend. Or rather, yes. It is the very issue of pretense that is raised here, that of the relation between illusion and reality. Is it because today, it seems that reality has replaced the idea, that the appearance of this world just passes by and is only an illusion, that we believe that “the whole world is a stage”?

The feeling is more that the illusion has overcome bodies and souls, and caused such a discomfort of hopelessly divided human beings. We gather on a ghostly stage, invaded by bodies caught in their dreams. We then witness the lives of these characters through poorly controlled agitations, poorly suppressed past violence, as they mingle in the laboratory of theatrical activity.

Pirandello's play can express its power, its tremendous strength, because it contains a mystery which is the contamination of the visible world by the invisible world, a “surreal world,” where the hidden magic, terrifying and deadly, which we could not anticipate, naturally takes its place in theater.

The theater is so overwhelmed by what is essential, its own heart, and its root: the characters! Characters that are not only in search of an author, but of theater as a whole, theater must be at their service, be sucked in by their existence, their incompleteness, by their violent drama that is not even consumed. A tragedy that must be rehearsed to make it happen.

The richness of this overlapping generates dizziness and stems a reflection on contemporary theater in its most intimate ins and outs. The theater world becomes the place where all is possible: from barely disguised incest to the violent death of innocents.

The family of characters is in the future compared to actors who are in the present, and who act as a chorus to the present.

And the sudden appearance of Madame Pace becomes the unveiling of the very power of the stage, which opens a gap where the character required by the situation slips in, the drama of the sex and death scene can then take place. Here and now we reinvent a past action, a primal scene. For the step-daughter, this repetition has no other goal than to seal the irreversible aspect of incest.

This takes place under the gaze of the theater director, who sees that these characters gain fresh blood from being on stage—so that they can be guilty victims among the living rather than heroes among the dead, and so that they can delude themselves about their story. This is a unique opportunity to seek to exceed the limits of theater, not by denying them but by bringing them to paradoxical consequences. To have a modern dream: a curtain drops in a breath of air, throbbing like a living thing, freezes in absolute stillness; a sheet becomes a home or a theater.

A mobile boxing ring, gallows, a raft, where all meet—to quote the father—“Chained and nailed for eternity.”

Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota

Luigi Pirandello (1867–1936) was born in Girgenti, Sicily. He studied philology at Rome and at Bonn and wrote a dissertation on the dialect of his native town (1891). From 1897 to 1922, he was professor of aesthetics and stylistics at the *Real Istituto di Magistere Femminile* in Rome. Pirandello's work is impressive by its sheer volume. He wrote a great number of novellas which were collected under the title *Novelle per un anno* (15 volumes, 1922–1937). Of his six novels, the best known are *Il fu Mattia Pascal* ("The Late Mattia Pascal," 1904), *I vecchi e i giovani* ("The Old and the Young," 1913), *Si gira* ("Shoot!," 1916), and *Uno, nessuno e centomila* ("One, None, and a Hundred Thousand," 1926).

But Pirandello's greatest achievement is in his plays. He wrote a large number of dramas which were published, between 1918 and 1935, under the collective title of *Maschere nude* ("Naked Masks"). The title is programmatic. Pirandello is always preoccupied with the problem of identity. The self exists to him only in relation to others; it consists of changing facets that hide an inscrutable abyss. In a play like *Così è (se vi pare)* ("Right You Are (If You Think You Are)," 1918), two people hold contradictory notions about the identity of a third person. The protagonist in *Vestire gli ignudi* ("To Clothe the Naked," 1923) tries to establish her individuality by assuming various identities, which are successively stripped from her; she gradually realizes her true position in the social order and in the end dies "naked," without a social mask, in both her own and her friends' eyes. Similarly, in *Enrico IV* ("Henry IV," 1922) a man supposedly mad imagines that he is a medieval emperor, and his imagination and reality are strangely confused. The conflict between illusion and reality is central in *La vita che ti diedi* ("The Life I Gave You," 1924), in which Anna's long-lost son returns home and contradicts her mental conception of him. However, his death resolves Anna's conflict; she clings to illusion rather than to reality. The analysis and dissolution of a unified self are carried to an extreme in *Sei personaggi in cerca*

d'autore ("Six Characters in Search of an Author," 1921), where the stage itself, the symbol of appearance versus reality, becomes the setting of the play.

