

# **Press kit**

This event is coordinated by ARTCENA, Centre national des arts du cirque, de la rue et du theatre (French National Centre for Circus, Street Arts and Theatre) with the support of the French Ministry of Culture (DGCA), the Institut Français and the Institut Français in Prague. It is coproduced by Nanterre-Amandiers, Centre dramatique national.

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# Presentation

The Prague Quadrennial, is celebrating its 50th anniversary as the world's biggest scenography and theatre architecture event. It is organised by the Czech Republic's Ministry of Culture and is produced by the Arts and Theatre Institute. The Quadrennial showcases scenography in the broadest sense of the term and in all its many guises, shining a light on this distinctive art form that seeks to create spectacular spaces and imaginary worlds. Every four years, the event offers a new vision and fresh perspective on this artistic field, marking the Quadrennial out as an unmissable international platform for training opportunities and experience sharing. It also runs an international competition.

#### 

After a 15-year break, France will be taking part in this high-profile event in 2019. The country's attendance is a real boon to all scenography professionals, and is key to bolstering artistic collaboration between European countries. Taking part in the Quadrennial will be an opportunity to showcase France's vibrant creative scene and artists, as well as the excellence of its educational establishments devoted to artistic creation.

**Scenographer and theatre director Philippe Quesne**, who is also the director of the Nanterre-Amandiers National Drama Centre in France, has been appointed artistic director for the French contingent. He is thus responsible for coordinating France's two exhibition pavilions in Prague:

- A "France" pavilion featuring one of his unique artistic creations entitled Microcosm;
- A "Schools" pavilion, "The Ninth School", designed to showcase the work carried out by a dedicated project team, comprised of students from eight French higher education institutions that offer specific training in scenography. This "Ninth school" offers an original selection of student work imagined by their teachers, who opted for the creation of a space in which young people could let their imaginations run free rather than a selection process and a competition between students.

The French presence at the Quadrennial is coordinated by **ARTCENA**, the French National centre for circus arts, street arts and theatre, with the support of **the French Ministry of Culture (DGCA)**, **the French Institute**, **the French Institute in Prague**. It is coproduced by **the Nanterre-Amandiers National Drama Centre**.

This event is organised in partnership with the eight higher education institutions teaching scenography in France:

- ensa Nantes, Nantes
- École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs-EnsAD, Paris
- École nationale supérieure des arts et techniques du théâtre, ENSATT, Lyon
- École nationale supérieure d'architecture Paris La Villette, Paris
- École nationale supérieure d'architecture Paris-Malaquais, Paris
- Haute école des arts du Rhin-HEAR, Mulhouse/Strasbourg
- École du Théâtre national de Strasbourg-TNS, Strasbourg
- Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle Paris 3, Paris.

And in partnership with the Maison Jean Vilar and the Union des scénographes - UDS



# Calendar

#### Meetings about scenography

ARTCENA and its partners organise a lot of meetings, before the Quadrennial, inviting the public and the professionals to moments of reflection about scenography, the workshops of the Ninth School in Nanterre and the different partner schools in France, as well as the events organized during the Quadrennial in Prague.

- July 13th 2018 « Writing with scenography» With Mathieu Lory-Dupuy, Phia Ménard, Philippe Quesne, Éric Soyer and Virginie Yassef. Meeting organised during the Festival of Avignon. <u>Listen to the podcast</u>
- November 26th 2018 «The dramaturgy of space». With Aurélien Bory, Séverine Chavrier, Alix Denambride and Caty Olive. At the Maison des Auteurs de la SACD, Paris. Watch the video of the meeting
- March 23th 2019 Master class "Island, Islet, Refuge, Survival" organised by Muriel Delamotte and Claire Chavanne, scenographers and professionals associated with the Institute of Theatrical Studies. At the Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3 University.

#### **Events organised by the partner schools**

In which partner schools, different events are organised by the students, in link with the Quadrennial

- March 1st to 3rd and 5th to 9th 2019:
   Project « Disappearances » 1 text, 4 visions, 4 places, 4 projects led by the Group 44 and 45 of the École Théâtre National de Strasbourg. Based on the play Disappearances by the French playwright Christophe Pellet.
   At TNS, Strasbourg.
- April 3rd to 20th 2019:
   Exhibition "Scenographies. From the artwork to the scene: Hamlet's quest."
   At École nationale supérieure d'architecture Paris-Villette.

