

Cas public

PRESENTS



The UGLY DUCKLINGS'
DANCING CABARET
CHOREOGRAPHY of HÉLÈNE BLACKBURN

The Ugly Ducklings' Dancing Cabaret

World premiere - november 2008

After *If you go down to the woods*, *Blue Beard* and *Diary*, H el ene Blackburn is now hard at work on her fourth piece for a young audience, this time intended for young children four years of age and over. *The Ugly Ducklings' Dancing Cabaret*, a work for six dancers and a pianist\master of ceremonies, draws its inspiration from the German cabarets of the 1920s, and the fairy-tale world. In these very short numbers, which follow one another, reality and artifice intersect in a sunny mix of song, music, dance, theatre and video. For this piece, H el ene Blackburn has borrowed freely from two stories dear to her: the seminal Andersen tale "The Ugly Duckling," who's rejected by others because he's different and who dreams of being a swan, and Swan Lake, which features Odette, who's turned into a part-time swan against her will, hindering her chances of love with the Prince! This improbable meeting between the Ugly Duckling and Odette constitutes the point of departure for a work that addresses the relevance of some of our dreams as well as the loss of illusion.

Message from the choreographer

«Children between the ages of four and eight live in a world where the real and the imagined constantly rub shoulders,» says H el ene Blackburn. «They play pretend games. And at this age, they begin to let go of their illusions, give up on Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy, in order to better confront reality, without totally turning their back on what is magical. I wanted to play with artifice, to question the power of illusions, of reality and its representation, by questioning the place children and adults leave to the magical and to imagination in their lives. »

Once again, H el ene Blackburn surrounds herself with an exceptional creative team experienced in working with young audiences. In addition to the company's magnificent dancers, she will collaborate for the first time with Slovak visual artist, Fero Liptak. The initial sketches of his work for Cas Public are enclosed, and they've already served to inspire the entire team. In addition to two short animated films, Fero will collaborate on the scenography. Historian and theatre expert Paul Lefebvre will act as historical consultant for the cabaret and as dramatist for the work as a whole. As for the musical score, H el ene Blackburn has called upon Laurier Rajotte, who was a driving force behind the musical choices and powerful improvisations that characterized *Diary*, our work for adolescents. Andr eanne Desch enes will be in charge of lighting for this new creation, marking her third collaboration with the company, while Samuel Th eriault will be responsible for sound, an increasingly important consideration in the creative works of Cas Public.



Although this piece is inspired by the cabaret form, the final version may be modified depending on the audience and the venue. With a shorter version (40 minutes) for a younger audience as well as a 60 minute version for general audiences, this work is sure to be a hit with all ages.

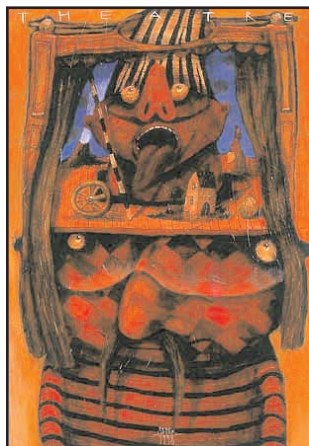
In 2001, H el ene Blackburn created *If you go down to the woods*, twice featured at Rideau and presented over 300 times since its creation, brilliantly rising to the challenge of a first show intended for a young audience. Since then, Cas Public has particularly distinguished itself in this area with pieces that are appealing and demanding, all little jewels, as intelligent as they are poetic, winning over audiences of all ages and maintaining their popularity in Canada as well as abroad.

The Ugly Ducklings' Dancing Cabaret is a production of Cas public, working in collaboration with Tangente, Festival Les Coups de Th eatre, the support program of l' cole Montr alaise of the Ministry of Education of Quebec, The Arts Council of Montr al and the Place des Arts. Its premiere is slated for November, during the festival Les Coups de Th eatre 2008.