The attitudes expressed in *L'Umorismo* ("Humor," 1908), an early essay, are fundamental to all of Pirandello's plays. His characters attempt to fulfill their self-seeking roles and are defeated by life itself which, always changing, enables them to see their perversity. This is Pirandello's humor, an irony which arises from the contradictions inherent in life.

From Nobel Lectures, Literature, 1901–1967
Ed. Horst Frenz, Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam (1969)

The **Théâtre de la Ville-Paris**, Paris, brings together the collaborators who have been working with Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota for close to 20 years, from the Théâtre des Millefontaines Company, via the Comédie de Reims (Centre Dramatique National) for seven years. Among works developed by the company are Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* (1999), Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (2001), Ionesco's *Rhinocéros* (2005) and *Ionesco Suite* (2012), Brecht's *Man for Man* (2008), Horvath's *Casimir and Caroline* (2009), Vitrac's *Victor, or Power to the Children* (2012), as well as Fabrice Melquiot's *Ma vie de chandelle* ["My Life as a Candle"] (2006), *Marcia Hesse* (2007), *Wanted Petula, Bouli année zéro*, and Balzac's *Le Faiseur*.

Says the company: "We share the constant need for periods of research, a kind of laboratory work, providing the possibility to explore in full a writer's work and to reflect on the forms of representation and interpretation."

Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota (*director*) was born in June 1970, the son of Portuguese actress Teresa Mota and French director and playwright Richard Demarcy. He founded the Compagnie des Millefontaines in 1988 and was director of La Comédie de Reims (Centre

Dramatique National) from 2002 to 2008. He has directed Théâtre de la Ville since 2008, and has served as general director of the Festival d'Automne in Paris since 2011. Among the many works Mr. Demarcy-Mota has directed for the stage are *Caligula* by Albert Camus (Lycée Rodin, 1988); *The Suicide* by Nicolai Erdman (Paris V University, 1990); *The Story of the Soldier* by Ramuz (Théâtre de la Commune d'Aubervilliers, 1993–1994); *Leonce and Lena* by Büchner (Théâtre de la Commune d'Aubervilliers, 1995–1996); *Love's Labour's Lost* by Shakespeare (Blanc Mesnil and Théâtre de la Ville, 1998–1999); *Marat Sade* by Peter Weiss (Théâtre de la Commune d'Aubervilliers, 2000), *Six Characters in Search of an Author* by Pirandello (2001), *Le Diable en partage, L'Inattendu* (Théâtre de la Bastille, 2001–2003), and *Ma vie de chandelle*, all by Fabrice Melquiot (CDN de Reims, Théâtre de la Ville, 2004); *Rhinocéros* by Ionesco (Théâtre de la Ville, 2004–2006); *Marcia Hesse* by Mr. Melquiot (CDN de Reims, Théâtre de la Ville, 2005–2007); *L'Autre Côté*, an opera by Bruno Mantovani (Festival Musica, Strasbourg, 2006); *Tanto amor desperdido* by Shakespeare (bilingual French-Portuguese version, Teatro Nacional Dona Maria II Lisbon, International Naples Festival, 2007); *Man Is Man* by Brecht (Théâtre de la Ville, 2007); *Casimir and Caroline* by Horváth and *Wanted Petula* (Théâtre de la Ville, 2009) and *Bouli année zero*, both by Mr. Melquiot (Théâtre de la Ville, 2010); *Rhinocéros* by Ionesco (restaging, Théâtre de la Ville, 2011); *Victor, or Power to the Children* by Roger Vitrac (Théâtre de la Ville, 2012), and *Le Faiseur* by Balzac (Théâtre de la Ville, Abbesses, March 2014).

Born in 1938, **François Regnault** (*translator*) studied philosophy at the Lycée Louis-Le-Grand before moving on to the École Normale Supérieure in 1959. At the École Normale he attended the seminars of Louis Althusser and Jacques Lacan in the early 1960s, and was a member of *Cahiers du Cinéma's* editorial

board and the Cercle d'épistémologie from their inception in 1966. From 1964 to 1970, he taught at the Lycée de Reims, where he became a close friend of Alain Badiou. In 1970, he joined the Department of Philosophy headed by Michel Foucault at the new University of Paris VIII (Vincennes). In 1974, he moved to Paris VIII's Department of Psychoanalysis, where he remained until his retirement from teaching.

