

# VÉNUS IMPUDIQUES

BY CAROLINE BOUCHOMS



PRESENTATION  
FILE

## CAST AND CREATIVES

*Watching Vénus Impudiques is a journey alternating between irony and poetry, practical reflections and new-age considerations, mythology and quantum physics. It is like being cradled by a playful fantasy, listening to snippets of life, questions our own life's choices. But above all, it is listening to a woman reclaiming her own story.*

*Catherine Makoreel - Le Soir*



### **Written and performed by**

Caroline Bouchoms

### **Director**

Joséphine de Renesse

Caroline Bouchoms

### **Dramatic advisor**

Vincent Romain

### **Set Design**

Julie Michaud

### **Sound design**

Julie Michaud

Marc Doutrepoint

### **Light design**

Kelly Furtado

### **Artistic advisors**

Olivier Lenel

Cécile Delberghe

Yumma Mudra

### **Produced by**

Reste Poli Productions

Chouak Théâtre

Supported by Le CED - WB, le Centre culturel des Riches Claires, La Maison des cultures de Saint-Gilles avec le soutien de la Cocof, le centre culturel René Magritte de Lessines, le Centre culturel d'Andennes, le Centre culturel de Perwez, le centre culturel d'Eghezée, Le Théâtre Marni.

# A TRIBUTE TO THE FIRST FEMALE PREHISTORIC ARTISTS



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The Willendorf Venus (24000 BC)

**Worship of feminine fertility**



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## The Project

### A performance from 15 years old and older

Shameless Venus's (Venus Impudiques) is a solo project, a quirky investigation into maternal desire, where stories and historical events converge. Lying between documentary and fiction, text, music, movement, sound and true stories are intertwined and connected in order to tell this story.

I believe that stories need to be told. I enjoy re-writing them, drawing connections between reality and fiction, creating bridges between individuals' experiences and "History".

Based on personal experience, I explore relationships between creation, procreation, ecology, women's personal experiences and stories, historical and mythological references as well as quantum physics. Shameless Venuses flirts with the fundamental questions of life.

*"We believe that living is doing. Life is for living"*

# Introduction

## Caroline Bouchoms

My generation is urgently demanding reconciliation in order to create new connections with a more sensitive world as opposed to a world based on the ashes of capitalism. We need to re-define this dual vision of feminine/masculine, nature/culture, body/mind for the survival of all living species, ecology and for the planet.

Centuries of patriarchy continue to impact the memory of our cells in both women and men regardless of age. We live in a society where female role-models are rare; if and when they do exist, they are seen through a negative prism.

Subjected to masculine codes in advertising and legislation, the female body is a source of inspiration, fascination and rejection. Even in today's society women are still objectified, reduced to child-bearers and femininity remains restricted, conventional, controlled.

Growing up in a caring masculine environment, I personally wasn't subjected to these restrictions. As a young girl, teenager or woman I didn't need to question if I belonged to this society. It was just natural that I did, just as much as the other half of society. At the age of 3 I declared that I would never get married or have children, that that wasn't my big dream. My mother said "You are so right!"

One day, a late period confronted me with the possibility that I may be pregnant. Surprisingly I was delighted. This shift was the inspiration for Shameless Venuses. A re-conciliation between the masculine and the feminine within my body. I began to wonder how other women experienced this relationship with their bodies, maternity, career, relationship, dreams. I decided to investigate. So armed with a questionnaire and a voice recorder, I interviewed women in my neighbourhood, family, friends and asked them to share their stories with me.

In a decaying world, a new approach is needed to avoid the monstrosities of our ancestors. It is urgent to encourage women and men of all ages to reconnect with their bodies, their feelings...the only real experience which we wholly possess throughout our lives on this planet.

Considering that our bodies are connected to the moon, sun, plants and elements...that our bodies are composed of 97% of stardust...that each of us are an ecosystem, interconnected...and everything organises itself organically...this is a magical phenomenon. Real intelligence lies in what our bodies tell us. This is true freedom.