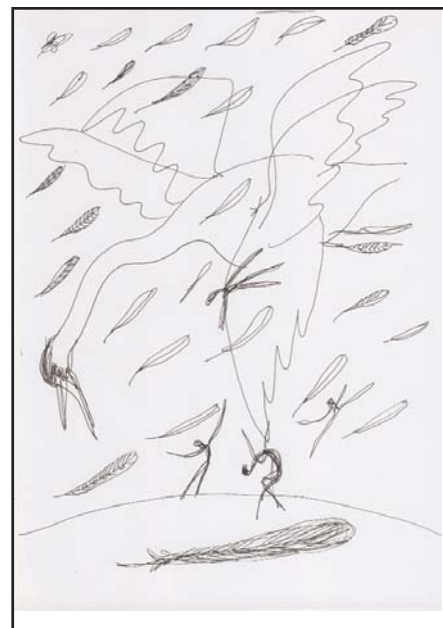
For this new creation, H  l  ne Blackburn will work with the Slovakian artist Fero Lipt  k, that she met at the french Festival for young, M  li'M  me. He will collaborate with Cas Public as illustrator.

Some examples of his works :



If you are curious to see more, you could find more pictures on http://lamalie.blogspot.com/album/fero_lipt  k/page1/

Some preliminary sketches for *The Ugly Ducklings' Dancing Cabaret*



Creative Artists

HÉLÈNE BLACKBURN

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CHOREOGRAPHER

Since 1983, HÉLÈNE BLACKBURN has made her daring choreographic voice heard in the contemporary dance world, both in Canada and abroad. She was trained in the Linda Rabin studios and at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM) and has performed with the Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault. Her dance, after 20 years of research, gives expression to a body of thought whose objective - in principle an outlook on human behaviour - has been shaped by studies in ethnography and theatre and ultimately takes the form of a passion for the dancing body. She views her creations as a collective act, and the name of the company she founded in 1989 reflects her social concerns and her commitment to a creative process based on collaboration. With each new creative voyage, Hélène Blackburn and her colleagues attempt to revitalize their vocabulary and approach with the intention of adding depth and vigour-together with a touch of derision.

By turns an artist committed to the advancement of her discipline, a sought-after choreographer and recognized teacher, Hélène Blackburn has also distinguished herself outside of CAS PUBLIC. She receives regular commissions from various companies and also collaborates, as a teacher and choreographer, with the main professional dance training centres in Canada and in Europe, including the LADMMI, Concordia University, UQÀM, the École supérieure de danse du Québec, the Laban Centre in London and the Accademia di Danza in Venice.

In 1990, she captured the Canada Council for the Arts' Jacqueline Lemieux Prize in recognition of the originality and quality of her approach. In 1999, Hélène Blackburn received the Bonnie Bird Award for North America, presented by the prestigious Laban Centre in London. Combining intense physical engagement with an innate sense of theatre, Hélène Blackburn's fiery choreographic parts keep a deliberate distance from established codes and bring a critical yet humane perspective to bear on the human condition.

FERO LIPTAK

PAINTER

Painter, sculptor and scenic artist FERO LIPTAK is among the most original artists of our time. He is also among our most free and fanciful artists. His pictures are invitation cards to the landscape of the painter's soul. Fero Liptak almost always fills them up with people who, according to their characters and qualities, become variegated figurines of a merry and crazy waxworks. They are all caught or rather overcome in moments that accurately express their world, their perception of this world and their roles in it. Playfulness and humour underlined both by the mode of painting and by the titles of pictures are dominant and welcome marks of works of Frantisek Liptak. One enters his landscape easily and joyfully. Once in, we begin to laugh freely. And, likewise, this landscape enters us and its echo sounds familiar because it is ourselves that we come upon there.

Fero Liptak has exhibited in Nantes, Prague, Hanover, Berlin, Vienna and Vancouver. His resumé as a scenic artist and decorator includes 80 plays, seven feature films and five films for television. In 1998 he captured the "Czech Lion" award for his art direction on the Martin Sulik film titled "The Garden."

LAURIER RAJOTTE

COMPOSER

Laurier began his musical training at the age of four. He went on to work with such great teachers as Marc Durand (Université de Montréal) and Julian Martin (Juilliard School). The winner of several competitions, including the FCAR and the Canada Music Competition, the young musician has also taken part in various international stages, and he obtained his master's diploma from Université de Montréal at age 21. Passionate about dance, Laurier has collaborated with renowned Montreal choreographer Hélène Blackburn as well as French choreographer Christophe Garcia. As a composer, he has also fostered an interest in musical theatre, collaborating with playwright Érika Tremblay.

