



IN SHORT

Studio ORKA is a unique collective of **designers and actors**, continuously inspiring one another.

They always create **site specific theatre** linked to a original location; story and design organically arise inspired by that location.

The stage designs are ORKA's hallmark: they are playful, poetic, and a lot more than merely a decor. They create settings to create an entire world, uplifting and transforming the location into an environment for actors and audience to get lost.

ORKA creates performances **for children and adults**.

In ten years time Studio ORKA has grown into one of the most prestigious companies, being a youth theatre company as well as a theatre company tout court. They are well known and valued in both Belgium as well as abroad, and have been invited to many festivals. Thanks to the synergy between inspiring locations, layered stories, the 'difficult' themes being addressed with a sense of humour, the poetic strength of the decor, the refreshing challenge of theatre codes, the genuine performance pleasure, the unique artistic DNA of ORKA is generated.

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ABOUT STUDIO ORKA

Studio ORKA is a collective (°2004) of designers and actors from Ghent. Their wayward design and imagery results into the creation of a startling biotope. They do have a preference for absurdity, enlargements, dreamworlds... In short, for anything in the twilight zone between imagination and reality.

ETCETERA, Evelyne Coussens:

"Sometimes youth theatre entails more mature wisdom than adult theatre - especially when arising from the minds of theatre makers/designers Philippe Van de Velde and Martine Decroos. Their performances are known for their surprising scenography on location - Studio ORKA's trademark! - and their refreshing plots.

***But Studio ORKA is more than a sum of visual gimmicks and a good story.** Below all that shimmers a regularly recurring thought, almost an ideology, about losing and finding oneself, about being stuck and being reborn into this world. This melancholic and 'adult' undertow of the 'condition human' renders their performances a depth lacking in many other children's performances. Studio ORKA doesn't picture little stories, but offers deeply human tragedy and hope. In their most recent production Chasse Patate - perhaps their most perfect show so far - performance, dramaturgy and scenography are nearly perfectly balanced. Chasse Patate can be a guideline to discover the artistic, dramaturgical and utterly humanistic universe of Studio ORKA.*



ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

The permanent crew is formed by **Philippe Van de Velde** and **Martine Decroos**, both designer and stage producer.

Martine Decroos is the artistic director/daily manager of Studio ORKA; together with the acting crew she conceives and makes the performances. She also functions as the binding element between the set designers and the actors. She

sees to it that design, technique and story are fully integrated in the show. She graduated as a graphic designer at Sint-Lucas in Ghent. She's also a teacher at The Academy of Fine Arts.

Designer **Philippe Van de Velde** also belongs to the artistic core of ORKA. He thinks up and realises all (set) ideas in his own atelier. He graduated as a interior design architect at Sint-Lucas in Ghent. Since then he has worked for several customers, thus combining his ORKAactivities with other assignments. Being a multidisciplinary artist his influence on the creating process is very important. His surprising view of the world, and how he translates this in his designs is a key element to Studio ORKA's style.

THE ARTISTIC CREW

Studio ORKA often works with the same actors because they know and understand each other that well, they share the same fantasy. The actors are involved from the very beginning. Together with Martine and Philippe they figure out the scenario, write the texts and imagine the characters. Together they create charming and touching theatre with a laugh and a tear, both for children as well as adults, who still cherish their child-like wonderment.

MAKE BELIEF - RICH STORIES

Everything they make departs from the idea of 'make belief'. Letting the audience - young or adult - believe in something that in fact isn't possible. In each performance 'something' amazes the audience, they are astonished, amused and often deeply touched by what they experience. This is done by ingenious, imaginative set designs and richly layered, funny and emotional stories that want to reach out to people of all ages.

ETCETERA, Evelyne Coussens:

"ORKA's plots are rather like a classic (Greek, Shakespearian) drama: at first there's stability, then suddenly something or someone disrupts stability, after which order has to be restored. However ORKA uses a specific variation: stability is only a facade, the stranger is the one exposing this false harmony and seemingly effortless connection between the characters. Resulting not back into the initial situation, but into a more truthful harmony – so no sustaining of the past but a fundamental change."

The necessity to once again enter the world, to engage, perhaps is the most important (but always implicit) 'message' in all of Studio ORKA's productions. That you cannot live alone, with your own sorrows, but that the outer world – however capricious and dangerous – is necessary to breathe, to live, is a bold social statement, in the present day resonating in lectures of psychiatrists as Dirk De Wachter and Damiaan Denys or philosophers as Bleri Lleshi. The reign of fear, which Denys mentions, covers threats situated in the outside world (regarding terrorism, food safety, overall regulation and cleanliness of public space), but the mechanism runs parallel to the mental threats melancholic people try to flee from: by staying inside and building high mental walls around them, these souls try not to get hurt any more. Studio ORKA asks those having been torn to shreds by the cruelty of 'the OTHER', to get up again and connect with the other and the world. This message goes way beyond the mainstream idea of 'addressing difficult subjects' in youth theatre: it's an ideological and even political statement.