Your body is your home.

Wars are rooted in the perpetuation of this neurosis, in this masculine/feminine duality within our bodies. Yet in this intercellular organism the penis is the clitoris' twin brother!

Everything becomes one in these cosmoses so it is important to repossess the freedom we had before being dominated by these models which force us to reproduce destructive social relationships.



# SET DESIGN



A 6m x 6m stage. A black backdrop which spreads onto the floor. A closed boxed-like space. A closed boxed-like space; an indoor-exterior kitchen, a belly, a space of creation

A blackboard used by the performer to sketch, to note her thoughts. In this closed space, a pilates ball appears like a pearl. Stage-left: a kitchen work-top, a stove, kitchen crockery. The set is both a kitchen (where meals are prepared, discussions about daily practical issues or more intimate discussions take place) and a more abstract setting, a place for the performer to express and create and for the audience's imagination.



As the story progresses, the audience flits from minute details, to large-scale concepts...the woman's womb and the universal cosmological matrix. This actress-storyteller addresses the audience directly, looking directly into the audience's eyes. The aim is to create an intimate relationship with the spectator, to connect with the spectator so he/she may form his/her own point of view on the subject. The kitchen creates a sensory place. The actress re-creates the story live before the public. She is guided by everything she sees, feels or smells. She calls upon the senses of the spectator to see, taste, feel the present, the past and the future of her story.

# The Team



**Caroline Bouchoms** is a Belgian born actress, author, stage director and dramatist.

She trained at the De Kleine Academie, International Academy for Theatre and Creation. The pedagogy emphasises movement and the actor as a creator. She subsequently completes her studies at the Centre for Theatrical Studies in Louvain-la-Neuve specialising in dramaturgy and stage directing. In 2012 she founds Chouak Theatre.

Using a hybrid approach, her artistic research is based on her observations of life and personal stories.

She has performed in many performances and theatre productions such as *Si Sarah....*, *Cheveux Rouges* and *Panthère & Vautour* (with Didier de Neck), *Etr'ange*, *Vénus Impudiques*. Her filmography includes work with Franck Bachelin, Micha Wald, Anne Depetrini, Nicolas Steil and Stefano Ridolfi.

Her book of short stories, *N'oublies pas que la vie t'aime (Don't forget that life loves you)* and her play *Cheveux Rouge* (monologue) are both published by Le Coudrier. Her essay, *Mon corps, ce lieu de poésie témoin d'expérimentation criminelle (My body, this poetic place witness to criminal experimentation)* is soon to be published by Le Coudrier. Her debut novel *Mille Collines (A Thousand Hills)* is due for publication in the near future.

Teacher of the Duende theatre method at Mudriam artistic school founded by Yumma Mudra, she continues her research in the Danza Duende International NetWork.



**Joséphine de Renesse** graduated from the IAD acting course in 2002. She has been a member of the Panach'club theatre company since 2002. She has appeared in productions including *The Real Inspector Hound* by Tom Stoppard at the TTO, *Husbands and Wives* by Woody Allen and *Contractions* by Mike Bartlett at the Varia Theatre, Bruxelles; *Sunderland* by Clément Koch at the Riches-Claire Arts centre, Bruxelles, *The 39 steps* by Alfred Hitchcock and *The Green Bird* by Carlo Gozzi at the Public Theatre, *Noises off stage* by Michael Frayn at the Royal Gallery Theatre.

She has also been working as assistant director with various theatre companies. Her voice-over work includes ads, dubbing for both TV and radio as well as audio books for Audiolib.



# CONTACTS

## PRODUCTION


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*"Caroline Bouchoms lays bare, letting her questions and fragility reach you gently. Unvarnished, but tactfully and with modesty and a touch of humor, she lifts an everlasting taboo : the wish of not become a mother. A dive at the heart of intimacy, carried by a delicate and poetic scenography and sound production, where we feel like in a cocoon, protected and free of all."*

Stéphanie Bocart, La Libre

