

THE INVISIBLE DOG

SEASON TEN

Affordable Solution for Better Living

by THÉO MERCIER & STEVEN MICHEL

Monday, November 12, 8pm
Tuesday, November 13, 8pm

Conception and choreography:

Théo Mercier & Steven Michel

With: Steven Michel

Text: Jonathan Drillet

Voice-over: Jonathan Drillet, Kathryn Marshall

Scenography: Théo Mercier & Steven Michel

Lighting Designer: Éric Soyer

Sound Composer: Pierre Desprats

Costumes: Dorota Kleszcz

Stage Management: François Boulet

**These performances are supported by FUSES,
French U.S. Exchange in Dance, a program of FACE Foundation**

Affordable Solution for Better Living

by **THÉO MERCIER & STEVEN MICHEL**

In *Affordable Solution for Better Living*, visual artist **Théo Mercier** and choreographer **Steven Michel** break the taboos of a society saddled with healthy living, placing a Kallax—a most peculiar totem—in the middle of a spotless space.

The flagship shelf unit by the giant company Ikea, less famous than the Billy but more sizable and refined, epitomizes “beauty for all.” By transposing a commercial system to a choreographic piece, *Affordable Solution for Better Living* aims to interrogate the commodified body, the prescribed lifestyle, and the illusion of freedom touted by the major industrial powers. How does the corporate world stage the consumer’s body? Is the household the only insubmissive space or in fact an umpteenth incarnation staged by a major brand? In three acts, *Affordable Solution for Better Living* debunks the model and unfurls the convictions and doubts of a nearly perfect and polished man. A centaur, half man and half furniture, absurdly builds his own customized interior, unique and yet like all the others. In a crescendo mode, man and space merge beautifully, the smooth, harmonious and chilling world cracks and bends, exposing its dark side as well as its humanity. Aren’t people likely to self-destruct from within as they strive excessively to tend to their interior? – Hervé Pons, April 2018

Production and Booking

Nanterre-Amandiers, Centre Dramatique National

Booking in collaboration with Art Happens–Sarah de Ganck

Executive Production

Nanterre-Amandiers, Centre Dramatique National, apap–performing Europe 2020, with the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union

Coproduction: Bonlieu Scène nationale Annecy

In Collaboration With: workspacebrussels/Life Long Burning,

with the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union

Special Thanks:

Actoral – Festival international des arts et des écritures contemporaines & Montévidéo, Créations Contemporaines – Atelier de Fabrique Artistique, La ménagerie de verre, CAMPO, Ghent (Belgium)

The work of Artist and Stage Director **Théo Mercier** forms a critical inquiry at the intersection of anthropology, ethnography, geopolitics, and tourism. Between choreographed performance works and the exploration of diverse materials, he is both a creator and a collector, involved in a rich dialogue between past, present and future, between animate and inanimate, truth and lies, artisanal and industrial, sacred and profane, real and imaginary.

Most of Mercier's pieces turn on the anthropomorphisation of objects—whether they are found, assembled, in collage, or grafted together. He tends to work in series, forming communities of pieces—roughly grouped as young or old, male or female.

Résident at Villa Médicis de Rome, he wrote his first performance *Du futur faisons table rase*, performed at Nanterre-Amandiers (Paris) in December 2014. In the same year, Théo Mercier was nominated for Marcel Duchamp prize. He has presented personal exhibitions in Mexico, Los Angeles, Paris, and New York. His works have been showed at Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Moscow Biennial (Russia), Centre Pompidou (Paris), and Hamburger Bannhof (Germany). His last performance, *La Fille du collectionneur*, was shown at Nanterre-Amandiers (Paris) in 2017. He works and lives between Paris and Mexico.

Steven Michel (France, 1986) studied mime and circus at an early age, and dance and percussion as a teenager, before settling in Brussels in 2006. He trained at The P.A.R.T.S. dance school (Performing Arts Research and Training Studios), directed by Ann Teresa De Keersmaeker, and graduated in 2010.

He has been working as a dancer with choreographers, theater director, and filmmaker such as David Zambrano, Falk Richter, Lukas Dhont, Daniel Linehan, and Maud Le Pladec, as well as artists such as Théo Mercier and Sarah & Charles. Since 2012, he has regularly collaborated with the Belgian choreographer Jan Martens.

Steven is currently preparing a series of performance laboratories, open to artists from different disciplines. The methodological diversity of the research builds bridges to new areas of knowledge and experience. His goal is to not limit himself to a single discipline or tool, but to experience different roles and approaches, to explore diverse objects, and to blur the boundaries between modes of expression. He continues to explore and play with correspondences evoked by his research, such as: fiction and science, miniature and monumental scales, harmony and chaos, major modes and minor modes, the eye and the ear, and the analogue and the digital.

Upcoming Events

Dataatadata: Everything and Nothing

by Chris Klapper & Patrick Gallagher

December 1-31

Rewriting Personal History: Intensive Workshop with
Magnum Photographer Diana Markosian

December 9-11

TheaterMatters: An Artist and Critics Review Panel

December 10

() by AORTA films & the A.O. Movement Collective

January 4-6

Faces of Downtown Scene by Maria Baranova

January 4-February 16

50 States: Arkansas by Nick Vaughan & Jake Margolin

March 9-April 14

We May Never Dance Again by the feath3r theory

Spring 2019

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