



“S.P.R.L.”

A creation by Jean-Benoît Ugeux

A co-production of the Théâtre de la Place/Liege, the Apoptose Théâtre, the Théâtre National de la Communauté française, PROSPERO and the KVS.
With the support of the French-speaking Community of Belgium – Theatre department and of the European Union Culture Programme.
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THÉÂTRE DE LA
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“S.P.R.L.”

The play

“The real threat to democratic society, the maggot in the apple, always comes from its weak management. An undermanaged society, that is not sufficiently organised, cannot respect liberties. It is simply a question of leaving the job of structuring our reality to forces other than reason.”

In the offices of a successful modern company, on the top floor of an enormous skyscraper with a view overlooking nothingness, a summit meeting is taking place in which no-one will be spared...

A young woman joins a company with a roaring turnover and ruthlessly ambitious, greedy shareholders, whose memories are either too short or too long, depending on the situation. This young woman will discover both the concealed and frightening realities, relationships of power and pain, victims deeply-hidden behind managers' speeches and new communication, going by the name of IT and *Knowledge Management*, and colleagues who smile at their opponents while stabbing them in the back, who smooth-talk while destroying them. Until she learns that words no longer have a meaning. And that it is probably just as well.

Wrecked marriages, silent and patient castrations, unfulfilled desires, skilfully sharpened jealousies, uncontrollable pressure, crises, abandoning and discredit: in his creation “SPRL” – which will be performed at the **Théâtre de la Place** from **29th to 31st January 2008**, in partnership with the Liege Festival and the Théâtre National, then presented again in **Autumn 2009** in Tampere, Modena, Liege and Brussels – Jean-Benoît Ugeux closely intermingles the world of the family and that of business. Two entities that appear to be completely different from each other, but which have several convergences and issues in common. A place of strong competition, latent war, internal struggles. The heart of deep tears, with or without noise. A unit where any member who does not fit in with the “norm” must adapt or take a back seat. Economic liberalism, affective liberalism: companies and families become indubitably linked.

Faced with this observation, Jean-Benoît Ugeux, author and stage director of this play, wished to dissect the cogs of the family and of the business world. A reflection on the structures and excesses of work in Western European society. Observing the relations of power, pressure and possession, “SPRL” swings constantly and tortuously between these two worlds which never cease to confront and enrich each other.

Casting

Author / stage director	Jean-Benoît Ugeux
Playwrights	Françoise Bloch, Jean-Bastien Tinant
Cast	Henri Monin (the father), Sophia Leboutte (the second wife), Mieke Verdin (the aunt), Yoann Blanc (the son), Marie Bos (the daughter)
Pianist	Alberto Di Lena
Stage design / costumes	Anne Guilleray
Sound design	Brice Cannavo
Light design	Fred Vaness
Technical coordination	Fred Op De Beeck
Assistant	Amandine Zurbuchen
Length of the performance	90 minutes

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Intentions

“**SPRL**” by the Apoptose Théâtre (Apoptosis: programmed death of cells) challenges an economic system that relies on financial profitability – and the flexibility required for its survival and growth – by making it resound with the new family unit structures.

And by observing how these are beginning to resemble each other inescapably.

After analysing the destruction of the family microcosm (“**Zaï Zaï Zaï Zaï**” and “**Hansel and Gretel**”), this play, without by any means deserting the research begun in the first creations, actually extends the research and considers the apoptosis phenomenon in companies and in the business world of today.

Biography of Jean-Benoît Ugeux

After studying at the Liege Conservatoire, Jean-Benoît Ugeux emigrated to the Northern part of the country where he worked at the Victoria Theatre (Ghent) with Wayn Traub on “**Maria Dolores**” and Lies Pauwels in “**White Star**”.

Still in the Ghent area, where he lived for two years, “**Zaï Zaï Zaï Zaï**” was created in 2003 with Anne-Cécile Vandalem in the *Résidence Catherine* troop. In 2006, the same troop produced the second work “**Hansel and Gretel**” at the Emulation Festival. In the meantime, Jean-Benoît Ugeux continued his partnerships as both actor and author, both in Belgium and abroad (Wayntraub, I. Vrambout, W. Vandekeybus, R. Garcia, ...)

In 2007, further to the breakup of the troop, he created a new NPO – called Apoptose – which is involved in theatre and cinema productions, and radio and visual creations and with which he has prepared his new creation, “**SPRL**” along with a radio creation on the text “**Gaspard**” by Peter Handke.