SITE SPECIFIC LOCATIONS

Studio ORKA makes **site specific productions**. Starting from a wayward view on things and by means of contemporary design and technical sophistication a startling biotope is created, where, for a short while, everything can and may be possible. Studio ORKA already performed in parcs, garden allotments, basements, in old houses, a retirement home and last year they made a play staged in a real theatre, but not set up as a regular theatre play.

In 2009 Studio ORKA received the Flemish Culture Price and the 'Gouden Krekel', also they've been selected 6 times for the Flemish as well as the Dutch Theatre Festival. Studio ORKA is well known and valued in both Belgium as well as abroad, and has been invited to many festivals. Last year they were, for the first time, invited to perform at

the Ruhrtriennale, with the production 'Duikvlucht' (Sturzflüg). Their presence being part of the Ruhrtriennale's ambition to also develop a family theatre programme. As a result of this Ruhrtriennale invited ORKA again and even contributed to the show by co-producing 'Sumpfland'.

SCENOGRAPHY

The highly praised scenography of Studio ORKA is a lot more than a setting for events to take place: they are entire worlds, mental biotopes which literally 'shape' the mental turmoil the characters are subject to. Like a metaphor stands for a concept, Philippe Van de Velde's decors materialise the metaphor. Although it being more correct to say that in fact the process takes place in reverse: starting from the idea of a sketch, characters arise talking about why they live there. Thus the beginning is an image, an idea for a scenography, a location, and the characters and several plot lines simply impose themselves. The scenography is a primal character, acting on one's own (by moving, disintegrating, making noise), its 'actions' are the translation, the material reinterpretation of what's mentally happening with the characters.



PRESENTATION PLAYS

Complete presentation of all plays can be found on our website

> performances (voorstellingen) > archive



TUESDAY

Family performance on location 8 +
LOCATION: OLD CHURCH

To be presented as a family performance or a mixture of schools and adults.

Capacity: 230 persons (can be less or a bit more depending on the size of the church).

*I baptise you as Tuesday, he said, because
I found you on a Tuesday - from now on,
the most beautiful day of the week.'*

Tuesday's an old man now, nearer the end than the beginning. As he looks back on his life, which began when he was abandoned in a church by his mother (at the end of the second world war) we travel with him through time - into his memories, his dreams and the moments that shaped the person he became. To show that some things in life are (ir)reversible. **By the use of make up and costumes the actors show a whole lifetime.** Young fathers, mothers and kids in the beginning, old people, looking back at their life, at the end.

Beautifully staged in an old church, Tuesday is a magical and moving show about the people, places and experiences that make our journey through life unique. An ode to all visible (seemingly important) and all invisible (seemingly unimportant) people and events in life.



CREDITS

Production Studio ORKA /commissioned by Manchester International Festival, hetpaleis / coproduction THEATER ANTIGONE

BY/WITH: Martine Decroos, Philippe van de Velde, Dominique van Malder, Titus De Voogdt, Janne Desmet, Tania Van der Sanden, Ilse de Koe, Robrecht Vanden Thoren, Peter Monsaert, 3 kids and a choir. COACH: Peter Monsaert TECHNIQUE/DECOR: Philippe Van de Velde, Koen Demeyere, Jonas Lambrigts, Lorin Duquesne, Geert Vandewalle, Willem Rys, Jille Wellecan, Geeraard Respeel COSTUMES: Valerie Leroy, Elise Goedgezelschap, Leentje Kerremans. HAIRDO/MAKE-UP: Dorien Van Poucke, Dian Vandecruys CHOIR : about 30 singers (male and female), preferably by organizing local auditions SUPPORTED BY: the Flemish Government, the City of Ghent. Tuesday was realised with support by Tax Shelter.

PRESS

"A Christmas gift (...) Studio ORKA brings the story in warm gentle colours, they bring a meticulous text with folksy-poetic imagery and offer refined and humoristic acting." (De Morgen ****)

"Tuesday once again brings together all of ORKA's strengths: a mesmerising decor, empathic actors, authentic characters holding a secret. As in Chasse Patate and Inuk, their previous gems, they result into moments of heartwarming beauty. It's theatre to feast on." (De Standaard ***)

"Tuesday offers plenty of unexpected surprises. At times thrilling and breathtaking Studio ORKA also draws you into an utterly convincing play and existential story about people, relations and longings. Outright magic." **** (De Theaterkrant)



In each foreign country we do rehearse with the local choir who is also a main character. As well as 5 young kids. All together they tell Tuesday's story.