#### Workshops of the Ninth School at Nanterre-Amandiers

In preparation for the creation of the "Schools pavilion", Philippe Quesne works with the project team of the "Ninth school", composed of students in scenography from the eight French higher education partner schools.

**Dates:** October 20th 2018, November 23th- 24th 2018, December 10th-14th 2018, January 17th-18th 2019, March 8th-9th 2019, April 15th-18th 2019

#### Talk and workshop tour of the school pavilion.

**May 17th–18th 2019** – Workshop tour of the school pavilion designed by the students scenographers of the Ninth School for the 2019 Prague Quadrennial. At Nanterre-Amandiers.

## Prague Quadrennial

June 6th to 16th 2019, exhibitions. Industrial Palace, Prague.

#### <u>Avignon:</u>

**July 10th:** Back from the Prague Quadrennial, ARTCENA organised **« The 12 hours of Scenography! »** during the Festival of Avignon. Exploration of the "Schools Pavilion", impromptus, meetings, screenings, flash lectures and a party. With Philippe Quesne, students of the Ninth School, artists and guest. At the Maison Jean Vilar, Avignon.



# France Pavilion: *Microcosm* by Philippe Quesne

Curator, artist and director of Théâtre National Nanterre-Les Amandiers, Philippe Quesne was appointed artistic director of the French presence at the Prague Quadrennial. He is therefore coordinating the creation of the two pavilions that will be displayed in Prague. For the France Pavilion, he is presenting a unique production: *Microcosm*.

"With what is sometimes considered an "ecosophic" theatre, I explore through my installations and performances the relationship between man and nature, a theatre-as-lab-assistant that puts the spectator in the role of observer in front of a foreseen staging turned terrarium. A universe that brings together human and animal, daydream and material, sounds and words, the solitary and the group.

Indelibly fed by the visual arts, my shows are indivisible from their scenography, which is an integral element of the writing and scoring process. They are born from thinking of landscapes and imagining micro-worlds into which I can plunge the actors — spaces in which tiny communities must make up lives for themselves in any possible circumstance.

Constructed from various dioramas — from the snowy forest of *Mélancolie des Dragons*, to the fens of *Swamp Club* all the way to the caverns in *La Nuit des taupes* — these shows have been dreamt up for the past fifteen years and have travelled the globe. Once more, for the Prague Quadrennial and the conception of the pavilions conferred to me, it is the landscape that will act as my guide. A dream space around the theme of the deserted island will be the source of inspiration for this next adventure. I imagine an immersive installation, one that propels the visitors into the experience of life within an insular microcosm.

The island, as closed-off space isolated at sea, conducive to the most diverse visions possible, is the basis for many myths, symbols and fantasies, from Ulysses to Robinson Crusoe, Jules Verne to Gilles Deleuze, from Shakepeare's *Tempest* to *The Invention of Morel* by Bioy Casares. Across the arts and literature, the island is a space inspiring many tales of exile, the backdrop of certain fantasies, and the structure of utopias. The truest space of possibility, the island can represent happiness as well as abandonment and the anxiety of survival. It can be the theatre for epics, for great dramas, of the litmus test, or the baptism by fire. At the centre of a story, it plays many roles in function of the theme. In the Robinsonade adventure tale, it isolates the hero or heroes, who learn how to survive on it or how to escape from it. In a treasure hunt story, it becomes the hideout for booty. It can also be a refuge for those who seek to cut themselves off from the rest of humanity in order to quietly carry out their activities or live in respect of their ideals. In the same right, it can be used to present an imaginary, utopic, or dystopic society.

