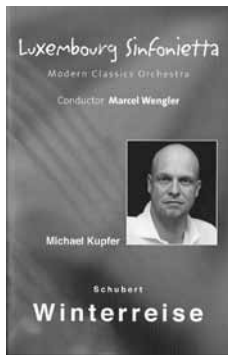


KULTUR-TIPPS



Luxembourg Sinfonietta : Winterreise

(ft) - Cette saison, le Grand Théâtre proposera pas moins de deux versions du « Winterreise » de Schubert, l'une conforme à la partition originale, c'est-à-dire pour voix et accompagnement au piano, l'autre en version orchestrale. Pour s'y préparer, ou tout simplement pour un intense plaisir musical, on pourra regarder le DVD récemment publié par les éditions LGNM (Luxemburger Gesellschaft

für neue Musik). Il s'agit de la captation en direct au Théâtre d'Esch, le 6 février 2014, du concert donné par le Luxembourg Sinfonietta. Le célèbre cycle de lieder du compositeur viennois y est joué dans un arrangement pour petit ensemble du Luxembourgeois Marcel Wengler, qui en assure également la direction. Le rôle du voyageur hivernal, l'un des plus tristes de l'histoire de la musique, est tenu avec brio par le baryton Michael Kupfer, avec un jeu scénique minimaliste qui laisse toute sa place à l'émotion. L'arrangement de Wengler utilise deux touches insolites : un accordéon et une mandoline. Loin d'apparaître incongrus, ces instruments se mêlent avec bonheur à l'ensemble, lui conférant une originalité que contrebalance le respect intégral de la partie chantée et apportent par leur sonorité plus populaire un surcroît d'humanisme à une œuvre éminemment pessimiste. Wengler parvient à multiplier les timbres tout en sachant rester en retrait pour laisser flotter les mélodies. Un bien bel hommage à Schubert par un compositeur et un ensemble luxembourgeois de qualité.

« Winterreise », par Michael Kupfer et le Luxembourg Sinfonietta sous la direction de Marcel Wengler, éditions LGNM, à commander auprès de info@luxembourg-sinfonietta.lu

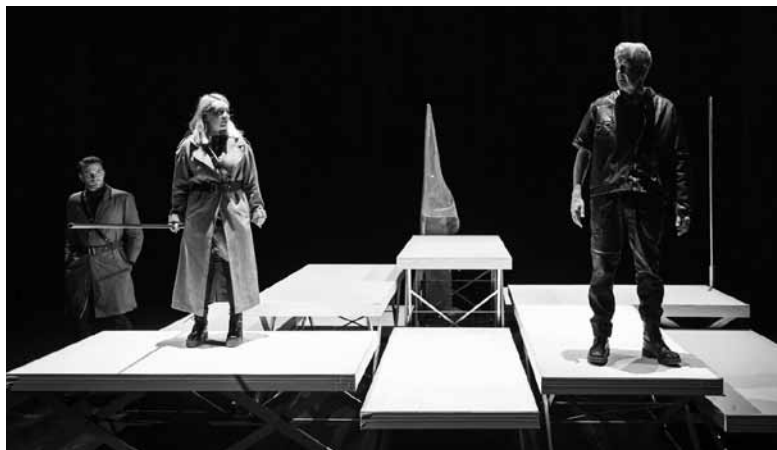


FOTO: RICARDO VAZ PALMA

Morbide Wortschlacht

(avt) - Heiner Müllers Theaterstück „Philoktet, das auf einer der Tragödien Sophokles' sowie antinationalistischen Stücken Bertolt Brechts basiert, ist wahrlich keine leichte Kost. Mehr noch als um die Geschichte von drei großen Helden des Trojanischen Krieges, dessen Ausgang in ihren Händen liegt, geht es in Müllers Stück um menschliche und politische Manipulation im Allgemeinen. „Was wir hier zeigen, hat keine Moral. Sie sind gewarnt, sie haben nichts zu lachen, bei dem was wir jetzt miteinander machen!“ warnt der Luxemburger Marco Lorenzini, schalkhaft um die Ecke des Vorhangs grinsend, zu Beginn des Stücks. Und fürwahr: In Karolina Markiewicz's experimenteller Bühnenadaptation liefern sich zwei schwache Schauspieler mit dem alten Bühnenhasen Lorenzini eine wahre Wortschlacht. Lorenzini spielt den wütenden Rächer Philoktet überzeugend furios und lässt nach einem Schlangenbiss einen Schrei ertönen, der einem durch Mark und Bein geht. Ada Günther dagegen verharrt während des gesamten Stücks in ein und derselben Haltung, und auch Dennis Laubenthal wirkt in der Dreierbesetzung blass. Wortfetzen und morbide Monologe fliegen einem nur so um die Ohren, und am Ende bleibt nur Leere und Melancholie, die weder durch die streckenweise einfallsreiche Belichtung noch durch das musikalische Intro oder den Ausklang gemildert wird: psychotische Klänge, die in ihrer schrägen Interpretation an Björk erinnern.

KULTUR

POETRY AND THEATER

Poet-in-residence

Florent Toniello

He's a successful Luxembourgish writer who chose already decades ago to live his dream abroad and write in English. Meet Pierre Joris, artist-in-residence this season at the Théâtre national du Luxembourg.

When starting a conversation with Pierre Joris, any poetry enthusiast has to be humbled by the achievements of the Strasbourg-born Luxembourger now residing in New York: close to 50 books published, ranging from poetry and essays to translations and anthologies. Among these are three volumes of the critically acclaimed "Poems for the Millennium" series (co-authored with Jerome Rothenberg and Habib Tengour), gathering poems from hundreds of twentieth-century avant-garde writers from all over the world. Yet Joris remains very approachable; poetry, after all, is also a humbling discipline that often requires great efforts to only offer a small albeit passionate public in return. This season's residence is thus an opportunity to widen his public in Luxembourg.