INUK*

a family performance, on location
Capacity 100 people

*Stormy weather, somewhere, nowhere,
4 people cross paths.
On the road - between here and there -
longing for a shoulder to lean on.
INUK is about
taking refuge and finding peace,
regaining confidence, for the umptieth time.
Finding strength to step into the world,
while – finally – someone is listening..*

* INUK means 'real human' (in Inuktitut, one of the Eskimo languages)

WITH: Philippe Van de Velde, Martine Decroos, Randi De Vlieghe, Steven Beersmans, IlseDe Koe, Tomas Pevenage DESIGN DECOR : Philippe Van de Velde
COACH: Titus De Voogdt SUPPORTED BY : the Flemish Government, City of Ghent, Province of East-Flanders



PRESSE

'What's wonderful is that everything, really everything – each painting to each trait – eventually leads up to the finale. (...) At the end all, young and old, step out of the 'electricity cabinet', warm in body, heart and soul.' (FocusKnack ****)

'Studio ORKA warms the heart, Inuk is a magical fairy tale about taking refuge and feeling at home. (...) It's warm, deeply human theatre, dreaming out loud. And we dream along. (De Standaard ****) (De Standaard ****)

'Inuk once again is a wonderful piece by Studio ORKA. (...) Designers Martine Decroos and Philippe Van de Velde, the artistic minds of Studio ORKA, yet again managed to put everything together: a delicate story about an essential theme, wonderful actors and designed in such a magical way that one can only be in awe.' (De Morgen ****) (De Morgen ****)





ABOUT INUK

THEMES

As always Studio ORKA let itself be inspired by a specific location. This time Studio ORKA chose locations where children live in 'non-home situations', due to difficult or unsafe living conditions, such as youth care or asylum centres.

One of the reasons why ORKA chose such a location is the general observation that the audience for family performances is mainly white and a regular theatregoer. Children not having parents taking them to a performance, children not getting acquainted with theatre in school, often miss out.

To also reach these children ORKA performs Inuk in their near environment, the decor is installed in the garden or parking of the homes they're staying. It makes it possible to meet the children, talk with them and invite them to the performance. (in Ostend, where we premiered at a youth care centre, the children were involved during the creation process)

Performing at such a location generates a two-way traffic: the regular audience is invited to unknown territory. Thus ORKA hopes to make them think about prejudices they might have. Youth care children are often thought to be problem kids, while in fact they are wounded children; none of them chose their past or current situation.



Currently in Flandres about 3500 children live in youth care centres. **On the other hand Inuk is also performed near asylum centres, where minor refugees have to stay.**

Being it war in their country, or war at home: both situations are comparable when talking about safety and the need for a home. During the creation process Studio ORKA visited several youth- and asylum centres in Flanders.

The ins and outs of these centres, talking with the counsellors, the children telling about what 'home' means to them, about longing for a place or family, about saying goodbye... all these things inspired ORKA. It's not the first time that ORKA touches upon these matters, but never before the need was that urgent.

After many encounters and conversations it became clear what one - young or old, from here to there - needs to feel 'human': some food, a bed, a bath, warmth, quiet, trust, connecting to others, feeling safe and welcome within a larger community. In asylum centres for instance, they make sure that there are several cookers as for every family to be able to prepare their own meal. Eating together as a family is crucial.

'Inuk' as a word is borrowed from Inuktitut, one of the Eskimo languages, it means 'real human'. It implicitly raises questions as: When are you a 'real' human? When do you take part in society? When are you listened to? When can you finally rest?

Studio ORKA used this all to make a story about being without home, about longing to come home and being loved, about family ties and regaining trust.



STORY AND CHARACTERS

Inuk is staged in an electrical cabine converted into a hotel. Once a flourishing business, now in decline. Pale wall paper, worn off furniture, ancient and hazardous wiring. Guests long gone. The story takes off with a heavy storm. Because of it a few unwanted guests end up at the hotel. Though all having entirely different backgrounds, they are all adrift and deeply alone.

Carl (Randi De Vlieghe): he's the only inhabitant and owner of the hotel, a somewhat older grumpy man, passing time in solitude, meanwhile meticulously painting a whole oeuvre of mountain landscapes. He was forced to take over the hotel from his parents (because they went back to their home country and had to leave him behind), but he couldn't cope on his own and the business went bankrupt. Although his paintings express a deep longing for his family, he stays put. He's ashamed, he promised his parents to run the hotel, but he failed. When calling him, he pretends that everything is fine. Going back to his family and admitting to having lied all this time is too much for him.

Something we also often saw when visiting the different centres, people being ashamed for their current situation. Carl's father symbolizes the migrant coming over, building a life, turning nothing into something, but eventually not feeling at home.



Ivan (Tomas Pevenage): he's the merry handyman trying to disentangle the electric wires and make the hotel a bit more safe and livable. He seems to come from here and there, he learns Dutch while doing his chores and he's utterly vivid. The happy memories of his family, of his home left behind, of family meals, give him the force not to despair and also to connect to others. He symbolizes the resilience of all children in such situations.

Nina (Ilse de Koe) ends up in the hotel due to the stormy weather, in search of a place to hide. But there's more: as a child she has stayed one night at the hotel and she remembers the warmth and shelter during that night. Her grandmother had taken her there, on a Christmas Eve, because at home things were not safe. That night Carl gave her something that every child deserves: tenderness and cosiness. Now Nina no longer has a home, her grandma is dead, she's not welcome at home. She's been in and out of homes and foster care her entire life. More than looking for a place to hide, she's in search for a place to stay, to finally come home.