At the cinema, he was seen in “**Viandes**” by B. Deville, “**What makes you happy**” by J. Lafosse, “**My Angel**” by S. Frydman and “**Retraite**” by F. Pirot, with whom he is currently co-writing a full-length film called “*Mobilhome*”. More recently, he played the leading part in “**Menteur**”, a full-length film by T. Geens and is currently writing a short film called “**Avant-terme**”.

Jean-Benoît Ugeux is also a photographer (www.unpeufrou.net) and an electro-acoustic musician.

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Théâtre de la Place – Liege, Belgium

As one of the five drama centres in the French-speaking Community Walloon-Brussels, the Théâtre de la Place is experiencing a new impetus, generated by the artistic project that started during the 2005/2006 season, under the direction of Serge Rangoni.

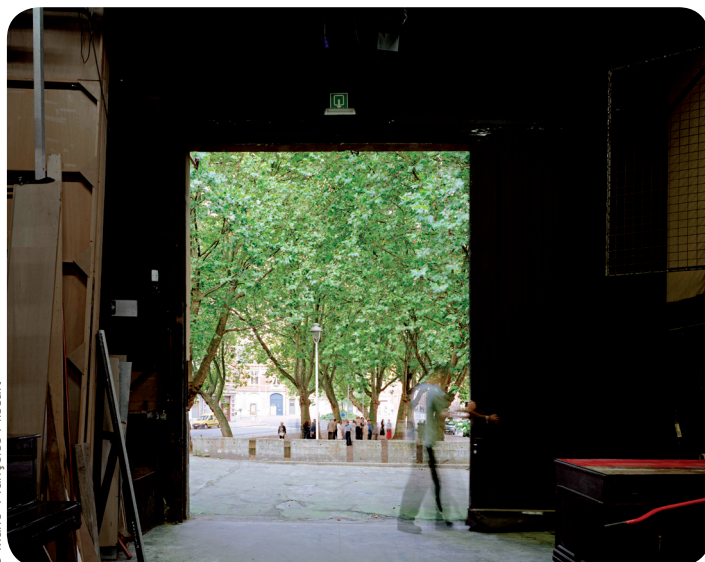
Located in the heart of Liege, the Théâtre de la Place, that became a European centre of theatrical and choreographic creation in 2006, intends to confirm its partnerships with local and regional actors – the rich artistic fabric of the Liege region, where Françoise Bloch, Jacques Delcuvelierie, Nathalie Mauger, Mathias Simons and Pietro Varrasso, to name but a few, work – and to build bridges with international institutions. Over the last few seasons, the Théâtre de la Place has thus co-produced various European shows, such as “Questo buio feroce” (That Inhuman Darkness) by Pipo Delbono, “Faust” by Eimuntas Nekrosius and “Brickland” by choreographer Constanza Macras. “War and Peace”, directed by Piotr Fomenko, “Long Life”, directed by Alvis Hermanis and “La dame de Chez Maxim” (The Girl from Maxim), which will be hosted next season directed by Jean-François Sivadier, have or will have pride of place in the programming of events at the Théâtre de la Place.

Having studied at the Brussels Conservatoire, Serge Rangoni was appointed on the management team of the Saint Anne Workshop in Brussels in 1990. After his position as secretary-general of the Mac’s (Contemporary Art Museum at the Grand Hornu) from 1999 to 2004, he joined the Théâtre de la Place in June 2004, as successor to Jean-Louis Colinet.

Serge Rangoni has maintained his enthusiasm and will to break down the barriers of theatrical practices and habits, through his work with several artists and young troops. Since the 2005/2006 season, the Théâtre de la Place brings Liege alive, every two years, with its Emulation Festival, devoted to young French-speaking Belgian theatrical troops that set up in various parts of the town, accompanied by their novelty and (im)pertinence. In addition to this array of innovation and a full season, there is the international two-yearly “Pays de Danses” festival, providing the opportunity to discover all sorts of contemporary choreographic art. Set up as a real support network for the dance sector, this highlight offers Belgian and foreign troops the opportunity to perform in several centres and cultural institutions in the Meuse-Rhine Euregio and has enabled to forge links with Aix-la-Chapelle, Maastricht, Hasselt and Eupen.

This event will have an even greater impact in the cross-border project “Regiotheater O regiodance”. Creating a joint Euregional cultural space in the scenic arts sector, placing it on an international level and encouraging the public’s participation: these are the aims of this European programme which, like “Prospero”, hopes to establish the reputation of the Théâtre de la Place and broaden its scope of action.

Prospects that are even more significant as the theatre is preparing to move to the Emulation building, in 2011/2012, both a historical and contemporary building, in the heart of Liege. A custom-made set-up for today’s theatre.



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