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NEWS

For Immediate Release

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***Seuls en Scène* - Princeton French Theater Festival**

***Celebrated French theater artists converge onstage at Princeton University***

***8th Edition of the Festival***

   

Photo 1:  From *Avignon à vie (Avignon for Ever*), photo by Christophe Raynaud de Lage

Photo 2: Guillaume Baillart in *Desordre du discours* (*The Disorder of Discourse*), photo by Marc Domage

Photo 3: From *Qui a tué mon père* (*Who Killed My Father*), photo by Jean-Louis Fernandez

Photo 4: From *Radio Live*, photo by Louise Quignon

What: *Seuls en Scène* French Theater Festival featuring renowned and emerging French writers, actors and directors in seven productions of contemporary works recently presented on stages in France, most performed in French with English subtitles.

Who: Presented by Lewis Center for the Arts, L’Avant Scène and Department of French and Italian at Princeton University and organized by Senior Lecturer in the Department of French and Italian and artistic director of L’Avant-Scène.

When: September 19 -28

Where: Various venues on the Princeton University campus

Tickets: Free and open to the public, however advance tickets are required, available online at tickets.princeton.edu

For more information: <https://arts.princeton.edu/frenchtheater/>

(Princeton, NJ) Princeton University’s Lewis Center for the Arts, Department of French and Italian, and L’Avant-Scène will present the eighth annual Seuls en Scène French Theater Festival, which will take place from September 19 to 28 at venues across the University’s campus. Most performances will be in French, and several will include English subtitles; all are free and open to the public.

Seuls en Scène ushers in the 19th season of L’Avant-Scène, a French theater troupe of Princeton students. It also celebrates professional theatrical achievements from the past year: many of the invited artists to Seuls en Scène are prominent contributors to contemporary theater in France. The Festival is organized by **Florent Masse**, Senior Lecturer in the Department of French and Italian and artistic director of L’Avant-Scène.

**Fanny de Chaillé** returns to Princeton to present Désordre du discours (The Disorder of Discourse), a restaging of one of French philosopher Michel Foucault’s most famous lectures on September 19 at 8 p.m. and September 20 at 6 p.m. in McCosh 10 in McCosh Hall. On December 2, 1970, Foucault gave his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, the first lesson for which a rewriting exists, entitled *L’Ordre du discours*. De Chaillé recreates the event and puts together a discursive performance. After studying aesthetics at the Sorbonne, de Chaillé worked with Daniel Larrieu at the Centre chorégraphique national in Tours, as well as with Alain Buffard, Matthieu Doze and Rachid Ouramdane, and performed under the direction of Gwenaël Morin. She regularly participates in projects with visual artists Thomas Hirschhorn and Pierre Huyghe. She also creates her own installations and performances.

The Festival continues with **Julien Gosselin** who presents *Le Marteau et la faucille (The Hammer and Sickle)* on September 20 and 21 at 8 p.m. in the Wallace Theater of the Lewis Arts complex. Director Gosselin continues his scenic exploration of contemporary literature and violence in societies. Based on a 2010 short story by the American writer Don DeLillo, this latest production presents the dystopian world of high finance. Jerold Bradway is a trader imprisoned for financial crimes. Along with his cell-mates, he is forced to watch a children’s television program written by his ex-wife and presented by his two daughters, which talks about financial crises. Gosselin brings the story to life through a powerful monologue that reflects on the contemporary void and our relationship with money. In 2013, the impact of Gosselin’s adaptation of Michel Houellebecq’s *Les Particules élémentaires* brought Si vous pouviez lécher mon cœur, a young collective led by Gosselin, into the spotlight. In 2016, with *2666*, an adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s monumental novel, the director confirmed his taste for unbridled shows, non-theatre-based texts and all-embracing, immersive formats in which music, video and lighting engage spectators in a dazzling aesthetic experience. Gosselin recently adapted *Players* (1977), *Names* (1982) and *Mao II* (1991) that draw upon the inextricable links between individual destiny and collective history.