Johan (Steven Beersmans), he sells fun and magic things, he's always on the road. He eats, sleeps, lives in his car. His car, like a Faraday cage, protects him from the storm, which he fiercely dreads as having been struck by lightning four times as a child. His car is the only place where he feels safe. When a window is broken, and thus also his safe house, he's forced to go to the hotel. He's literally electrically wired, which explains his social isolation:

DESIGN

To integrate all story lines, Studio ORKA chose a hotel, it being a metaphor for a place where people, who do not know each other, temporarily reside, and where friendships can develop. The whole construction - which from the outside looks like a windowless, grey electricity cabinet - including the forties interior and the tribune, is made by Studio ORKA. At each venue Studio ORKA arrives a bit like a travelling circus, building up the pop-up hotel.

SUMPFLAND (2016)

Outdoor family performance

300 persons

8 > 108 years

*51° north latitude, 3° east longitude, the most fragile place on earth
everything is sinking away, nobody knows why.
and in this no man's land, a pub where people rarely pass by,
but those who do, wish to stay.
because everything can be simple, just what it is.
sometimes very special, sometimes plain and simple.
in that pub you can laugh about things nobody laughs about
you can dance - foot by foot.
You can sing, out loud and exuberantly. Or become silent.
Sumpfland offers comfort to those who, at all costs, try to stay upright,
While the earth below their feet is turning into a soggy swamp
Sumpfland is about willpower, energy, about longing to achieve and never giving up.
About how to comfort someone.
About dreamers, fighters and way too hot beer...*

CREDITS

A production of Studio ORKA in coproduction with Ruhrtriennale, C-mine Cultuurcentrum, Theaterfestival Boulevard, NTGent.

BY/WITH: Philippe Van de Velde, Martine Decroos, Dominique Van Malder, Julie Delrue, Titus De Voogdt, Janne Desmet

MUSIC: Wim Deliveyne, Peter De Bosschere, Luc Waegeman

DESIGN: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven

COACH: Peter Monsaert



ABOUT SUMPFLAND / CHASSE PATATE (original title)

As always Studio ORKA lets itself be inspired by a specific location. This time the story is staged in open nature. Amidst the fields there is a small pub/fish 'n' chips shop, with lots of stuff (tables, buckets, chairs ...) and muddy pools surrounding it. Although the pub itself is in a bad state (it might even sink into the marshes) Jules (performed by Titus De Voogdt) and Alice (performed by Janne Desmet) keep on living there, against all odds. There's hardly any one coming by, while back in the days it used to be a flourishing place, where lots of people came by and enjoyed a beer or meal and where the yearly cycling race used to arrive. Alice tries to take all of the stuff outside, hoping this might make the house lighter and more stable, because the house is the only thing reminding of good times.

CHARACTERS

DAAN (performed by Dominique Van Malder) is a regular guest, he is a teacher in a secondary school. The pub is his safehaven, where he feels at ease. He's being bullied at school, the students laugh at him and he's not taken seriously. To get some peace of mind he goes to the pub, to Alice, who tries to comfort him. He has lost his self-esteem, he thinks he's too thick, too emotional, a bad teacher. But Ulrike, one of his former students, tells him he was the best teacher she ever had. And this being a turning point for Daan makes him once again believe in himself.

All of a sudden **ULRIKE VANDEGHINSTE** (performed by Julie Delrue) drives up the lawn with her bike, she's there to deliver some flowers to Alice, flowers on behalf of her father who's in hospital. It will become clear that she is a key figure, as a reminder of past events but also as the one who makes the others see things in a different way. She is somewhat naive, she says things others would think twice about. But in doing so she stirs things up.



ALICE (performed by Janne Desmet) wants to stay, she's holding on to the place, because of past events, and refuses to yield. She wants to hang on to memories, afraid she'd forget when letting loose.

Alice is the key character in 'Sumpland', as all things happening are somehow connected to her, to her memories, to her current actions, to her decision to stay or leave. She's the one who keeps things going, who in spite of all, keeps the house upright. This is her way of coping with and holding on to her loss, as long as she keeps busy she won't break down, or so she seems to believe. Near the end she

allows her emotions to overwhelm her, it being a first step towards a new beginning.

JULES (performed by Titus De Voogdt), Alice's brother, wants them both to leave, to let go, there's no more future there. He thinks they should break down the place and build a cottage instead. He always tries to help Alice, but it's getting too much for him. He's a real outgoing person, he loves his sister, but thinks she should move forward and forget the past (they have lost their little brother Junior a long time ago). He loves nature with all his heart, he would rather sleep outdoors than in a bed, he prefers the bushes over using a toilet. He's also a hunter and provides meat for Alice, so she can make her delicious meat balls in tomato sauce (the favorite dish of Daan and Ulrike). Although he'd build a new house straight away he knows Alice has to come to terms with the past at her own pace. And until she does so he'll be there for her. Each of the four characters are struggling, are trying to make amends, are trying to understand one another. In doing so they slowly but surely grow close and choose a new beginning.