ANDRÉANNE DESCHÊNES

LIGHTING DESIGNER

After graduating with distinction from Collège Lionel-Groulx's Option-Théâtre in 2002, Andréanne Deschênes went on to design the lighting for *Simone et Victor*, a Théâtre Quatre/Corps production, and for ***Tout ce qui est debout se couchera*** by the company Trois Tristes Tigres. She subsequently became involved in the dance milieu, acting as lighting director for ***Document 3*** by Lynda Gaudreau and for ***Chantier*** and ***Zo*** by Collectif Zeugma. In 2005, she worked as assistant stage director on the Sylvie-Catherine Beaudoin production, ***Le Boudoir***. After touring with the company on a few occasions as assistant technical director for the shows ***If You Go Down to the Woods Today*** and ***Blue Beard***, she has design the lighting of the most recent shows of Cas Public, ***Diary*** and ***Suites Cruelles***.

SAMUEL THÉRIAULT

SOUND DESIGNER

After graduating from the Option-Théâtre program at collège Lionel-Groulx, Samuel Thériault was immediately hired as a technical assistant at Salle Pauline-Julien. Since then, he has worked as a technical director (sound and video) for various touring shows and events, including the Quebec tour of the Canadian exhibit presented at the 2003 Prague Quadriennale, ***Poiléplumes*** (theatre production for young audiences) and the 40th Jeux du Québec in St-Hyacinthe. In 2004, Samuel started his own sound design company. He has since done the layback (final mixing stage) for several video projects, including the series ***Bébé à bord*** (canal Vox), a corporate video for Collège Bourget as well as a short film. Samuel joined the team at Cas Public in January 2007, giving himself a chance to combine sound, video and technical direction.

ANNIE GÉLINAS

COSTUME DESIGN

Annie Gélinas is a graduate of stage design at the Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe's École de théâtre. Since 2000, she has distinguished herself in Montreal's contemporary dance milieu. She made her debut as a costume designer with choreographer Jean-Pierre Perreault and has collaborated on several of his company's productions. Since then, she has designed dance costumes for ***De Julia à Émile***, 1949 by Estelle Clareton, ***Desirabilis*** by Karine Ponties, ***Manitowapan*** et ***Mon père m'a raconté*** by Gaétan Gingras, ***Confort à retardement*** by John Ottmann and ***Territoires féminins*** by Marie-Claude Rodrigue (upcoming). In the theatre, she has worked with puppetry, mask and costume. She brought her fantastic vision to bear on the creation of ***Fuego*** by Stéphan Cloutier, presented by the Théâtre du Grand Cornu. For a fourth consecutive year, she will join the Théâtre de la petite marée for its latest production, ***Les Voyages*** de Muriel Velluleg, written by Stephan Cloutier and directed by Geoffrey Gaquerre. For the same company, she designed the costumes and puppets for ***Une Nuit en mer*** (an adaptation of ***Vieil homme et la mer*** by Reynald Robinson), a highly poetic and visual work directed by Alice Ronfard; the following year, she collaborated on the company's production of ***Pinocchio***, adapted by Fanny Britt and Geoffrey Gaquerre. In a more burlesque genre, she created the costumes for the modern vaudeville production, ***L'air et la chanson***, written and produced by the Groupe Party de Cuisine and directed by Normand D'Amour. In conjunction with her creative projects, Ms. Gélinas has held the position of costume designer with the Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal since 2000.

Diary

February 2006

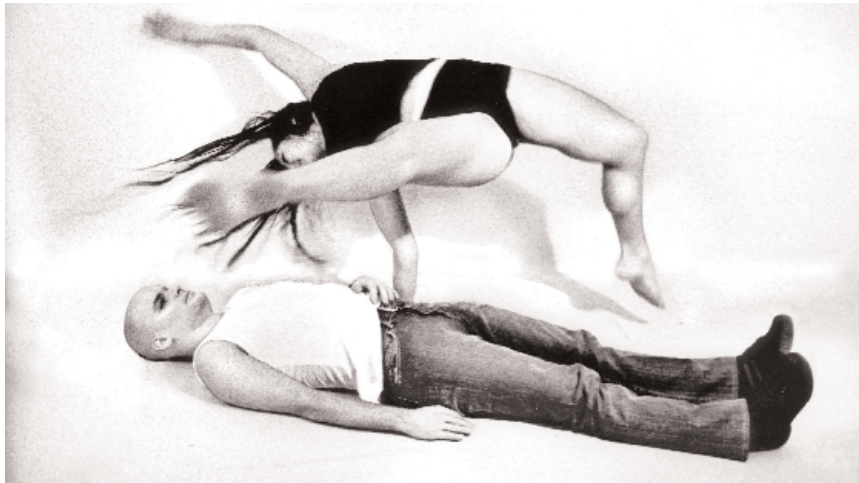
Duration: 55 minutes

Diary is an ambitious work... Seven dancers, a pianist, a sound designer, a filmmaker, Cas Public's entire creativeness and the theme of love... Love! The fundamental motif of adolescence, love teaches us how to experience relations with others - it is a form of revolution, a collective movement for two...