Among many other reasons, these various illustrations stand to show how the island fascinates and remains an inextricable source of inspiration for all types of works. "

Philippe Quesne May 2018



# The Schools Pavilion: "The Ninth School"

How do we materialise the unthought, spark the unexpected, break from the formats that elide past consciousness into creative movement? How do we make a procedure that opens up the possible within the narrow framework of an international exposition? How do we share the experimental process, the hunt for new concepts, the often disarrayed momentum of the imaginary? Rather than organise a selection of the most brilliant students and emerging artists and present their final works, why not first create a space to liberate the imagination and create together?

Brought together under the auspices of ARTCENA, the French National centre for circus arts, street arts and theatre, the pedagogic directors of eight higher education institutions teaching scenography in France dreamt of a "Ninth school", a utopia that brings together a student from each school in order to build a team for the thought, conception and production of the pavilion, accompanied by Philippe Quesne.

It's a done deal. As of October 2018, the eight students making up the "Ninth School" meet each month at the Nanterre-Amandiers theatre, to create together, workshop by workshop, their French schools pavilion.

Under the artistic direction of Philippe Quesne, the "Ninth School" is growing in a space brimming with performance artistry. The students have the opportunity to take advantage of the incredible production tools at Nanterre-Amandiers and to go behind the curtain of theatre production.

Gradually, throughout the adventure and during each meeting of this utopian school, the schools pavilion itself has been christened "The Ninth School". As a given. In the style of an explorer's log, the works, inspirations and paths taken by the "Ninth School" are collected and documented in the logbook.

#### The Ninth School is composed of:

Ariane Chapelet (ensa Nantes), Bianca Da Costa (EnsAD), Shehrazad Derme (ENSATT), Camille Ranson (ENSA Paris-La Villette), Estelle Baverel (ENSA-Paris-Malaquais), Clothilde Valette and then Léa Chardin, (HEAR), Simon Restino (TNS), Lucie Mazières (Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3).



# Augmented pavilions: an open window on creation

French pavilions are augmented with a bilingual website (French / English). It is conceived as an open window on the research and creation processes.

This website puts a particular stress on the creation of the pavilions with photos, sketches and narratives of the workshops. Everything is recorded in a digital logbook that keeps records of the creative researches feeding the artistic process.

In parallel, this digital platform highlights the singularity of the pedagogical approaches of the partner schools teaching scenography in France. It offers a lively portrait of the schools by focusing the attention on the work done by their students throughout the year.

This plurality of points of view form the specificity of the French presence at the 2019 Quadrennial.



# The Prague Quadrennial

The Prague Quadrennial for Performance Design and Space (or simply "PQ") is the largest international event in the field of scenography. At its last iteration in 2015, more than 75 countries were represented and some 180,000 visitors were in attendance.

It presents scenography in the broadest sense of the term and in all the forms it takes on, as a fully-fledged artistic discipline that seeks to create active performance spaces and imaginary worlds. Since its creation in 1967, the Quadrennial explores every four years the notion of scenography as a transdisciplinary field where the performance, visual, and even architectural arts act and converge.

Supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and organised by the Arts and Theatre Institute, the Quadrennial is largely structured around three exhibitions where the various pavilions compete:

- Regional and national pavilions;
- Schools pavilions;
- Theatre architecture and space design pavilions.

The Prague Quadrennial is a unique space where cultures and performance artists mix from around the world, an unparalleled opportunity for the exchange of experience, of discoveries of new trends, of technical means for theatre production, and workshops that allow participants to try out new ways of doing.

In parallel, it commissions a lively program of performances, symposia, debates, and conferences for which participating countries may submit proposals.

The 14th Quadrennial will take place at its historic site, the Prague Exhibitions Grounds (Výstaviště Praha), of which one wing that burned down in 2008 has since been reconstructed.

The 2019 PQ is inspired by the Golden Triga. This reduced-size reproduction of the famous statue is chosen to symbolise the prize traditionally awarded to the best pavilion of the Quadrennial. The three horses pulling the carriage of Athena Nike, goddess of Victory, three forces, metaphors for three phases of life: impetuous youth, maturity enriched by experience, wisdom of age. The three themes of 2019 are as a result: imagination, transformation and memory.