PRESS

'It's the actors' intensity that renders authenticity to their intentional theatricality. Pain is real pain, pleasure is really pleasant. Mud and yellow Bicky sauce splash around. Or how 'dirty' theatre can also be very beautiful. (...) If art by genuine artists comes down to the multiplication of an entirely unique style with ongoing astonishment, then Studio ORKA makes real art. Just wait until the final scene.' (review paper **De Standaard**, ****)

'Chasse Patate intertwines a spectacular feel with intense emotions, or as a little boy mused afterwards 'It's only by letting go their house, that they also can let go their sorrow and be happy again'. And that's it really, mused the bigger child that saw the world in fire once again that day: 'We will go on, when no one even expects it, we will go on.' (review paper **De Morgen**, ****)

'An enchanting story, told by a cast that nearly blew the roof off, staged in a set revealing one visual surprise after another.' (review magazine **KnackFocus**, ****)

'Studio ORKA is well known for its surprising location theatre, with its ingenious decors, and again they marvel with Chasse Patate. Their latest production has become a master piece. It has been a very long time since the words 'very moving' don't even begin to cover Chasse Patate.' (review paper **Het Nieuwsblad**, *****)



SALTLESS (2014)

Family show on location, in an elderly home
ideally: 8+ / 3rd year onwards primary school
80 persons / twice a day

In Saltless (literally 'without salt') we get acquainted with Palmira, a courageous old lady, whom has been residing in an elderly home for some years now. She's still very witty, but can barely put one foot in front of the other. Her body's aching all the time and her heart is weak. She knows the end is near and wants it to be a grand farewell. Long ago she fell in love with Charlie, together they travelled the world and had adventurous times, and they adopted Boris, a bear. Now, realizing that her time is up she wants to see Charlie one more time and one of the nurses leaves no stone unturned to make her dream come true. Palmira's doctor strongly advises against meeting Charlie because of her heart problems, but nonetheless Palmira chooses to see Charlie. Thus she generously says her goodbyes, to life and all her loved ones. Sensitive themes such as death, bidding farewell, euthanasia and self management are lingered upon, but always with a lot of humour and fantasy.

VAN en MET: Philippe Van de Velde, Martine Decroos, Dominique Van Malder, Ilse de Koe, Steven Beersmans, Tania Van der Sanden, Julie Delrue, Cecilia De Mulder, Walter Schudel, Kobe Van Hille/Pelle Van den Steen / Ferre De Maere / Tijmen Van Handenhoven VORM: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven, Kris Van Oudenhove COACH: Tom Dupont DRAMATURGIE: Mieke Versyp PRODUCTIELEIDING: Maarten Naessens KOSTUUMS: Elles De Koe TECHNIEK: Kristof Oosterlynck, Bram Waelkens, Bart Van Belleghem In coproductie met cc De Grote Post (Oostende), MiramirO.





"Zoutloos is – like any other ORKA performance – sumptuous on the outside, and deeply touching on the inside ... ORKA renders new emotions to very delicate subjects. **** (De Standaard)

"Zoutloos is a moving family show about human warmth and dignity in an elderly home. A must-see for all ages ... Zoutloos does certainly give something to talk about **** (De Morgen)

"Zoutloos is ORKA's umptieth heartwarming show, that guides you to the small, moving details in life. This time it's staged in an elderly home, that all things considered isn't that 'saltless' after all." (Knackfocus)



DUIKVLUCHT (2012)

Not touring anymore



DESIGN: Philippe Van de Velde CONCEPT AND CREATION: Martine Decroos, Philippe Van de Velde, Dominique Van Malder, Joris Hessels, Ruth Beeckmans, Titus De Voogdt, Thomas Devos SET BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ENGINEERING: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven, Kristof Oosterlynck, Kris Van Oudenhoven COACH: Johan Heldenbergh DRAMATURGICAL ADVICE: Mieke Versyp Coproduction Zomer van Antwerpen, Theater Antigone.





PRESS

How does Studio ORKA succeed in warming up adults, as if they were children watching a puppet show? Magic in five steps (...) Hessels, Van Malder, De Vooght, Beeckmans: they could take Olympic gold at the 4 X 100 metres, physical as their way of playing is, smoothly tuned in towards one another. With a grin on their pokerfaces they play lies and truth, amusement and grief, guilt and innocence. At times it's quite obvious, certainly towards the simplicity of the text, but you recognize real clowns from integrity. **** **Wouter Hillaert, De Standaard**

Studio ORKA gives people and things a marvelous second chance. **** **Evelyne Coussens, De Morgen.** With Swoop they scored a hit. A story about four lonely souls meeting each other on a difficult moment in their lives? But as they observe one another, a new world opens up. **Griet Op De Beeck, De Morgen.**