Starting in the early 1970s, Mr. Regnault's work expanded to include, alongside philosophy and psychoanalysis, a practical involvement in theater. Coming from a family with theatrical connections, in 1973 he translated Tankred Dorst's *Toller* (1968) for Patrice Chéreau. He collaborated with Mr. Chéreau on several productions, culminating with *Peer Gynt* in 1981. In 1974, with Brigitte Jaques-Wajeman, he founded the Pandora Company. He has continued to work in the theater ever since, as a translator (of, among many other works, Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* and J. M. Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*) and as a theorist, dramaturge, and playwright. From 1991 to 1997, again with Ms. Jaques-Wajeman, he co-directed the Théâtre de la Commune (Pandora) at Aubervilliers, and from 1994 to 2001 he taught diction at the Conservatoire National d'Art Dramatique in Paris.

He joined Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota's ensemble in 1999 for the translation and dramaturgy of *Love's Labour's Lost*. He has since collaborated on most of the productions.

Christophe Lemaire (*assistant director*) is a longtime friend and collaborator of Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota. He was part of the founding and permanent team of the Théâtre des Millefontaines, as an assistant director and an artistic collaborator. He has worked on every production and on every theatrical activity of the company's since high school.

Yves Collet (*set and lighting design*) has designed sets and lights for Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota since 1998, including *Love's*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Labour's Lost, *Marat/Sade*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, *Rhinocéros*, *L'Inattendu*, *Le Diable en partage*, *Ma vie de chandelle*, *Marcia Hesse*, *Man Is Man*, *Wanted Petula*, *Casimir and Caroline*, *Victor, or Power to the Children*, and *Le faiseur*. He has also designed sets for *L'Autre Côté*, an opera by Bruno Mantovani on a libretto by François Regnault, directed by Mr. Demarcy-Mota at Opéra National du Rhin. With the artistic ensemble, he works on other formats and has redesigned the public spaces of Théâtre de la Ville. He also collaborates with Catherine Dasté, Adel Hakim, Claude Buchwald, Elisabeth Chailloux, and Brigitte Jaques-Wajeman.

Jefferson Lembeye (*music and sound design*) has composed music for all of Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota's productions since 1998. Within the artistic ensemble of Théâtre de la Ville, he composes and performs on a regular basis for poetry recitals and small format work. His work mixes acoustic and electronic music. He has worked with Catherine Hiegel, Ricardo Lopez Munoz, and for dance with L'expérience Harmaat, Retouramont, and Kirvat. He also works in cinema and is a co-founder of the Mix Collective.

After studying set design at the International School of Arts and Research in Nice, **Corinne Baudelot** (*costume design*) worked at the Festival d'Avignon. She worked with Mathilde Monnier and Jean-François Duroure for many of their creations, collaborated with Hervé Robbe and Jacques Pattarozzi, and designed costumes for Kenzo's fashion shows. She also works with such circus artists as

Johann Le Guillerm. Since 2001, she has designed the costumes for most of Mr. Demarcy-Mota's productions.

David Eden Productions, Ltd. (*U.S. tour producer*) has been one of the leading American organizations devoted to producing international work in the United States for over 25 years. Most recently, David Eden Productions has produced U.S. tours of Bouffes du Nord's *The Suit* (2013–2014), Batsheva Dance Company (2012, 2009, 2004, 1998), Théâtre de la Ville's production of Ionesco's *Rhinocéros* (2012), the Republic of Georgia's Ensemble Basiani (2012), Gate Theatre Dublin's *Endgame/Watt* (2011) and *Krapp's Last Tape* (2011, 2012), Maly Drama Theatre's *Three Sisters* (2012) at BAM, as well as North American tours of Galway's Druid Theatre's *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (2011), *The Walworth Farce* (2009) and *DruidSynge: The Shadow of the Glen and The Playboy of the Western World* (2008). Other recent tours include Maly Drama Theatre's *Uncle Vanya* (2010), Gate Theatre Dublin's *Waiting for Godot* (2006), Declan Donnellan's *Twelfth Night* (2006), Propeller's *The Winter's Tale* (2005), Piccolo Teatro di Milano's *Arlecchino* (2005), the Russian Patriarchate Choir of Moscow (2007), and the State Ballet of Georgia with the legendary Bolshoi prima ballerina Nina Ananiashvili (2007, 2008, 2009).

The staff of David Eden Productions includes David Eden, *President*; Nicholas Elliott, *Company Manager and Title Operator*; Erica Charpentier, *General Manager*; Elise-Ann Konstantin, *Visa Coordinator*; and Lori Harrison of Atlas Travel, *Travel Agent*.