Innovative poetry to describe today's world

While most of his countrymen choose to pursue a literary career in French or German, the poet decided himself for English. "At 18, I had started to write in German and in French, but the problematic of post-War German literature was not mine, and I was totally not interested in what the French were doing at the time," Joris explained last year in an interview with American author Paul Auster. So English it was, a choice influenced as well by childhood memories of American movies and a copy of "On the Road" abandoned by a young couple on a Spanish beach. Probably the reason he remains less known in his native country than in the United States, despite six books published in the Grand-Duchy by Éditions Phi.

How would Joris describe his own poetry? "A poem needs to be a dis-

covery. I get my first line from various sources of inspiration: other poems, newspaper articles, dreams, something I read on the back of a truck - but I do not wish to know where it takes me, otherwise I lose all interest." This very personal view of creative writing is also the reason why he did not publish any novel: doing so would mean having a predefined plan, which Joris seems above all allergic to. And yet he confesses reading classic poetry with pleasure: "Of course I enjoy rereading Shakespeare's sonnets. But I do not believe that a traditional sonnet is a meaningful format to describe today's world."

The poet's innovative and modern style will be at the forefront of this year's TNL season. Encouraged by friends Nico Helminger and Jean Portante, who also were artists-in-residence, Joris took up the challenge and will offer two very different pieces to the Luxembourgish public. The first one, "The Gulf (between You and Me)", already premiered in the United States while he is still currently writing the second one, "The Agony of I.B.". The former is a musical triptych on his poetry, commissioned by the Philadelphia-based choir The Crossing, directed by Donald Nally, on the Deep Water Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. The latter is a theater play, a genre he had not yet ventured into. "Although my work was never theatrical, it has always been tied to public performance. Public readings are an essential component of American poetry - so in a way my poems are similar to music scores that need to be interpreted on stage to be complete."

Speaking of scores, each part of "The Gulf" was given to a different composer (Gene Coleman, Chris Jonas and Gabriel Jackson), resulting in three very different atmospheres. They were presented on three different evenings during summer 2013, following a first event where Joris read his own text. In Luxembourg, the triptych will be performed for the first

Pierre Joris, 69, here taking part in a performance designed by his wife Nicole Peyrafitte in Aix-en-Provence last June.



PICTURE: SERGE GUITARD

time in one single evening, which the author is understandably quite excited about. "On top of my research, I also did a lot of fieldwork to write that piece. My wife and I drove to Florida and witnessed the scale of the disaster. Among others, I interviewed the fisherwoman and activist Kindra Arnesen, whose words are included in the third part."

Fighting Moloch with words

It is not difficult to feel that, despite being a commissioned work, "The Gulf" offers the poet the opportunity to take a political stand: "Moloch, Moloch / Moloch - / rules, Moloch / rules / all rules are broken when Moloch rules", he writes in the final verses of the first part, in a discreet homage to Allen Ginsberg's "Howl". And when Joris adds later "the Vietnamese & the Cambodian communities / a really tough time being hired on / the great language barrier: / 90% of the information put out / in the first 60 days was English only," he sneaks in a parallel between the predominance of the English language and the almighty power of the conglomerate between the US government and BP that minimized social and environmental unrest. This combination of lyricism and political criticism is to be found throughout Joris's poetry.

"The Agony of I.B.", to be staged next June in a world premiere, is by contrast an entirely personal project narrating the last days of Austrian poetess Ingeborg Bachmann. Besides Max Frisch and Hans Werner Henze, the other major character is Paul Celan, the famous German language Romanian poet. "Bachmann and Celan have been important to me from the very beginning of my career: after all, I have been translating Celan for about 50 years! The two met in 1948, two years after I was born, and Bachmann died in 1973, after I left Europe. So I was interested in looking back on this continent I was educated in af-

ter the War," he comments. The play starts with the accident that led the Austrian author to fall into a coma, and then shows her being visited by the voices of the most important men in her life. Here, the evil English language that left some communities uninformed in "The Gulf" turns into a decisive advantage: it introduces a distance factor that the playwright can use to convey his own vision, rather than having to quote his characters in their original language and somehow dilute his personal touch.

How does writing for the theater modify Joris's routine? True to his appreciation of everything disruptive, he

explains: "I have to travel between New York and Luxembourg with 23 kilograms of books, the complete works of all writers mentioned in my play. Every day I dive into Bachmann's words. Yet I am not sure I will succeed; writing this is taking a big risk, but that is what makes it worthwhile." Master of parallels, Joris also mentions that Bachmann, not as recognized as she should be, had a literary career that started with poetry and evolved onto prose. "The next books I have in the making will also be in prose, although not using a specific genre - and certainly not novels." While waiting for the results of this new endeavor, theatergoers will have this season the opportunity to discover or rediscover a unique Luxembourgish author. For those who enjoy the experience, there will be plenty to read after the performances.

Pierre Joris's web site: www.pierrejoris.com
At the TNL this season:

"The Gulf (between You and Me)",
October 23rd and 28th at 8pm,
October 25th at 5pm.

"The Agony of I.B.", June 14th, 17th, 18th and
21st at 8pm.

A SHIPWRECK at the heart that the
gulf widens
between water & oil, you & me
fish & water, me & you
that the
Abyss
between water & water, you & you
me & me, oil & fish
widened then whitened
there is slack growing
raging underwater in the heart
underheart in the water
on the brain

From "The Gulf (between You and Me)", first part. Text by Pierre Joris,
music by Gene Coleman.