



PHILIPPE QUESNE (VIVARIUM STUDIO)

The Garden of Earthly Delights

Creation 2023

**A creation freely inspired by
The Garden of Earthly Delights
from Jérôme Bosch (c. 1500)**

Play for 10 performers
and 10 local amateurs

Concept, direction and stage design

Philippe Quesne

Production

Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne
Vivarium studio

Coproduction

(in progress)

CONTACT VIVARIUM STUDIO

Philippe Quesne

philippe.quesne@vivariumstudio.fr

CONTACTS THÉÂTRE VIDY-LAUSANNE

Director of artistic and international projects

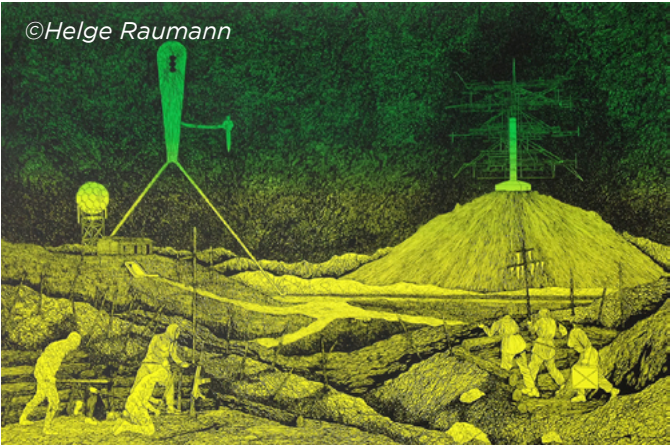
Caroline Barneaud
c.barneaud@vidy.ch T +41 (0)21 619 45 44

Distribution

Elizabeth Gay
elizabeth.gay@vidy.ch T +41 (0)79 278 05 93

Head of productions and tours

Judith Martin
j.martin@vidy.ch T +33 6 70 63 47 58



Philippe Quesne marks 20 years of creation with his company Vivarium Studio with a large-scale show at the crossroads of the arts, philosophy, politics understood as common things, ecology and the need for fantasy as a response to the anxieties of our time. Between utopia and dystopia, between melancholy and faith in the human imagination, between a seminal La Démangeaison des ailes, a memorable La Mélancolie des Dragons and a recent Malherian Chant de la Terre, he brings together the know-how of his company in a new theatrical saga. The eggs of Farm Fatale incubated by the scarecrows are about to hatch, the asteroids of Cosmic Drama have fallen in the middle of the forest: the show brings together the Vivarium Studio bestiary as well as the author friends, poets, musicians and philosophers who gravitate around the company.

For this new adventure, Philippe Quesne enters into a dialogue, five hundred years apart, with the famous painting by Jérôme Bosch, a masterpiece of art history with infinite interpretations, marking the transition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Philippe Quesne's theatre and the painting share the same free convocation of a wide field of artistic, intellectual, spiritual and political knowledge.

Proceeding by accumulation, amplification, diversion, parody or irony, both aim less at solving than at creating the debate, via the imagination, on a virtuous and future governance; the painting as well as the show describe an era of changes, and one can read in them a severe criticism of the human unconsciousness that leads to its destruction as much as the hoped-for achievement of a harmonious collective life.

Both compose a multi-action panorama that is as utopian as it is critical, in which the imagination is put to work in the service of a lucid sense of joy and new perspectives for the lives to come.

As in the late Middle Ages, the fable is situated in a period of transition, in the full metamorphosis of its narratives and skills. *The Garden of Earthly Delights* is the multiple and truculent tale of a group of humans gathered in a place visibly apart from the world and who undertake to realise, in a practical and cinematographic sense, their utopia: a free life, without separation, without distinction, in which beings and species cohabit in good harmony.

They do not distinguish between the real and the artificial, of which their temporary paradises are composed. The fabulous shoulders with the concrete, the imaginary has a practical use. Drilling the ground for water, between heat waves and resource extraction, allows for a derisory Fountain of Life, for example. The natural and artificial elements are both protective and protected.

