

THE FAR SIDE



UNPLUSH COMPANY

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PREMIERE 8 MAY 2019
CABANE B BUMPLITZ BERN (CH)

EPISODE 1: INSTANT GALLERY SOUP
EPISODE 2: MONT OLYMPUS GOLF CLUB

TRAILER: [VIMEO.COM/415051587](https://vimeo.com/415051587)
EPISODE 2: [VIMEO.COM/423266721/29C34C3B0D](https://vimeo.com/423266721/29C34C3B0D)

WITH : MARIA DEMANDT, IDRIS BOUKHALFA
VITTORIO BERTOLLI, PETER CRIPPS CLARK

CONCEPT: MARION ZURBACH
INSTALLATION : MATTEO TARAMELLI
LIVE MUSIC : MARION ZURBACH
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: OLIVIER FAMIN
PRODUCTION: MARTINA LANGMANN
DIFFUSION: LES PRODUCTIONS DE LA SEINE

DURATION : 80'
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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MARION ZURBACH

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INTRODUCTION

THE FAR SIDE is a diptych of installation performances, to be presented individually or as a sequence of episodes. They are adaptable to different types of spaces (theatres, galleries, cultural centres...).

Episode I: Instant Gallery Soup

Episode II: Mont Olympus Golf Club

The FAR SIDE presents ironic and political myths, faithful to the absurdity of existence. The mosaic of live performance, electronic soundscapes and digital media opens a dialogue between myths and contemporary events, generating an unusual place of encounter.

The focus lies on creating a sensory experience, emphasizing the metamorphosis of bodies. A diptych of performance installations on futuristic cabinets of curiosities and inspired by „The Garden of Earthly Delights“ by Hieronymus Bosch.

The performances are created in remembrance of cabinets of curiosities, Wunderkammern. These eclectic juxtapositions of rarities were once regarded as a world in miniature. They responded both to the desire to understand the world and to enjoy its mysteries, sometimes resulting in the cruel appropriation of goods or living beings.

THE FAR SIDE guides the audience through discordant uplifting fiction that highlights various aspects of cabinets of curiosity. The journey begins by arousing the viewer's curiosity and progresses towards an examination of the possible narratives of human history, between myth and reality, past, present and future, through the story of three fallen gods.

The characters are inspired by creatures from Ovid's "Metamorphosis" and current internet icons. They are the hosts of the place and invite the audience to an interactive close encounter. Their narrations and behavior oscillate between greatness and triviality, coinciding to produce different energies in the room. The audience is frequently challenged by unexpected turn of events.



EPISODE 1: INSTANT GALLERY SOUP

Drink from the source, the experience of the supernatural, the warning that life on earth is changing irrevocably. The visitors must understand the cosmology that is presented to them. We do not explain everything. The abyss, the end of an era, narrated by us, the fallen gods. From the age of wonder to the age of nostalgia, our bodies are vehicles for your personal and common stories.

INSTANT GALLERY SOUP is set in a sneaker store, in a post-apocalyptic future, showcasing well-preserved specimens from a devastated era to the audience. The characters, three ex-important people, live in this sneaker store and keep it alive. They seem to have had a glorious past, but are now trapped in this situation.

The three characters are running a business, in order to survive, they have converted into oracles, offering services which follow a well-defined protocol.

The ceremony begins with a foot wash of some visitors, the water collected is then boiled with vegetables. While the soup is cooking, the fallen gods present the sneakers in a disco showcase, with psychedelic light effects and massive amounts of smoke.