*Selected as one of the 10 best performances of 2012 by Focus Knack.
Selection Dutch Theatre Festival*



LAVA (2004)

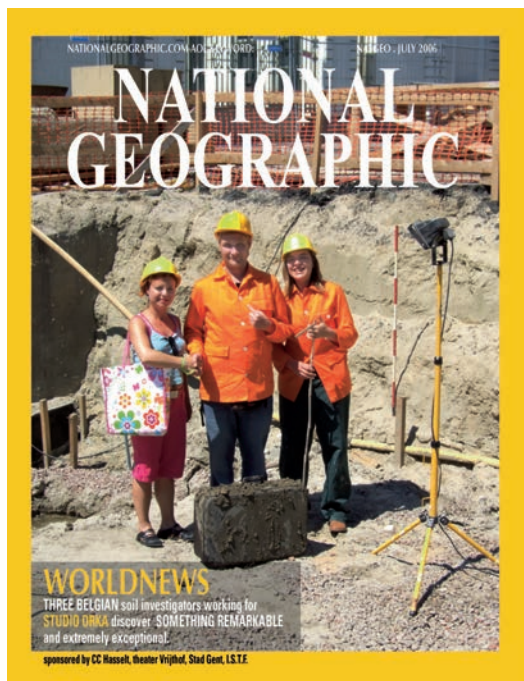
Not touring for the moment

CONCEPT AND REALISATOR: Studio ORKA, Philippe Van de Velde, Martine Decroos together with Brenda Bertin, Katrien Pierlet, Dominique Van Malder PERFORMERS: Katrien Pierlet, Brenda Bertin, Dominique Van Malder, Jo Jochems, Griet Dobbelaere, Ilse De Koe DRAMATURGE: Mieke Versyp FILM SHOOTING: DIRECTION, MONTAGE, LIGHT: The Vidiots, Pascal Poissonnier, Joost Wynant PERFORMERS FILM: Bob De Moor, Wouter Bruneel, Lisa Buytaert, Veerle Malschaert, Martha Baltazar, Remi Van de Velde. Lava was realized in co-operation with Zone 35-62 of CCHasselt and Theater aan het Vrijthof Maastricht for production and distribution of youth theater in the pro-vinces Nederlands - and Belgisch Limburg. The project is also subsidized by Gent and The International Street Theatre Festival.

PRESS

...Lava was selected as one of the best theatre pieces by the Dutch-Flemish theatre festival. Lava is all but a nice friendly little people's tale. With a tiny camera going down a long pipe, Lava is creating its own imaginary world on the spot. On occasion it reaches the intensity of a scary movie. ... Lava gets you on the edge of your seat and broadens the imagination with passing comments on waste materials and the media society. ...Lava is a discovery in its own right: charming and intelligent, and very well performed. **(De Morgen)**

... A divine example of theatre played on location, for young and old... Unpretentious, honest and humoristic theatre. Lava wants to surprise and succeeds in doing so. With all kind of tricks the audience is made to doubt. Suspicion is left behind and while one stares at the actors open-mouthed, another says 'how can this be?' The magic of theatre... **(De Standaard)**



WARMOES (2010)

Not touring for the moment



FORM

Studio ORKA chose 'allotment gardens' as their location, fascinated by a world reflecting society in many ways. The gardens kind of are a miniature society on its own, with scheming, quarrels, conflicts, reconcilements, friendships, loves ..., inherent to people living together. That's what Studio ORKA wanted to express in Warmoes. Warmoes is mainly staged in the open air, in gardens and on the pathways connecting one garden to another. Because of this Studio ORKA chose to install large elements in the gardens, such as waste pipes, a watchtower, a greenhouse. No one questions the objects being there, it's as if they've been there for ever and ever.

STORY

During the guided tour we get to know a few gardeners but especially Meesje. She's a simple girl that loves her herbs and animals. She'd like a garden very much, but all gardeners are quite against her getting one: she doesn't fit the story, she's got dirty fingers, they think she's strange, weird... But in fact Meesje has nowhere to go and is trying to find a place to stay. While awaiting a garden, promised by the chairman, she hangs about, thus annoying the 'anciens' ...

Meesje is blamed of all that goes wrong; since her being there the vegetables have been eaten, and rats crawl out of every hole, they threaten to destroy the ingenious sewer system, an idea of which the chairman is very proud. Yet, Meesje remains utterly positive. She does all the chairman asks, having her heart set on her own garden.



Her story gets intervened by other stories, which especially depict the gardeners and their little traits: Sandra's flirting, she thinks to know the garden community inside out and claims to be loved by all. The always noisy ex military Selle, who flaunts his expertise as the soldier, the movie figurant and the gardener. Handyman and ratcatcher Fred, who flaunts his power and handiness, and finally chairman Geert, who covers up his frustrations and incompetence by bossing everyone about. All inhabitants think they're quite something; when together they pretend to be one big happy family, but behind each other's back gossip is all about. It's a colourful mishmash. During creation Studio ORKA mainly rehearsed on location, so it's no wonder that we were hugely inspired by the gardeners we met in Ghent.



