

This is  
not

«A urinal», because the 'u' makes a sound

a  
urinal

like «yu» and the y is a consonant here.

A dance, juggling and music-video performance for all ages – 1hr

The Martine à la Plage collective – A 2013 production  
[www.martinealaplage.info](http://www.martinealaplage.info)

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## Synopsis

Two performers and a musician lead the audience through a ritual composed of dance, juggling and video-projections. Beginning with an empty space, we organise a celebration to praise the moment, the space and the performance. Immersed within the performative apparatus, the spectator is invited to observe the events unfolding one after the other, to project themselves into the video landscapes and participate in the celebration in order to share a moment that is amusing, strong, mysterious, and absurd.

# Artist Statement

## FROM THE INSTALLATION IN A PUBLIC SPACE

The project began with an audio-visual installation composed of sequences shot during an artistic residency in Portugal. The creative process consisted of confronting a performer (or several performers) with a specific place at a given time. The places are devoid of any other human presence. These are exterior spaces that dive us, by their diversity, into a journey, which speaks of something universal.

« This is not a urinal » borrows some of the installation's video sequences but re-edits them for, and within, the performance. One cannot live without the other. This time the sequences carve out, around the spectators, a blend between a stage and an arena that invites them into a new landscape upon which to venture with the performers.

## TO THE GREAT PERFORMANCE

The creation of the performance began with a residency in the Israeli desert entitled « and we will go dancing with our gods ». The challenge of the performance resides in the capacity to recreate, here and now and together, a new nation. It involves the search for a language, boundaries, a history. It's a search for what unites, despite the distance, the landscapes and the characters that travel through them, until we find, deep within ourselves, what connects us with them; to invent a land, myths, rituals to question our capacity to become one.

How to reach a new land?

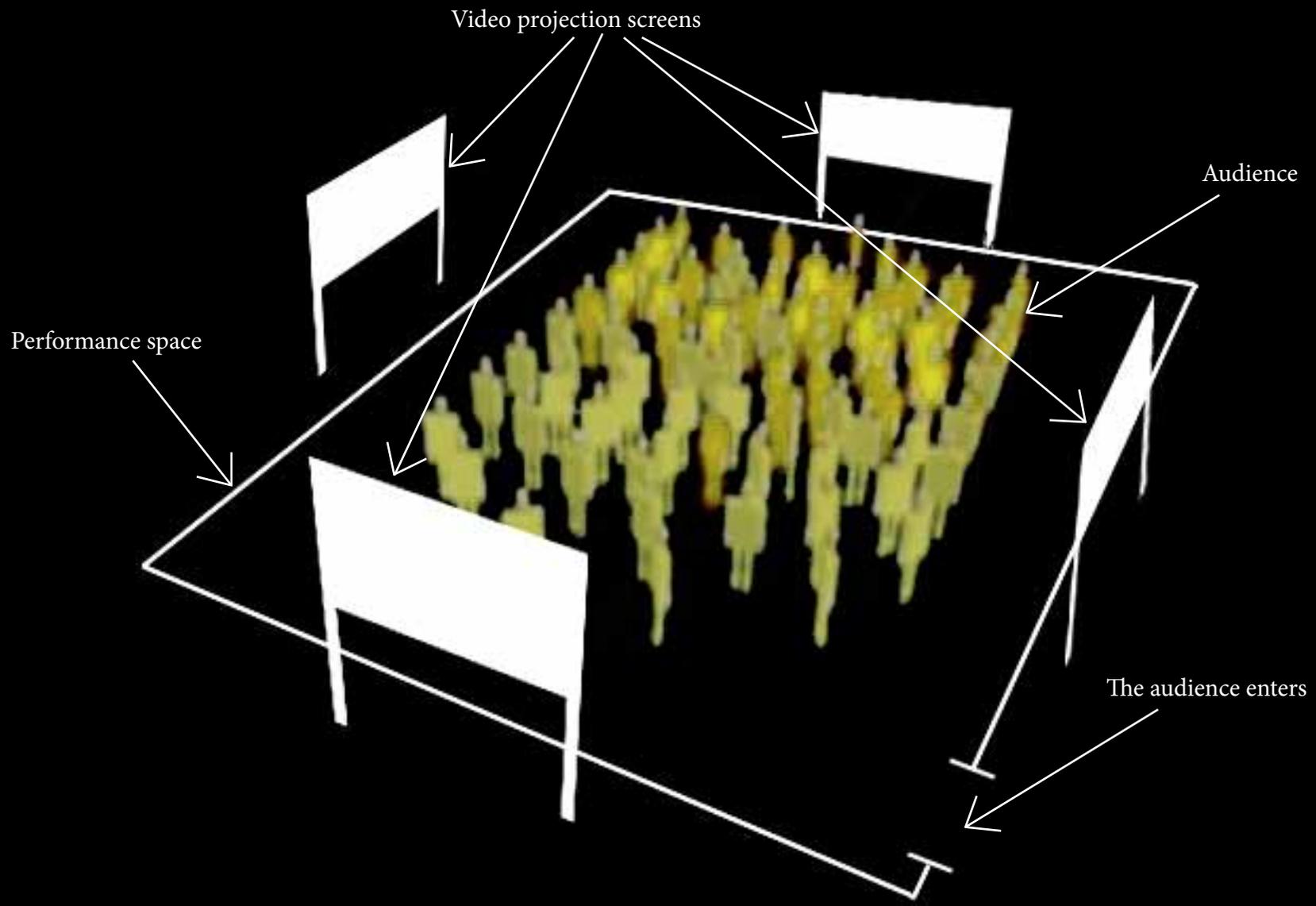
How to venture upon it and make it part of our body?