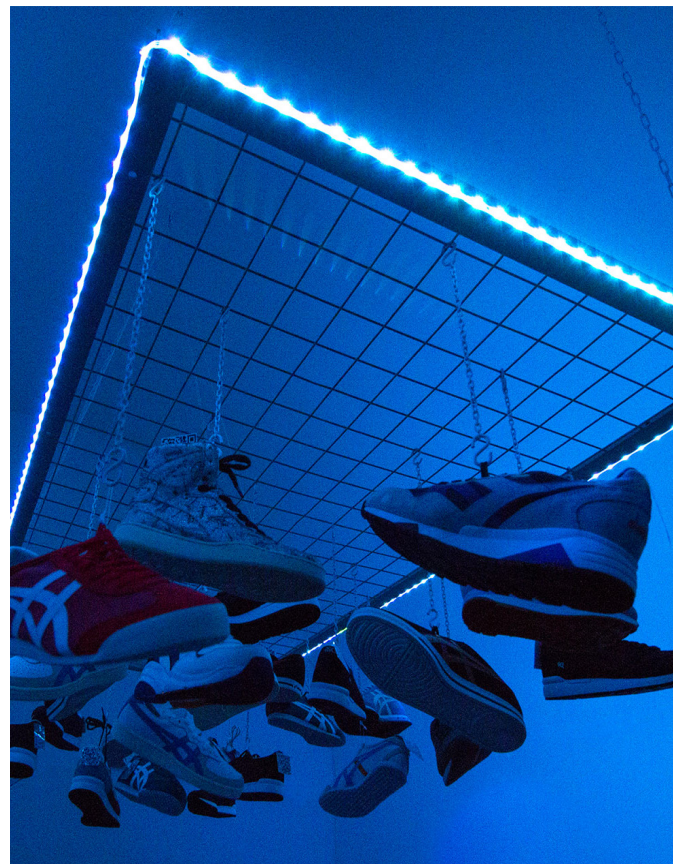
The shoes are presented as most precious objects from a time before the disaster, which is what their observation of our contemporary world suggested to them. Proud of their trophies, they invite some members of the audience to try on these marvels.

Then they continue the ceremony with a choreographed narration, a danced history of the world, inspired by their archival documents: YouTube videos. When the soup is ready, they settle down to drink it, the oracle begins.

INSTANT GALLERY SOUP stages the characters' attempts to challenge their role as "living curiosities", serving and entertaining the audience.

The second part of the performance offers the audience the freedom to play with the installation. QR codes are placed on the shoes, which when scanned offer an additional perspective to the live show. The audience's choices trigger a projection of images and videos that show an eclectic composition of unusual viral as well as concealed internet curiosities.

These videos create additional associations with curiosity cabinets of the future, possibly resembling a nostalgic attempt to keep the wonders of the world that are rapidly disappearing, alive. They also give hints of the cause of the post-apocalyptic scenario simulated in this episode.



EPISODE 2: MONT OLYMPUS GOLF CLUB

Their passion has become mythical, it has reached an unbearable intensity that transposes the episode to a divine or supernatural plane. The particular thrill of the event: the moment when the victim, too human, stumbles into the mythical arena and must transform.

The performance works like a prequel. It presents the characters of the first episode at the height of their glory, before the various disasters that transformed the world and led to their downfall. The passions and desires evoked, are the source of their transformations.

Inspired by Ovid's metamorphoses, these three characters were gods living on the Mount Olympus golf club. The installation, a miniature golf course, suggests an association between the gods of Olympus and privileged people of our contemporary era.

An unsettling atmosphere is created that prepares the audience to enter a place where the boundaries between illegal and immoral, observing and violating are explored. It's a journey, where the characters invite to be followed into the human unconscious, exploring its unconfessed fears and desires.

The characters evoke myths by transforming their outcomes, such as the one of Daphne and Apollo. Maria Demandt is Apollo, a cruel man, a scary figure of youth, beauty and masculinity dressed up in a white tennis uniform, dominating Daphne, played by Vittorio Bertolli, a raped woman, pushed to her limits, who will transform into a bull, Jupiter.

The kidnapping of Europe follows; a young woman mourning her forced departure of her native country, watching buildings crumble in the distance. She is undertaking the perilous crossing of the Mediterranean on Jupiter's back.

Circe, played by Peter Cripps Clark, is the magician who unites and soothes the characters in an ultimate metamorphosis, where their bodies merge into each other to transform into the characters in the first episode.

The performance is accompanied by electronic soundscape and a narrative in the Berber language. The warm voice of Idris Boukhalfa soothes the audience and gives them the feeling that they are the observers of a mythology outside of time.