PRESS



"All characters seem to be mixed up. Together they stand for 'Flanders', lovingly but not without irony. (...) Warmoes is ORKA as we know them: very bright, overwhelming atmosphere and honest play, with a big heart for its family audience. (...) Warmoes tastes like honey." (De Standaard, 29 juli 2010)

"some charming politically incorrect statements, and what's more: no compromises to spare children's souls. No happy end, no restoring of all evil, at most a tiny sense of guilt for non appealing behaviour. This is a credit to the company. It's not because one's 7 that the world would be a less harsh place. And who else than children on a playground know phenomena as exclusion and peer pressure best?

(...) Warmoes also is a charming production, merry and sincere, with which you can do your children a great pleasure. All that's left to say: go and see that show." (De Morgen)

...Studio ORKA did what it does best: move by means of tiny theatrical interventions which accentuate the wonderful and sometimes funny characteristics of a day to day environment. Subtle and on occasion in a hilarious way Studio ORKA brings up difficult social themes as alienation, isolation, discrimination and pollution. Warmoes is great 'garden theatre' for young and old. KNACK, Els Van Steenberghe (* * * *), 26 juli 2010



FORMER PLAYS

NOT TOURING ANYMORE

BERNINNA (2009)

CONCEPT & REALISATION: Philippe Van de Velde, Martine Decroos, Katrien Pierlet, Dominique Van Malder, Jo Jochems PERFORMED BY: Dominique Van Malder, Jo Jochems, Katrien Pierlet, Cecilia De Mulder SOPRANO: Emmanuelle Schotsaert
DRAMATURGY and COACHING: Mieke Versyp, Brenda Bertin FILM: Fabien DeLathauwer
SCENOGRAPHY: Philippe Van de Velde TECHNICIANS: Philippe Van de Velde, Bram Waelkens

This sublime creating of sphere, a celebration of detail, is exactly what distinguishes Studio ORKA's work from the average 'summer theatre'. Upon arriving in the salon - where the birthday girl will receive her present - the Orka crew intentionally uses the natural surroundings to bring about even more imaginative forces. With their distinctive technical finds, and also with actors switching - within the blink of an eye - from witticism to gripping emotions. Beneath this reality another world is hidden. In Berninna it's a universe packed with guilt and well preserved grief, and as always with Studio ORKA the story becomes a metaphor on how to deal with this all. A marvellous wintertale... Dostojevski on location. Tsjechov for kids. **DE STANDAARD 30-07-2009**

Berninna is poetry set in motion (a ballet with lampshades), in language ('one does not replant old, old trees, as they fear being cut up', the doctor knows) and in music, at the end. Emmanuelle Schotsaert sings a dazzling aria by Händel. Studio ORKA not alone succeeds in letting children listen to a piece of classical music, it tore our heart out to see yet another beautiful house going to ruin. A dual prestation by Studio ORKA, who this time fill houses sitting empty with an ode to phantasy. **DE MORGEN 30-07-2009**





THE LEGEND OF WOESTERDAM (2008)

PRODUCTION : Studio ORKA In coproduction with KOPERGIETERY CONCEPT: Martine Decroos, Philippe Van de Velde, Johan De Smet, Katrien Pierlet, Joris Hessels PERFORMED BY: Joris Hessels, Katrien Pierlet DIRECTOR: Martine Decroos, Johan De Smet SCENOGRAPHY: Philippe Van de Velde DRAMATURGY : Mieke Versyp TECHNICIANS: Sebastien Van Huffel, Jeroen Doise, Kwint Manshoven, Philippe Van de Velde CO PRODUCTION with Theaterfestival Boulevard ('s-Hertogenbosch), MiraMirO Internationaal Straattheater Festival (Gent), Cultura Nova Zomerfestival (Heerlen), Theater Aan Zee (Oostende).

...A performance of rare visual creativity that gives children an hour of intense fun. The endearing intensity of Studio ORKA wins everyone's heart ...

DE STANDAARD, M. Cloostermans, 10/6/2008

...The Legend is a gem of a play, generously full of glorious one-liners, with a high-quality plot line, in which the actors make the modern fairytale so credible that even as an adult spectator one leaves this neighbourhood park against one's will, out into the big bad world again. **KNACK, G. Lauwaert, 10/6/2008**



...an exciting and absurd journey acted with abandon, so that you are drawn effortlessly into the story about the stomach butterflies from the lost city of Woesterdam. ... when you leave after this play you suddenly find yourself hopping...