Can we forge a link between and dance and love? Can we draw a parallel between a devotion to dance and falling in love? Enter into dance or fall in love?

« *Blackburn has a finely balanced sense of fun and an ability to convey sophisticated emotions in ways that booth young and older can understand. When the lights and the last candle faded to black yesterday, the youngsters screamed their approval.* »

The Gazette, Montréal, 2007



Coproduction *Diary* stems from a commission from the National Arts Centre's dance program, which supports works for young audiences in partnership with CGI and the Canada Council for the Arts.

Choreography_Hélène Blackburn Rehearsal Director_Sophie Michaud Music_Johann Sebastian Bach, Laurier Rajotte
Lighting Design_Andréanne Deschênes

Places visited

Alma, Baie Comeau, Chicoutimi, Lennoxville, Montréal, Ottawa, Rimouski, Toronto, Trois-Rivières (Canada) - Le Creusot, Reims (France) - Düsseldorf, Postdam (Germany) - Madrid (Spain) - Plan-les-Ouates (Switzerland) -Birmingham (United kingdom)

Blue Beard

September 2004

Duration: 50 minutes

«Anne, my sister Anne, do you not see anything coming ?»

Charles Perrault

Following the huge success of *If you go down to the woods today...*, Hélène Blackburn takes on her second work for young audiences. *Blue Beard*, the tale by Charles Perrault that she has chosen to adapt, strikes a familiar chord even today. Once again, Blackburn has chosen to combine languages: invented sign language, spoken language, literature and danced movements. Coupled with the evocative power of dance, the themes of this tale will surprise and move young audiences, causing them to shudder!



Barbe Bleue © Rolline Laporte

« Everyone has a guardian angel and a little Blue Beard inside themselves. Unfortunately, all of us - adults and children - must acknowledge that we are not entirely good, nor are we completely bad. Black and white are always mingling, meaning that certainty is rare. Therefore, we must learn very early on to live courageously in doubt.»

Hélène Blackburn



Coproduction_Théâtre Centennial - Sherbrooke

Choreography: Hélène Blackburn Rehearsal Director_Sophie Michaud Music_Johann Sebastian Bach

Lighting Design_Jean-François Gélinas Costumes_Denis Lavoie Set Design_Madeleine St-Jacques

Places visited

Bruxelles (Belgium) - Alma, Baie Comeau, Ville saguenay, L'Assomption, Laval, Le Bic, Lennoxville, Lévis, Longueuil, Montréal, Ottawa, Québec, St-Georges-de-Beauce, Sainte-Thérèse, Valleyfield (Canada) - Madrid (Spain) - Alençon, Bordeaux, Cherbourg, Clamart, Conflans Ste-Honorine, Creil, Fontenay-sous-Bois, Hazebrouck, Le Creusot, Lille, Lyon, Montreuil, Mulhouse, Nanterre, Paris, Petit-Quevilly, Reims, Vire (France) - Florence, Rome, Rovigo (Italy) - Aberystwyth, Bangor, Birmingham, Nottingham, Stirling, Swansea, Treorchy (United kingdom)

If you go down to the woods today ...

September 2001

Duration: 40 minutes

For children aged 6 to 12

«Thanks to the dancer's acting skills, **If You Go Down To The Woods Today** does for dance what Peter And The Wolf has done for symphonic music. » The Toronto Star, Toronto

It's never easy to overcome your fears when you're knee high to a grasshopper! Afraid of the wolf, afraid of the dark, afraid of thunderstorms and robbers, afraid of difference... Hélène Blackburn delves into the theme of childhood fears and insecurities in **If you go down to the woods today...** Conjure up an imaginary forest at night, and it's welcome to the kingdom of fear! In the long shadows cast by large trees lie our fears: big and small, irrational or unadmitted, funny fears, fears real and imagined, and anxieties as well. Alternating in one and the same breath from the spoken word to dance, the six dancers-actors of Cas public examine all of these fears. To the frenzied rhythm of the Paganini's 24 Caprices, they have fun with them, they hold them at bay and find a way of exorcizing them. To wit, they express the unadulterated pleasure of moving and dancing. Freshness and humour take centre stage in this inspiring show that has captured the imagination of children and adults alike. There's no time for boredom, and above all, no time for fear!