**Stanislas Nordey** directs and performs Qui a tué mon père (Who Killed my Father) by young French literary sensation **Edouard Louis** on September 21 at 2 p.m. in the Matthews Acting Studio of 185 Nassau Street. In the manner of Marguerite Duras, Simone de Beauvoir, Annie Ernaux and Didier Eribon, Louis writes from his personal experience, lauded for his two mostly autobiographical novels: *The End of Eddy* (2014) and *History of Violence* (2016). *Who Killed my Father* is a soliloquy: aman visits his father, whose back was damaged in a factory accident, and launches into an angry and scathing social and political critique of the violence he sees perpetrated against the working class, remembering episodes from his childhood in an attempt to explain how his still young father ended up as he did. Nordey, a celebrated and indefatigable theater artist in France, makes his acting debut in the U.S. Nordey directs plays and operas and performs in a number of projects every season while serving as artistic director of Théâtre National de Strasbourg (TNS), both the theater and its renowned acting school. Since arriving at the helm of TNS, Nordey has produced forceful and socially-relevant seasons and has invited prominent actors, directors, and playwrights to join him as associate artists. An advocate for contemporary theater, he has staged works by writers such as Falk Richter, Anja Hilling, Peter Handke, Wajdi Mouawad, or Christophe Pellet in recent years.

With **Pascal Rambert**, Nordey will read *Avignon à vie (Avignon for Ever)* on September 22 at 5 p.m. in the Hearst Dance Theater of the Lewis Arts complex. *Avignon à vie* is a love letter, written by Rambert, to Avignon and its famed theater festival. Nordey will lend his voice to this luminous ode to the theater and share the stage with Rambert, a major figure in French theater, who received the “Grand prix de l’Académie Française pour l’ensemble de son oeuvre” or “Theater Prize from Académie Française for his entire body of work” in 2016. His texts have been translated and adapted by many directors in France and abroad. Last spring Rambert joined Princeton as a Belknap Fellow in the Humanities Council and Visiting Lecturer in the Department of French and Italian. Nordey, a long-time collaborator of Rambert, recently starred in Rambert’s production *Architecture* at the 73rd Avignon Festival. *Avignon à vie* will mark Rambert’s fourth appearance at *Seuls en Scène*.

*Blablabla* by **Emmanuelle Lafon** and **Joris Lacoste**will be performed at the Wallace Theater of the Lewis Arts Complex on Wednesday, September 25 at 4 p.m. & 8 p.m. With *blablabla*, Lacoste and Lafon orchestrate, for the first time, a children’s version of their *Encyclopédie de la parole,* an artistic project exploring the spoken word in all its forms. Since September 2007, Encyclopédie de la parole has been collecting various recordings and indexing them according to specific phenomena that make up how people speak, such as pacing, chorality, timbre, address, overemphasis, spacing, residue, saturation or melody. From this collection composed now by more than a thousand documents, Encyclopédie de la parole makes use of these recordings to produce works of sound art, performances, shows, conferences, concerts and installations. The project is led by a collective of poets, actors, visual artists, ethnographers, musicians, curators, directors, choreographers, and radio show producers. In this piece, devised using many different types of recordings, an actress-singer-performer explores how children hear, designed for both adult and child “relisteners,” ages six and up. Directed by Lafon and composed by Lacoste, *blablabla* draws upon such sound sources as Mrs. McGonagall greeting Hogwarts’ young witches and wizards, Jean-Pierre Pernaut presenting the day’s events on TF1, a break-time game of cops and robbers, the conductor welcoming passengers aboard the TGV n°1456 train, a speaking toy, a rapper, the queen of hearts wanting to make heads roll, or Radouane’s fits of laughter. Via a special sound device designed by Ircam, performer Anna Carlier experiments with her voice and summons up an array of different characters.

