

## AND...

PRESS CONFERENCE with Irène Bonnaud,  
July 7 at 11:00, cour du Cloître Saint-Louis

## THOUGHT WORKSHOP

*La Grande Table d'été* by France Culture with Irène Bonnaud,  
July 15 at 12:45, site Louis Pasteur Supramuros - Avignon Université

FAITH AND CULTURE ENCOUNTER with Irène Bonnaud,  
July 19 at 11:00, Chapelle de l'Oratoire

## ITINERANT SHOW

July 5	Avignon	Collège Anselme Mathieu
July 6	Lapalud	Espace Julian avec Éclats de Scènes
July 9	Châteauneuf-de-Gadagne	Jardin de la Treille
July 10	Saze	Cour du Château
July 11	Sorgues	Pôle culturel Camille Claudel
July 12	Caumont-sur-Durance	Salle Roger Orlando
July 13	Avignon	BMW Mini-Foch Automobiles
July 15	Barbentane	Espace Baron de Chabert
July 16	Saint-Saturnin-lès-Avignon	Salle des fêtes La Pastourelle
July 17	Avignon	Complexe socioculturel de la Barbière
July 18	Mazan	La Boiserie
July 19	Morières-lès-Avignon	Espace culturel Folard
July 20	Vacqueyras	Cour du Château
July 22	Rochefort du Gard	Complexe sportif Jean Galia
July 23	Boulbon	Salle Jacques Buravand

## TOUR DATES AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- September 26 to October 5, 2019, Théâtre national de Bretagne, Rennes
- November 15 to 24, Théâtre national de Strasbourg
- December 6 to 22, Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris
- January 7 to 10, 2020, Bonlieu Scène nationale d'Annecy
- January 15 to 17, La Comédie de Clermont-Ferrant
- January 24 to February 1<sup>st</sup>, Les Gémeaux Scène nationale, Sceaux
- February 5 and 6, Le Phénix Scène nationale de Valenciennes
- February 12 to 19, Célestins - Théâtre de Lyon
- February 21 to 23, VIE Festival, Théâtre Arena del Sole, Bologna (Italy)

73<sup>rd</sup>  
EDITION

In order to bring you this edition, over 1,700 people, artists, technicians, and organisational staff, have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically for months. More than half of them are state-subsidised freelance workers.

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#FDA19

## FRIENDSHIP

Largely unknown to the public, the friendship between Pier Paolo Pasolini and Eduardo De Filippo was nevertheless deep. And the admiration of the great Italian poet, writer, and director for the Neapolitan actor and playwright such that the story's main character shares his name. The story? Eduardo—wise man by profession—is following a star guiding him to Bethlehem. Once there, he learns that Christ died years ago... A journey on which encounters are more important than the quest itself... To tell the story of Eduardo's long walk, motivated by hopes and utopias, Irène Bonnaud wanted to respect the spirit of a synopsis which never became film due to Pasolini's murder: a "*philosophical road movie*" in which the Pasolinian hero meets protagonists from De Filippo's work! A journey through styles and times, featuring three exceptional actors, in the great tradition of Italian artisanal theatre. *Friendship* is a comedy that rests on tragic hidden mechanisms, and which addresses the audience directly and without artifice, a strange history of the world.

## IRÈNE BONNAUD

A translator and playwright, **Irène Bonnaud** created her first professional show in 2002 for a festival dedicated to Heiner Müller. Her shows have allowed audiences to rediscover texts—for instance with the French creations of Heiner Müller's *Tractor* or John Osborne's *The Entertainer*, the meeting of Marcel Pagnol and the troupe of the Comédie-Française for *Fanny*, or her modern rereading of Aeschylus's *The Suppliants*. Her last show, *Guerre des paysages (Landscape War)*, was based on testimonies from the Greek civil war.

## PIER PAOLO PASOLINI AND EDUARDO DE FILIPPO

Through his Roman work, poet **Pier Paolo Pasolini** (1922-1975) tried to ward off "*the anthropological genocide*" he saw in the project of our consumer society. As for the work of Neapolitan **Eduardo De Filippo** (1900-1985), it speaks of humanity by giving tragic accents to Italian comedy.



FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON 73<sup>RD</sup>

JULY 5 6 | 9 10 11 12 13 | 15 16 17 18 19 20 | 22 23  
ITINERANT SHOW

## INTERVIEW WITH IRÈNE BONNAUD

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**You've never adapted a text by Pier Paolo Pasolini or Eduardo De Filippo before. What can you tell us about the meeting of those two giants of Italian poetry?**

**Irène Bonnaud** : Two years ago, I came across the French version of *Porno Theo Kolossal* (*Theological Porno Blockbuster*). It's a text by Pier Paolo Pasolini which was published in Italy fourteen years after his death; it was supposed to be made into a film. It's about forty pages long, not quite in the form of a screenplay. It's more like the story of a character on a journey through the Europe of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. A philosophical road movie made of some of Pasolini's thoughts about society. I found in that text what I'm always looking for in the plays I direct: a way of tying together individual destinies and a collective destiny, to bring together personal history and the history of the world. I was surprised to see that the film was supposed to star Eduardo De Filippo. Eduardo De Filippo is from Naples, and began his career in the 1920s. At once an actor and writer, he's the symbol of a theatre anchored in the popular tradition of Italian comedy. I wouldn't have thought of him as a good fit for Pasolini's world, but I learnt that Pasolini thought he was a great actor. He'd even considered writing a text in Neapolitan called *Mandolini* for him. For the Pasolini of the 1960s and '70s, referring to that theatre was also a critical and political choice against consumer society and television, which he thought were standardising and stifling language, local cultures, and popular creativity. He talked of a new fascism. Italian intellectuals, including on the left, didn't take him seriously. They even called him a reactionary. In fact, Pasolini saw in the revolutionary power of the past a form of resistance to the standardisation of the world.

**For this show, you're bringing together two writers and a number of very different texts: a screenplay, short plays, poems, songs... How did you make them fit together? What is the show about?**

When Pasolini sent his unfinished manuscript to Eduardo De Filippo, he thought that De Filippo would write the dialogue while they shot the film. It gave me the idea to add fragments from De Filippo's plays to the screenplay. The show starts like a philosophical tale and morphs into a picaresque fable in episodes. The screenplay tells the story of Eduardo, a Neapolitan wise man who is following the star to Bethlehem but to whom so much happens on the way there that, by the time he gets to the Promised Land, Christ is long dead. Those adventures were taken from the plays of Eduardo De Filippo: *The Happy Widow* (1931), *Christmas at the Cupiellos* (1931), *Locked-Up Pain* (1964), and *A Good Recipe* (1931). I chose them because they could easily be cut and incorporated into the screenplay in a sort of organic alchemical process. They take place over the Christmas period in a very humble environment. They're about banal relationships which could happen everywhere.

The first is about a company of operetta singers who have ten minutes to perform. The second about the disillusionment of a naïve character about his family. The third is about a man who discovers that his sister hid his wife's death from him. And the last one takes place on Christmas Eve, with a woman and her ex-husband. The construction of the play follows one central idea: three characters are following that star, and on the way they meet people stuck in situations which reflect the reality of society. Pasolini didn't necessarily see the star as a Christian symbol. It can be a stand-in for Marxism or for political hope. An ideology which lets people face their goals and their responsibilities. Because the story is a sort of tragic tale underpinned by a desire for utopia, the search for an ideal. Even if it adds up to nothing, Pasolini isn't a nihilist. To him, to follow an illusion is to follow hope: the possibility of a better world.

**Did the Neapolitan tradition of comedy give you the idea to perform on a trestle stage? Or was it the format of an itinerant show playing in fifteen venues in Avignon and its region? It's a show without artifice in which the audience can see all the costumes and objects that help the actors' performance...**

The construction of the play is based on the fact that Eduardo De Filippo loved to move from narrative to dialogue without transition, and that Pier Paolo Pasolini's beautiful text, even adapted and corrected, remains an oral tale. It was written in a very precise and direct style. In the show, the actors suddenly exit narrative parts to perform their scenes. Everything rests on what an actor can do to move from one scene to the next, without sensationalism or technical effects. Costumes are among the elements which, in the artisanal tradition of theatre, allow the audience to understand the context of a scene and what is at stake in it. This way of playing directly with the audience, by calling on a dramatic form that doesn't need appearances, reminds us of other popular forms that Eduardo De Filippo knew well, like *La Varietà*. With a few simple tricks, the actors tell the story of this great journey through the world and through time, and give the audience the opportunity to imagine the transitions. It's an aspect of theatre that is very present in Pasolini's film *Uccellacci e uccellini*, in which we follow a group of actors performing in the middle of nowhere. The soundtrack of the play, from Bach to 1960s pop music, was also inspired by Pasolini. In *Accatone*, for instance, he plays Bach's *St Matthew Passion* over images of the suburbs of Rome, as if to idealise them. In the show, music plays an active part. It creates a reaction and invites the audience to use their imagination. It gives the text a different dimension and emotion. Like the wise man following the star, the music allows us to exit one world to discover others.

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Interview conducted by Francis Cossu and translated by Gaël Schmidt-Cléach