Coproduction _Agora de la danse, Maison de la Culture Mercier

Choreography: Hélène Blackburn Artistic Director _Lise Gionet Music _Nicolò Paganini, Antanas Rekasius

Lighting Design _Jean-François Gélinas Costumes _Carole Courtois

Places visited

Perth (Australy) - Baie Comeau, Brampton, Châteauguay, Chicoutimi, Coaticook, Fredericton, Gaspé, Gatineau, Granby, Hamilton, L'Assomption, Laval, Lévis, Mont Laurier, Montréal, Rimouski, Sept-îles, Sherbrooke, St-Jean-sur-le-Richelieu, Terrebonne (Canada) - Birmingham, Cork, Coventry, Derby, Edinburgh, Inverness, Leicester, Nottingham (United Kingdom) - Daytona Beach, Keene, New-York, St-Paul (United States)

What the adults tell about Cas Public

«...In seeing **Bluebeard**, it's not hard to understand its recipe for success. And it isn't because this is a children's tale that the complexity of the piece - its formal and theatrical beauty, the innovative use of video and lighting as well as the ingenuity with which the narrative is integrated into the dance - is given short shrift. Quite the contrary : **Bluebeard** is a superb piece : original and poetic.» - La Presse, Montréal, 2004

«...A minimum of text with a maximum of warmth- Cas Public offers the joyous **If you go down to the woods today** at the New Victory Theatre... Hélène Blackburn's piece for children is the current jewel in their crown... The company has several French-speaking members, whose accented English gives the whole thing an air of precious charm... Each dancer works with gymnastic vigor, their exuberance making us believe that we could move as they do... Identifying with them proves irresistible... For children, the production is exciting, forthright, lovable. For the adults who accompany them, just wear it for an hour, and it will make you feel young.» - The New York Sun, New York, 2004

«Connecting their hand and body motions to the words the dancers speak, choreographer Blackburn ingeniously introduces the idea that the dance movements in the show will carry specific meanings along with their grace... » - Newsday, New York, 2004

What the kids tell about Cas Public

«J'ai apprécié votre spectacle extraordinaire, vos danseurs sont impressionnants et bons.» “ I have like your extraordinary show, your dancers are impressive and good” - Marc-Antoine, 7 ans

«Merci pour ce beau cadeau» “Thank you for this beautiful gift” - Maude-Catherine, 8 ans

«J'ai beaucoup ri. Merci, ça m'a fait du bien.» “I laughed a lot. Thank you, it makes me feel good” - Stacy, 9 ans

«J'ai beaucoup apprécié votre spectacle, vous êtes les meilleurs au monde.» “ I have like your show a lot, you are the best in the world.” - Laurence, 8 ans

«Je vous félicite car vous avez dû travailler fort pour les enfants. À bientôt mes chers danseurs.» “ I congratulate you because you've had to work a lot for the kids. See you soon my dear dancers.” - Marion, 8 ans

«Je n'ai pas aimé la fin de la pièce lorsque la lumière s'est éteinte et que tout de suite après les danseurs saluent le public.» “ I didn't like the end of the show when the lights faded and just after the dancers saluted the audience.” - Alexandre, 9 ans

«J'ai aimé le spectacle et je vous mettrais la note 10 sur 10.» “ I liked the show and I will give you a mark of 10/10.” - Laurianne, 7 ans

«J'ai bien aimé la pièce parce qu'il y a de la danse que je ne connaissais pas.» “ I liked the performance because there was a new style of dance I didn't know.” - Cédric, 8 ans

Contact

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Sébastien Forgues
Kyra Jean Green
Claudine Hébert
Pierre Lecours
Susan Paulson
Benny Royce Royon
Georges-Nicolas Tremblay

Pianistes

Matthieu Fortin
Laurier Rajotte

Répétitrice - Sophie Michaud

Directeur technique - Samuel Thériault-Langelier

Éclairage - Andréanne Deschênes

Vidéaste - Martin Lemieux