# The curator: Philippe Quesne



Photo: Manuel Obadia-Wills

After studying graphic arts (Ecole Estienne then EnsAD, section scenography), Philippe Quesne has worked for over a decade as a theatre and exhibition scenographer. He founded the company Vivarium Studio in 2003, bringing together a working group of actors, graphic artists and musicians with whom he conceived and directed performances, building over time a repertoire performed around the world: La Démangeaison des ailes (2004), Des Expériences (2004), D'après Nature (2006), L'Effet de Serge (2007), La Mélancolie des dragons (2008), Big Bang (2010) and Swamp Club (2012).

In his plays, he hunts for the marvellous, pushing everyday experiences and the relationships of man and nature to an extreme. He works on small utopian communities that he looks at under a microscope, as if they were insects. Scenography, indistinguishable from writing, is seen as an ecosystem in which he plunges his performers.

Beside his company, he created in 2011 Pièce pour la technique du Schauspiel de Hanovre for the resident technical team of the theatre. In 2012, he was invited by The Pavillon at the Palais du Tokyo to create a staged creation in collaboration with the ten artists and curators in residence. The same year, he contributed to the collective production at HAU Berlin, based on the novel by David Foster Wallace *Infinite Jest*, a production within dedicated spaces lasting 24 hours.

Additionally, Philppe Quesne creates performances and actions for public spaces or in natural spaces, and exhibits his installations in the frame of various exhibitions, such as the Biennale de Lyon in 2017. He has also published four short texts: Actions en milieu naturel (2005), Petites réflexions sur la présence de la nature en milieu urbain (2006), Thinking about the end of the world in costume by the sea (2009) and Bivouac (2011). He is regularly invited to devise the artistic programming for events, notably the TJCC Festival at the Théâtre de Gennevilliers from 2012 to 2014.

In 2013, he created *Anamorphosis with four Japanese actresses* from the company Oriza Hirata, at the Komaba Agora Theatre in Tokyo. In 2014, he created *Next Day*, a play for children aged eight to eleven, at the Theater der Welt Festival (Mannheim, Germany) with the Belgian production company CAMPO.

Since January 2014, Philippe Quesne has been co-director of the Nanterre-Amandiers theatre, creating in collaboration with the sociologist and anthropologist Bruno Latour and the team from SPEAP the Théâtre des Négociations, a simulation of the COP21 with 200 students from around the world, and La Nuit des taupes in 2016. The same year, he premiered Caspar Western Friedrich, part of the programme for the Kammerspiele in Munich. For the 2018–2019 season, he created Crash Park, la vie d'une île at the TNB Rennes and the main stage at Nanterre-Amandiers before going on an international tour, then Farm fatale at the Kammerspiele in Munich. For the first time, he was invited to direct and design the scenography of an opera at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, Usher, based on the story The Fall of the House of Usher by Edgar Allen Poe, music by Debussy and Annelies Van Parys (October 2018).

Furthermore, Philippe Quesne regularly organises training programmes in art and theatre schools (Manufacture Lausanne, Academy of Arts Reykjavik, TBA Portland, Das Art Amsterdam, etc.)



# The partners

#### **STEERING COMITTE**

## French Ministry of Culture - Department of artistic creation (DGCA)

The Department of artistic creation (DGCA) contributes to the development of the European and international initiative for graphic and performing arts. This contribution takes form as provision of resources, tools, education and grants designated for actors of the performing and visual arts, allowing them to develop: professional and artistic mobility measures, distribution of performances and exhibitions, exportation of their craft, cultural engineering, artistic exchanges, partnerships and cultural cooperation, creation and integration into European and international networks. The DGCA contributes to the international regularisation of public policy in the arts.

→ www.culture.gouv.fr

#### Institut français

The Institut français is a public institution responsible for French cultural actions abroad. Its initiatives cover various artistic fields, intellectual exchanges, cultural and social innovation, and linguistic cooperation. Throughout the world, it promotes the French language, as well as he mobility of artworks, artists and ideas, and thus works to foster cultural understanding. The Institut français, under the aegis of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, actively contributes to France's soft diplomacy. Its projects and programs take local contexts into account and can be successfully implemented thanks to the vast network of the French Embassies' cultural services, as well as the many Instituts français and Alliances Françaises present across five continents.