UNPLUSH

Unplush is a transdisciplinary art association connecting artists from various fields such as dance, performance, music, visual arts and graphic design.

Since 2017, the collective UNPLUSH has been presenting performances, organising clubbing events and workshops with UNPLUSH Company, HEPTEKA and AMAClub.

With its vast collaborations, formats and venues, Unplush is actively involved in the swiss cultural scene and produces for a broad audience.

UNPLUSH COMPANY

The company proposes works that result from the dialogue between people participating in the productions. Whether they are artists, anthropologists or amateur dancers, the meeting between people with different life experiences or of different ages is seen as a stimulus for reflection and solidarity.



Under the artistic direction of Marion Zurbach, the performers work from their connection to a theme, with their imagination and history. Between myth and realism, tragedy and humour, UNPLUSH observes constructions, existential strategies or non human life forms. A reflection on our conditionings, our struggles and what a space of speculation like the stage can produce.

PRIZES AND CREATIVE SUPPORT

2019 – UNPLUSH receives the “June Johnson Dance Prize”

2018 – UNPLUSH receives three years of support from PRAIRIE, the Migros Culture Percentage’s co-production model for innovative Swiss theatre and dance companies.

2017 – “ACT-BAD Bilbao” prize for the piece LABOR at the ACT Festival Bilbao

– “Best Production of the 17/18 Season” prize for FLIPPER by the „Voyeur Bern“

DIFFUSION

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BIOGRAPHIES

MARION ZURBACH

Concept and realisation

Marion was born in Martigues, France. She started her training at the École Nationale Supérieure de Danse in Marseille, before moving on to the École-Atelier Rudra Béjart Lausanne, where she began her professional career with Maurice Béjart's "Compagnie M". Between 2003 and 2015, she was a member of the Teatro comunale di Firenze, the Ballet National de Marseille, and was a soloist at the Bern Ballet and the Tanzcompagnie Konzert Theater Bern. In 2015, Marion founded with Vittorio Bertolli the Bern-based artistic association UNPLUSH and starts creating works for the company. Since its creation, UNPLUSH has collaborated regularly with the Dampfzentrale Bern, toured in Switzerland and abroad and has won several awards. In 2018, Marion completed her Master of Theatre and Performance degree at Bern University of the Arts (HKB). In 2020, she created "Les promises", a piece made with teenage woman living in the northern districts of Marseille. In 2021 she will work on UNPLUSH' artistic development and the new creation „Do it Mayra“.

MARIA DEMANDT

Performer

Maria Demandt (1991) was born in Amsterdam, where she began studying dance. From 2010 to 2015, she was a dancer for the Tanzcompagnie Konzert Theater Bern. She has worked as a freelancer since 2016, creating her own pieces and working as a performer on projects by other artists, for example in "Beyond Indifference" by Tabea Martin at the Kaserne Basel. Maria is a member of the company

UNPLUSH, and took part in its Tanz Faktor 2015/16 tour with her solo piece "My Box", as well as contributing to "Of Humans and other Artifacts" and "The Far Side Compilation". Maria follows an interdisciplinary approach to performance. In 2017, she collaborated with the visual artist Marijn Bax on the video installation "Touch of Stone". In 2018, Maria spent six months cycling across Africa. In 2019, she founded the musical duo "Homemade Iscream" with the musician and performer Donath Weyeneth. Since August 2019, Maria has been a member of "The Field", the artists' collective in residence at the Tanzhaus Zürich.

PETER CRIPPS CLARK

Performer

Peter grew up in Melbourne, Australia. At the age of 20, he moved to the Netherlands and joined the ArtEZ school where he graduated with a Master degree in Dance in 2015. He was a member of the Tanzcompagnie Konzert Theater Bern, where amongst other productions he participated in the creation of Koen Augustijnen's „Dancing Bach“. At this time, he started to work with Marion Zurbach. Based in Amsterdam since 2017, he works as an independent artist and performer, interested in interdisciplinary performances, installations and costume design. He is part of the drag house „House of Hopelezz“. He joined UNPLUSH at its creation in 2015. Since then, he has been a regular contributor to the artistic work of the company and is notably interpreting the role of Kathy in the piece FLIPPER.