DE VOLKSKRANT, 11/8/2008



MISTER PORCELAIN (2007)

CONCEPT AND CREATION: PHILIPPE VAN DE VELDE, MARTINE DECROOS KATRIEN PIERLET, BRENDA BERTIN, DOMINIQUE VAN MALDER, JO JOCHEMS SCENOGRAPHY AND TECHNICS: PHILIPPE VAN DE VELDE ACTORS: KATRIEN PIERLET, BRENDA BERTIN, DOMINIQUE VAN MALDER, JO JOCHEMS DRAMATURGY: MIEKE VERSYP

.....A bare minimum of means, an endearing enthusiasm and ditto ingenuity are 'enough' for Studio Orka to push the play forward, up until you no longer know where to look first. 'Mister Porcelain' is wonderfully thought out, all pieces fit together. While the merry actors amuse the audience with their cunning puns and cute surprises, they themselves make a excellent team. 'Mister Porcelain' is also about saying goodbye, ending with bittersweet memories, more than sugary words alone are served. But childhood nightmares are not to be feared. This gem is far to charming and compelling therefor. **KNACK, Thijs de Smet, 3 aug. 2007/8/2007**

They live on land, on the sea, in the sky: strange birds. Often they live far away from ordinary people. Luckily Studio Orka guides us, on occasion, to these wonderful resorts... But some wounds can't be healed. Even in this unbridled imaginative animal forest mortality rules. Studio Orka approaches mourning with soft sadness and warm laughter.(...)Orka juggles with emotions: fragile and heat-proof like porcelain. Sometimes hard, sometimes sweet. Like Mister Porcelain the play is a sheperd of the soul. Both for children as well as adults, who cherish their childlike amazement.

DE MORGEN, Liv Laveyne, 1 aug. 2007****



JACOBSENSE (2013)

CONCEPT & REALISATION: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven, Martine Decroos, Randi De Vlieghe, Katrien Pierlet DESIGN: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven ACTORS: Randi De Vlieghe, Katrien Pierlet COACH: Tom Ternest DRAMATURGICAL ADVICE: Mieke Versyp TECHNICAL ENGINEERING/PRODUCTION: Maarten Naessens, Veerle Kerckhoven, Kristof Oosterlynck VIDEO: Dries Bastiaensen COSTUMES: Lieve Pynoo. In coproduction with C-Mine Genk. Supported by the Flemish Government, the City of Ghent, the Province of East-Flanders.

A lighthearted wretched-sock-fairytale about how plodding through life can evolve to cheerful bouncing. As long as you meet the right sweet-smelling sock

Knack Focus

Sharp 7 + theater that tickles your nostrils. ...

Ingenuous bric-à-brac scenography which tosses you straight to another world...

De Morgen

Jacobsnose is once again a grand cru show that will make young and old shake with laughter and will move the audience to tears. CJP







MISTER MORE, LADY LESS (2011)

CONCEPT AND CREATION: Philippe Van de Velde, Martine Decroos, Jo Jochems, Katrien Pierlet, Wouter Bruneel, Tom Ternest COACH: Tom Ternest
WITH: Jo Jochems, Katrien Pierlet, Wouter Bruneel, Tom Ternest DRAMATURGY: Mieke Versyp DESIGN DECOR: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven
TECHNIQUE AND REALISATION DECOR: Philippe Van de Velde, Kwint Manshoven, Kristof Oosterlynck, Kris Van Oudenhoven PRODUCTION LEADER: Karen Van de Voorde
Coproduction C-mine Genk, Leuven in Scène.
Supported by the Flemish Government, the City of Ghent, the Province of East-Flanders, Centrale, Circa.

... A wonderful feel-good performance about love, and what it takes, about friendship, and what people are willing to do for it, about our day and age too, in which we are in the grip of capitalism. Go and see Mister More, Lady Less.

DE MORGEN, 19-11-2011

... "The set is an ingenious piece of technique and technology (...). The 8+ - whom initially are treated as suspects - don't know where to look first. More important is the fact that next to 'the thief hunt' and exciting gadgets the play's core business holds strong: that love and friendship are worth more than profit and prestige. And all this without any moralizing..."

(Zone 02)





THE SPARROW (2016)

'Very cunningly Studio ORKA manages to bring theatre into theatre. The audience may briefly choose Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' or Cyrano de Bergerac. ORKA decides. Fragments of Cyrano, turning into a storm. The decor functions as an antagonist. There's lots of references to theatre and playing theatre in daily life. Characters hide behind themselves, trying to find their roots, their place. The term catharsis isn't mentioned, but young and old do find a bit of themselves in the emotional scenes. Hilarious events, language jokes and joyful, humorous playing make the theatre and metatheatricity complete. Theatre, a feast.' **Theaterkrant ******

'An ingenious stormy set switch put an end to all squabbling. Then the performance shows where it's heading. And then the audience is struck into the heart.'
De Morgen ****





CARRARA (2015)

STANDAARD ****

'Once again Carrara is a impressive production about injured people. Not about failing people, but about people a bit weird, about sensitive, lonely, hurt people. Fiery and tranquil dialogues alternate with tentative narration and physical performance. In between we are being served with visual and auditive surprises. Slowly the love between the two brothers is shown, their past unravelling into a haunting end.'

THEATERKRANT ****