**François de Brauer** presents *La loi des prodiges (The Prodigies’ Law)* on September 26 & 27 at 8 p.m. at the Matthews Acting Studio of 185 Nassau Street. In this one-person show, François de Brauer creates 20 captivating characters using minimal props and costumes. We follow the story of Rémi Goutard, who from his birth, develops a hatred for the arts and holds a persistent grudge against artists and performers. When appointed as a congressman at the National Assembly, he strives to get rid of all cultural events and artists who wish to reintegrate into society. In this show, Brauer also introduces audiences to other intriguing personalities such as Rémi’s schizophrenic father and an Argentinian psychoanalyst. Developed over the past five years, the show is now playing regularly in Paris, and Brauer’s artistry at creating multiple characters and transforming subtly from one to another has been hailed by critics as a tour de force. Brauer studied at Cours Florent and continued his education at Le Conservatoire National Supérieur d’Art Dramatique. Notable credits include *Richard II* with Guillaume Severac-Schmitz, *Le Malade imaginaire de Molière* with Michel Didym, *Les Trois Soeurs* with Volodia Serre, and *La Ravissante Ronde* with Thomas Bouvet. Bauer has also assistant directed on *La Fleur à la bouche* by Pirandello at La Comédie Française with Louis Arène.

*Radio Live* by **Aurélie Charon, Caroline Gillet** and **Amélie Bonnin** will be performed at the Wallace Theater of the Lewis Arts complex on September 28 at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. Since 2012, radio journalists and producers Charon and Gillet have explored innovative documentary formats. Their voices already well-known to listeners of France Inter and France Culture, this duo, together with illustrator Bonnin, have developed a live program on stage accompanied by music, archives, and real-life exchanges. Charon and Gillet have traveled extensively over the past few years to Algiers, Moscow, Tehran, Istanbul, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and a number of other cities in Europe to interview youth from different socio-economic backgrounds and hear their thoughts about everyday life and their hopes for the future, thus creating Radio Live. Over the course of these conversations, their guests share their own life stories and personal revolutions, all expressing a desire to actively participate in society. In this particular iteration of Radio Live, guests **Ines Tanovic-Sijercic**, a Bosnian war survivor, and **Sumeet Samos**, an “untouchable” from India who overcame this social status to advocate for education of lower castes, will be joined by Princeton students.

On September 21 at 11 a.m., renowned French journalist and author **Laure Adler** will converse with **Julien Gosselin** and **Pascal Rambert** on newcomers to the French directorial scene. In recent years, French theater has seen the emergence of a formidable new generation of up-and-coming artists, of which Gosselin is a leading representative. Rambert, who just published a book of interviews with Adler entitled *Mon Coeur mis à nu (My Heart Laid Bare),* regularly follows, advises and supports early career artists. Adler attends a play nearly every night during the theatrical season in Paris and is a prominent supporter of the arts and a former cultural adviser to President François Mitterrand. The conversation will take place at the Lewis Arts complex.

*Seuls en Scène* 2019 will inaugurate a new partnership with **Festival d’Automne in Paris**. *Le Désordre du discours* and *Radio Live* are produced by this year’s Festival d’Automne 2019. *Le Marteau et la faucille* was part of *Players, Names, Mao II*, presented at the Festival in 2018, and *blablabla* was produced by the Festival in 2017.

Since 1972, the Festival d’Automne à Paris has been assisting artists internationally by producing and presenting their work in contemporary theatre, music, dance, visual arts and cinema at cultural venues throughout Paris.

This edition of the Festival will also continue partnerships with New York City French cultural organizations and institutions, **Cultural Services of the French Embassy**/**Invisible Dog Art Center/French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF)**. A few of the shows and guest artists of this year’s edition of Seuls en Scène will be presented elsewhere during their stay in North America; *Le Marteau et la faucille* will be presented in Montréal at Usine C.

Discussion with the artistic teams of the shows will follow each performance. During their visits, Festival artists will offer master classes for Princeton students related to their current theatrical productions. They will also participate in Program in Theater classes, such as the “French Theater Workshop” course, and L’Avant-Scène.