## French Institute of Prague

Since 1920, the French Institute of Prague has been promoting French language and culture in Prague and the Czech Republic. It is a place where Francophones and Francophiles get to meet contemporary players of the French culture at readings, conferences, debates, exhibitions, film screenings, concerts and shows within the framework of European exchange and international dialogue.

The French Institute of Prague thus supports major Franco-Czech cultural projects and cooperates with local organizations in all fields, from new circus to Baroque music.

#### ARTCENA, Centre national des arts du cirque, de la rue et du théâtre

ARTCENA is the French National Centre for Circus, Street, and Theatre Art. This resource centre is an open and lively rallying point, reinforcing both the foundations and growth of the circus, street, and theatre arts. It works closely with professionals from these three sectors while fulfilling the needs of teachers, students, researchers, as well as the general public. The centre's missions are based on three axes:

Sharing knowledge, through a digital reference platform and publications,



- Providing professional support through advice and training,
- Supporting and promoting the development of the circus, street and theatre arts. It thereby participates in promoting creation, mainly via the national "Aid for the creation of dramatic texts" initiative, the Grand Prix for Dramatic Literature.

ARTCENA promotes international development: it coordinates Circostrada, the European network for circus and street arts as well as Contxto. Lastly, ARTCENA nourishes reflexion and innovation through debates, but also through future studies labs and themed projects implemented with the players concerned.

ARTCENA is supported by the French Ministy of Culture.

#### → www.artcena.fr

## Nanterre-Amandiers, Centre dramatique national

Nanterre-Amandiers is a national public theater (Centre Dramatique National) whose mission is to produce and make circulate performances with contemporary aesthetics. The programme makes various performing arts – theater, dance, musical theater, visual arts – meet and circulate, while developing international collaborations and inviting French and international artists. The performances raise questions and depict acts that account for our times, pieces offered by artists who explore new forms of writings for the stage, artists who are controversial and question our preconceptions, artists of our times, who place the present at the heart of their work. Nanterre-Amandiers produces and co-produces new works, invites guest performances, hosts meetings and discussions, organizes tours. It is directed by the artist Philippe Quesne since 2014.

#### **SCHOOL PARTNERS**

#### École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs

The EnsAD teaches scenography after the second year of a 5-year programme as art of performance and of the ephemeral, which engages all its potential, all its expressive forms (theatre, art exhibitions, cinema, etc.) brought together in order to express the dramatic tension created in the nexus of space and narration. The Ecole nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, founded in 1766, occupies a vital place in the history of creation, the decorative arts and design in France. Drawing from a long heritage and today offering 10 fields of artistic studies, it has always been a pioneer throughout its existence and across generations through its continuous contributions to the history of contemporary arts.

# ensa - École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Nantes

With the DPEA (degree unique to schools of architecture), specialty Scenography, the ensa Nantes offers a rigorous education that takes place over two years in facilities specially dedicated to the 20 students of the course, out of the 1,000 total who make up the student body. The DPEA Scenography course at Nantes is a specialised post-graduate programme created in 1984 at Clermont-Ferrand, then in 1999 moved to the ensa Nantes where it enjoys a context dedicated to its development.

The degree in Scenography was established from the idea that architecture, the "beyond the walls", exhibitions, cinema, etc., share this in common with theatre, that they integrate the space, time and action to elicit – each in their own way – a sense of the dramatic.



## École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris-La Villette

The ENSA Paris-La Villette offers a course that is at once theoretical and practical in scenography through the specialization option of Art, Scenography and Architecture (ASA), a significant division among the available options for the Master's degree. Created in 1969 (under the name 'Study Unit in Architecture no 6), the ENSA Paris-La Villette is the first school to have integrated scenography into the teaching of architecture. It is today the largest school of architecture in France, in terms of the number of enrolled students.

## École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Malaquais

The ENSA Paris-Malaquais is a school of architecture in which scenography constitutes a specialty subject taught in close collaboration with outside institutions and professionals in the field. The Ecole Nationale supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Malaquais, one of twenty national schools of architecture in France, is an open and international school, characterised by a diverse pedagogical program. Created in January 2001, it is located within the historical compound of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Beaux-Arts.