VITTORIO BERTOLLI

Performer and artistic assistant

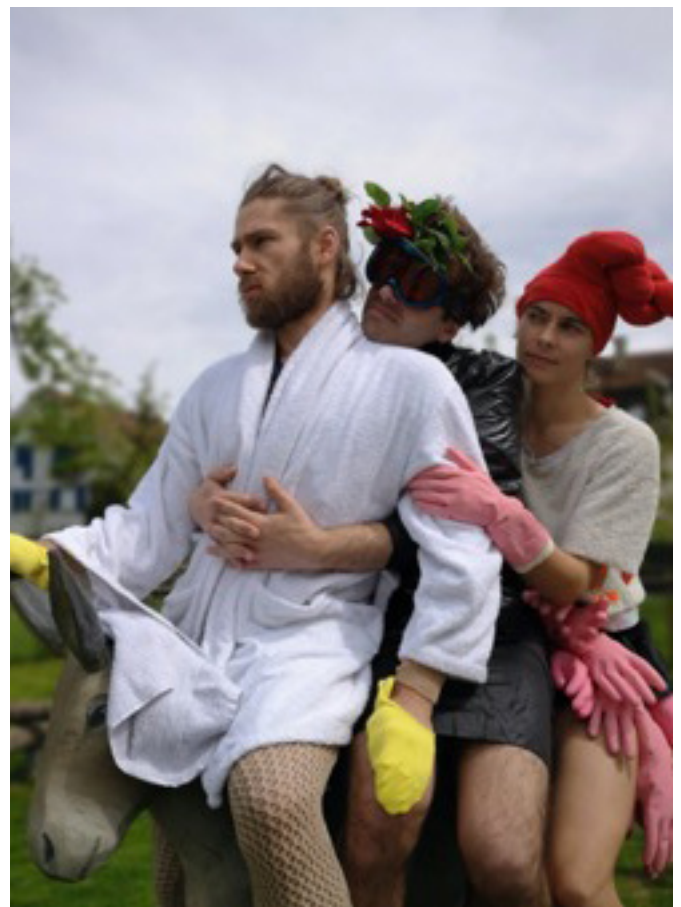
Born and raised in Napoli, Vittorio graduated from the Ecole Atelier Rudra Béjart Lausanne in 2002. During the following years he danced for several ballet and contemporary dance companies, such as the Béjart Ballet Lausanne, the Teatro alla Scala di Milano, the Compagnia Aterballetto and collaborated with choreographers such as Maurice Béjart, Mauro Bigonzetti, William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin, Andonis Foniadakis, Alexander Ekman, and Johan Inger. After the encounter with David Zambrano in 2008, Vittorio's interest shifted to different ways of expressing his passion for dance. Since then he works as a freelance performer and assistant choreographer in collaboration with artists coming from very different artistic backgrounds. Alongside his work as a performer, assistant choreographer, and dramaturge Vittorio teaches Flying Low regularly at Tanzcompagnie Konzert Theater Bern and in several companies and education programs in Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Belgium and France. In 2015 he co-founded with Marion Zurbach the company Unplush. In 2018, he achieved the MAS program in Dance Science at the University of Bern.

MATTEO TARAMELLI

Installation

Matteo is an architect, visual artist and computer design expert focusing on the creation of space installations and videos that link geometrical composition with sound and performing arts. Born in Bergamo (Italy), he graduated at the Dessau Institute of Architecture and completed his bachelor degree in Science of Architecture at the Politecnico di Milano.

He has been carrying out research on 3D Augmented Reality within the Architecture & Plan Department of Politecnico and worked as designer at NuMiStudio architectural office. For several years he has been creating illustrations for Atlas publishing company as well works as art assistant at Zimoun Studio (Bern). He also collaborated with the performative art project "A Normal Working Day" with Delgado Fuchs, focusing on the design and creation of video art works and with Tomàs Saraceno Studio (Berlin), for the design and 3D print of modular components. Matteo has been teaching workshops on 3D modeling and algorithmic design at Politecnico di Milano, DIA and Kulturesk HKB.



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