L’Avant-Scène anticipates a full year of programming with Masse planning to direct students in several plays. This fall, L’Avant-Scène will host French director and actor **Clément Hervieu-Léger** as a Humanities Council Short-Term Visiting Fellow. He will teach sessions of the course, “French Theater Workshop,” and offer a week-long master class for students in L’Avant-Scène on their upcoming productions.

Masse, who curates the Festival, was trained as an actor and director at Lille National Theater alongside his studies in American Literature and Civilization at the University of Lille. He later pursued his theater studies at Amherst College as a Levy-Despas Fellow and a teaching assistant in the Department of French. It is there that he originated L’Avant-Scène, a program that combines language and dramatic training. He has directed more than 60 full-length productions of canonical and new works of French theater since arriving at Princeton in 2001 and has hosted several prominent theater artists. In 2017, he was named Chevalier of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture.

The Festival is being presented by the Lewis Center for the Arts, the Department of French and Italian, and L’Avant-Scène with support through the Lewis Center’s Arts Initiative Partners program, which annually seeks unique arts partnership projects with other University departments and affiliated groups and individuals. Additional support is provided by Princeton University’s Department of French and Italian, the Humanities Council, the Department of Art and Archaeology, the Department of Comparative Literature, the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS), The Program in Contemporary European Politics and Society, the Center for French Studies, Rockefeller College, the Fund for Contemporary Theater by the French-American Cultural Exchange Foundation (FACE), Institut français and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy.

Tickets are free but must be reserved in advance, either online at [tickets.princeton.edu](https://tickets.princeton.edu/Online/default.asp), in person at the box offices at Frist Campus Center and te Lewis Arts complex, or by calling 609-258-9220.

Further information about L’Avant-Scène can be found at https://fit.princeton.edu/lavant-scène.

For more information on the Princeton French Theater Festival and the more than 100 events presented by the Lewis Center each year, visit [arts.princeton.edu](https://arts.princeton.edu/).

**EVENT SCHEDULE**

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents *Le désordre du discours*

**Fanny de Chaillé**

September 19 at 8 pm / September 20 at 6 pm

McCosh 10, McCosh Hall  
Duration: 60 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in French (with English subtitles)

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents *Le Marteau et la faucille*

**Julien Gosselin**

September 20-21 at 8pm   
Wallace Theater Lewis Arts Complex

Duration: 60 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in French (with English subtitles)

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents *Qui a tué mon père*

**Stanislas Nordey**

September 21 at 2 pm

Matthews Acting Studio 185 Nassau Street

Duration: 110 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in French (with English subtitles)

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents a reading of *Avignon à vie*

**Pascal Rambert**

September 22 at 5 pm

Hearst Dance Theater Lewis Arts Complex

Duration: 90 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in French

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents *blablabla*

**Emmanuelle Lafon, Joris Lacoste**September 25 at 4pm & 8pm   
Wallace Theater Lewis Arts Complex

Duration: 60 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in French

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents *La Loi des prodiges*

**François de Brauer**

September 26-27 at 8 pm

Matthews Acting Studio, 185 Nassau Street  
Duration: 105 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in French

Seuls en Scène 2019 presents *Radio Live*

**Aurélie Charon, Caroline Gillet, Amélie Bonnin**

September 28 at 2pm & 8pm   
Wallace Theater Lewis Arts Complex

Duration: 105 minutes, no intermission  
Performed in English

*Admission to all Festival events is free but ticket reservations are required by visiting:* <http://arts.princeton.edu/frenchtheater/>.

*For more information on the Festival, please contact Steve Runk, Lewis Center for the Arts,* [srunk@exchange.Princeton.EDU](mailto:srunk@exchange.Princeton.EDU) *or Florent Masse, Department of French and Italian* [fmasse@exchange.Princeton.EDU](mailto:fmasse@exchange.Princeton.EDU)