The plot follows several intersecting narrative threads: it could be the collective search for a different form of life, supportive and peaceful, with its rituals and buccaneers in the service of the cause, and perhaps its pitfalls; what seems to be the filming of a Fellini-style movie like *Intervista*, between rushes of scenes shot in other natural spaces and green-screen re-enactments - and the distinction between those acting or making the film and the inhabitants of this place is not obvious; and the threat, always present even if diffuse, of a catastrophe, caused by a brutal change in the climate or the destruction of this living space by hunters or bulldozers - could this be the name of a new housing estate to be built in that place?



Jérôme Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, circa 1505, open triptych.

Born in 1970 in the region of Paris, Philippe Quesne was educated in fine arts at the École Estienne and then at the Arts décoratifs in Paris. He then worked as a director and stage designer for theatre, opera and contemporary art exhibitions for 10 years.

In 2003, he created the Vivarium Studio theatre company, bringing together a group of actors, artists and musicians and creating shows as both author and director in which the scenography is envisaged as an ecosystem into which he immerses his performers. His shows form a repertoire that has toured the world: *La Démangeaison des ailes* (2003), *Des Expériences* (2004), *D'après nature* (2006), *L'Effet de Serge* (2007), *La Mélancolie des dragons* (2008), *Big Bang* (2010), *Swamp Club* (2013), etc. He has also published four booklets on the relationship between humankind and nature: *Actions en milieu naturel* (2005), *Petites réflexions sur la présence de la nature en milieu urbain* (2006), *Thinking About the End of the World in Costumes by the Sea* (2009), *Bivouac* (2011). In 2012, he was invited by Ange Leccia and the Pavillon at the Palais de Tokyo to create a set alongside ten artists and curators in residence. That same year, he contributed to the HAU Berlin's joint production based on David Foster Wallace's novel *Infinite Jest*, with a specific creation at the Berlin Institut für Mikrobiologie und Hygiene. At the same time, he developed performances and interventions in public spaces and natural sites, and exhibited his installations at large art shows, such as the Biennale de Lyon in 2017 and 2019.

Abroad he has created several original shows: in Japan, *Anamorphosis* (2013) for four actresses from the Oriza Hirata theatre company; in Belgium, with the production house Campo, *Next Day* (2014), a play for children aged from eight to eleven; in Germany, *Pièce pour la Technique du Schauspielhaus de Hannover*, *Caspar Western Friedrich* (2016) and *Farm Fatale* (2019) at the Munich Kammerspiele, as well as directing the opera *Usher* by Debussy & Annelies van Parys (2018) at the Berlin Staatsoper.

From 2012 to 2014 he was the artist associated with the Théâtre de Gennevilliers while Pascal Rambert was director, and he developed the programme for the Festival des jeunes créateurs. From 2014 to 2020, he was director at the Nanterre-Amandiers national drama centre, where he created *Le Théâtre des négociations* (2015), a simulation of the climate summit with sociologist Bruno Latour and his team, *La Nuit des taupes / Welcome to Caveland* (2016), *Crash Park, la vie d'une île* (2018), and with Jean-Luc Godard's collaborators he invented the *Parcours JLG Livre d'Image*.



More recently, in 2019 he represented France at the Prague Quadrennial and won the prize for the Best Country Pavilion with his *Microcosmos* installation. As a scenographer he developed the theatre spaces for *Hate* by Lætitia Dosch, *Le Théâtre et son double* in 2020 for Gwenaël Morin, and *Cascade*, also in 2020, with choreographer Meg Stuart, all created at the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne.

At the same time, for many years, he has been a regular speaker at art schools and universities during workshops and seminars: Écoles des Beaux-Arts, Ensad, École d'architecture Paris-Malaquais, Manufacture de Lausanne, Das Art Amsterdam, Speap science-po, etc.

Since the beginning of 2021, after seven years as director of the cdn Nanterre-Amandiers, he has reactivated his independent company Vivarium Studio. In 2021 he created a stage version of Gustav Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (*The Song of the Earth*) with the Vienna Klangforum at the Wiener Festwochen, followed by a science fiction piece *Cosmic Drama* in the repertoire of Theater Basel. This season he will present a new play without actors, *Fantasmagoria*, at the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne in May 2022. These three creations will be invited to the Festival d'Automne 2022.



Jérôme Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, circa 1500, closed triptych.