

TOUR MANAGER

Christine Willem-Dejean

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Laura Elands Artistic director

Théo Jégat Sound design

45 minutes (1h30 with Q&A)

All ages from 6 +

Without words



Théâtre de l'Heure Bleue

contemporary puppetry performance

a journey through the cycles of life

*"Of infinite tenderness..."**"Much softness, calm and serenity."**"Thank you very much for this moment of poetry and emotions."**"N'être: what a beautiful moment of acceptance of the inevitable transformation of everything and of ourselves."**"I had a wonderful time, lulled by poetry, magic and lots of emotions. Thank you for this gentleness and humanity in this magnificent show."*

N'être offers you a visual journey through the cycles of life. We meet in a forest to meet a mother who experiences the birth of her child, her return to the earth, and the life that she leaves behind. The puppets created from hand-felted wool invite softness and the contemplation of lives that unfold over time. In this poem filled with emotion, a fragility is expressed through images that recall paintings that evolve in real time. Accompanied by natural sounds, a flute, a guitar and a violin, *N'être* offers a soothing moment in a delicate and sensitive universe.

SUPPORT:

This project was selected for the Culture Recovery Plan 1190, at the initiative of the Municipality of Forest - Gemeente Vorst, BRASS and GC Ten Weyngaert (Brussels, Belgium). The remaking of the performance was supported by the Felt Museum (Mouzon) and financed by the town of Mouzon and the Communauté des Communes des Portes du Luxembourg (France).

TRAILERS & FULL-LENGTH VIDEO

Trailer of the performance:

<https://vimeo.com/751213713>

Long trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/745351865?share=copy>

Full video:

(This version has been reworked since.)

<https://vimeo.com/739635592?share=copy>

Password: 6YJ3Lh2Dc7

Access to all the performance documents:

<https://www.theatredelheurebleue.com/espacenetre>

Password: 6YJ3Lh2Dc7

Interview with Laura Elands about *N'être*:

How did this project come about?

"I wanted to bring the subject of the cycles of life to children, but with gentleness. Birth, filled with joy is eventually followed by death, and I didn't want to provoke, but to propose a soft bubble, like a meditation on the nature of life"

What kind of audience is the performance aimed at?

"Except for very young children, who will probably not understand the subject matter, but who are in any case welcome, this performance is aimed at a young audience from 6 and above, but it's accessible for any age. The theme is universal, we all are part of it. I perform without words, everything is visual, alongside the sound, so language isn't a barrier. I also created the show to be light to tour, I just put down a piece of black fabric as the stage to welcome an audience."

Why do you perform without words?

"This performance is a little different to what a young audience will be accustomed to seeing. I suggest another way of experiencing things. What I wish to bring through my work, in general, is another understanding of subjects that touch upon human experience but that are better understood if lived internally: emotions, sensations and feelings. That is why I place a lot of importance on the development of a visual world and of materials during the research process of a subject - these are the elements that will communicate it. I myself really enjoy reading and writing but I feel as though we live in a world that is too preoccupied with a logical mindset, and, in my own way, I'd like to encourage people to r(e)connect to themselves, to this ability to listen inwardly which the mind can too often confuse. I try to finish each performance with a discussion with the children - to exchange impressions, share what has been taken away, the possibility to ask questions and to understand what others have understood is an important moment to me - it's the time a child can be encouraged to enter their inner world and to trust it."





Why do you work with puppets?

"It seems to be a very natural form of communication for me! I also love performing as an actress, and puppetry allows me to do both. And being behind a puppet is very liberating, especially when you don't control the puppet anymore, it takes on a life of its own. It's also complex in that it asks for a lot of mastery of not only one's own body, but also to take on the body of another as an extension of oneself.

When I was younger, I didn't understand this choice, it was an impulse. But now I realise that a career in puppetry brings together everything I find interesting and am passionate about. I feel reassured not having to choose only one artistic discipline, such as painting, sculpture, photography or textile art. I work a lot, as my artistic process covers many areas, but all these aspects are very enriching."

What kind of materials did you use to make the puppets in *N'être*?

*"Felted wool is the main material. I've practised making it for about eight years. I am now developing more and more felt pieces that I use in my shows. It's a soft material that adds even more gentleness to *N'être*. Certain elements of the show have been created during a residency at the Felt Museum in Mouzon, where I presented an exhibition of my work in 2023. The other materials are varied, such as silk chiffon, air-drying clay and plaster. The paints are acrylic. I'm starting to experiment with thermoplastics to lighten the puppets."*

How was the sound made?

"The sound was made by Théo Jégat, an alumni of INSAS in Brussels. For the first sound design residency we spent four days in front of the sound software and a video of a rehearsal. Théo experimented with different instruments, searched for sounds by manipulating different objects in front of a microphone. It's very focused listening – you have to feel that the sound expresses the right intentions for each moment. You have to support emotions, without overdoing it. Théo made a beautiful musical composition which brings life to the whole performance. We spent another day on stage to bring it all together and make the final checks."

PRICING :

Different options are available depending on the venue and the request.
Please contact us for more information and for a quote.

The performance can also be followed by a workshop, more information is available upon request.

ABOUT THÉÂTRE DE L'HEURE BLEUE

Laura Elands is a puppeteer and multidisciplinary artist. She studied puppetry at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London and at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts de la Marionnette in Charleville-Mézières (France). She develops a unique theatrical language – blending contemporary puppetry to textile art to explore aspects of subjects that touch upon human experience and are difficult to express through words. In sharing this with an audience, she hopes to create a more internal understanding, one associated to emotions and intuition.

In 2020 she founded her puppet theatre company, *Théâtre de l'Heure Bleue*. Based in Brussels, Laura has regularly worked in the Ardennes in France to give workshops and to collaborate with the Felt Museum in Mouzon, where she has also created felt pieces during residencies and exhibited her work in 2023. Her first performance, *Racines du Ciel*, was presented as part of the IN program of the World Puppet Theatre Festival in Charleville-Mézières (France).

Théâtre de l'Heure Bleue is preparing a new performance for 2026, on the subject of human fragilities, both mental and physical, with the aim of further exploring the blending of puppetry and textile art.

Théâtre de l'Heure Bleue also offers cultural workshops around the theme of creating and manipulating puppets, for children and adults. These workshops are currently being developed towards an art therapy approach, with Laura planning to undertake formal training, aiming to allow audiences of all ages to connect to a personal creative expressive freedom, and to allow them to process their experiences of the shows.

Thank you for contacting us regarding these workshops.

www.theatredelheurebleue.com

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