¬ paris-malaguais.archi.fr

## École Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Techniques du Théâtre-ENSATT

The ENSATT offers a 3-year course in scenography with modern facilities and appropriate spaces provided to students, including an amphitheater and proscenium stage seating 218. Born more than 70 years ago in Paris and known first under the name Ecole de la rue Blanche, the ENSATT is a "Theatre School" located in Lyon since 1997 and allows professionals of the performing arts to enroll in an intensive course in the field of scenography.

#### HEAR / Haute École des Arts du Rhin

The HEAR is a multidisciplinary arts schools that offers a minor specialization in scenography, with theatre as the structuring mainline, all while incorporating a look beyond conventional performance space to explore a more active notion of theatricality. The Haute Ecole des Arts du Rhin (HEAR) was born in January 2011 out of the fusion of the Ecole Superieure des Arts décoratifs de Strasbourg (ESADS), the Ecole Superieure d'Art de Mulhouse (Le Quai) and music educators from the conservatory of Strasbourg, forming a single institution of higher education in the arts.

#### Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3

The professional bachelors in theatrical and event scenography being a degree conferred by a public university, it relies largely on theory, texts and through dramaturgy as taught by professionals active in the world of performing arts. The professional bachelors in theatrical and event scenography was created by the Institut d'Etudes theatrales of the Université Paris 3, within the department of Arts and Media, in partnership with the Ecole Boulle and the ESAA Duperré. It complements the other degrees offered in theatre studies offered at the Sorbonne Nouvelle.



## École supérieure d'art dramatique du Théâtre National de Strasbourg - TNS

The National Theatre of Strasbourg, the only national theatre to also have a school of theatre, offers a non-traditional course that brings together scenography and costume design. Enrolment has increased each year in this dual-degree based both on theory and practical application, taught in collaboration with other fields. Since its creation in 1954 by Michel Saint-Denis, the existence of the Ecole superiere d'art dramatique of the National Theatre, Strasbourg, is dual and invaluable to the theatre itself, with which it has shared infrastructure and facilities. It prioritizes the interdisciplinary in offering a program that teaches actors, stage directors, scenographers, costume designers, directors and playwrights together in one class.

#### **PARTNERS**

#### Maison Jean Vilar

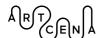
Jean Vilar passed away in 1971. The necessity of assembling a corpus of documents quickly became apparent: records of his work, the Théâtre National Populaire during his directorship (1951–63) and everything connected with the Festival d'Avignon which he created in 1947. In 1972, on the initiative of Paul Puaux, his closest collaborator and successor as director of the Festival d'Avignon (1971–79), the Association Jean Vilar was set up and was granted official status as a public interest organisation (allowing it to receive donations and funding). The Association, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF or French National Library), the Ministry of Culture and the city of Avignon met and agreed on the need to establish a centre dedicated to Jean Vilar and the study of contemporary performing arts. When the city of Avignon acquired the l'Hôtel de Crochans, in 1979, the Maison Jean Vilarbecame a venue for exhibitions, archives and research as well as a place for meetings and events, in keeping with the spirit of a people's theatre today. This project joins in a quadripartite agreement between the City of Avignon, the Ministry of Culture, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the Jean Vilar association.

The Maison Jean Vilar is:

- A place of remembrance: to promote interest in the work of Jean Vilar and popular theatre
- A resource centre allowing both professionals and the general public access to the collections and works: iconographic and audiovisual documents, performance archives, the cultural life of the region, Jean Vilar's decentralisation initiative and the history of the Festival d'Avignon.
- A vibrant place: a year-round programme of exhibitions, events and meetings, culminating in the Festival d'Avignon.

## Union des scénographes

Created in 1996, the Union des Scenographers is a professional, mixed and autonomous trade union that brings together stage designers for shows, equipment and exhibitions. The UDS organized under the high patronage of the Ministry of Culture the first European meetings of scenography at the Odeon Theater of Europe in October 2017 and prepares the next meetings in autumn 2020.



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Media partners