How to make it ours?

How to live within it?

How to invent what can become a new people?





Schematic 3D representation of the performance space, the audience and the video projection screens

Our production is a performative ritual. The audience is placed into the scenic apparatus delimited by four video projector screens. Immersed in this apparatus, paced by the performances, we invite the spectator to participate in a celebration of live performance and the fleeting instant. The interaction between the audience, the performers, the films and the audio soundscapes construct a unique, surreal and powerful moment around this event.

## **THE SCENIC SPACE**

The scenic space is enclosed, with one entry. It is square in shape so as to have no pre-determined direction. The goal of this space is to create a place where the action is soaked in the images projected onto the four sides. The closed scenic space, a zone of restraints and freedom, will be conducive to communion.

We wish to make a production for multiple spaces: the factory or the farmyard, the gymnasium or the public square.

## **THE AUDIENCE**

The Audience is immersed at the centre of the performative apparatus, active and reactive, free to choose the desired focus between the videos and the performances. The audience is situated at the same level as the performers, as close as possible to the action, that takes place at 360°. At times the audience can be led by the performers to touch and feel, or simply left to themselves.

The audience enters the Temporary Autonomous Zone, a frontier is crossed: It's the performance itself that leads the game and establishes the rules for the duration of the show, allowing a space of freedom for the audience.

## **THE PERFORMATIVE ACT**

To perform is a festive ritual for living and sharing. The physical commitment of the performers emphasises the transformative moment between the before and after. The performative act functions like animal instincts reacting to the present instant while echoing the films projected.

The performances propose a direct relationship with the audience so as to include them in the collective celebration, which is at times revolted, at times childish, a ridiculous pagan chant, a shamanic and popular communion.

## **THE FILMS**

The films are like the negatives (in a photographic sense) of the real performance. The films create a premise using images, then make that place speak through a body by stopping in landscapes that we normally only pass through. Dancers, jugglers, and clowns have played for the screen. It experiment with the relationship between themselves and the camera in a two-way improvisation where the camera interprets the performance: five characters walk together. They ignore each other, observe each other, they learn to be there. So they swallow the landscape to see what it feels like inside their bodies.

## **THE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK**

The rhythmic and melodic soundscape is created by 92 sounds travelling through space in a random manner. A live electric guitar plays on top of this sonar structure to orient the audience in the chosen direction. The ensemble creates an electric trance music at times dissolving into granulated, strident, or repetitive sound matter. The quadrophonic installation is used in a playful way as much to orient as to disorient the audience.



Sortie de résidence festival «Greffon Plastique» - Clermont-Ferrand 2012- photo Pier Brignon

# The Team

**Hélène MOTTEAU** : film producer, she began a documentary in 2006 entitled “Le cheval de Turin” (The Turin Horse), with the Martine à la Plage collective. Her research developed thereafter through solo projects where each film asked the question: What it is like to live at that given moment and at that precise place? “Plurielles” (Plural) (2008) questions the possible reintegration of ex-convicts, whereas “La loutre et le mobil ‘home’” (the otter and the mobile ‘home’) (2012) paints the portrait of a valley through those who live there.

Director of photography for documentaries, assistant in fiction, the image is the centre of her work today.

**Franco DEBIERE**: Dancer and performer. He discovered dance at 28 years old while a mathematical engineer. From 2004 to 2008 he trained in contemporary dance, then in acting with Christophe Egros from 2006 to 2008.

Since 2007, resolutely creative, he has written about ten choreographed performance as part of the S.T.O association. Since 2010, he has been part of the artist group FAAAC, and has worked since 2011 with the OFF Company and the Martine à la Plage collective.



**Benoit BORNES**: A musician, he discovered the guitar at the age of 9 but remains in the margins of academic discipline. At 22 years old, self-taught, he participated in several adventures around the rock and punk scene then developed his taste for Jazz and as well as more traditional music. A guitarist and percussionist, he trained in music therapy. Since 2008, it's in improvisation that he develops his musical palette

In 2009, he participated in the “Work in Progress Arts Meeting” organised by the FAAAC in Poland. Today, he collaborates in several projects ranging from punk to improvised music as well as street performance.



**Johan SWARTVAGHER**: Juggler and performer. In 2006 he became a founder member of the FAAAC - Alternative and Self-managed Training for Circus Arts. From 2007 to 2008, he joins a research group around juggling and butoh dance lead by Jean Daniel Fricker. In 2007 he created the Mars 07 (March 07) performance with the Martine à la Plage Collective. In 2010 he created his first long format solo entitled “SANS TITRE” (UNTITLED)

# Outsiders gaze

Jörg MÜLLER : Graduate from the National Centre of Circus Arts in Châlons en Champagne in 1994. Since 1993 he has worked around the theme of the tube (spherical shaped objects). In 1993 he produced “Les Tubes” with Mads Rosenbeck then the following year he worked around suspended melodic tubes. In 2001 “c/o”, a performance in a tube filled with water. In 2003 he invented “Performance Research Experiment #1 (P.R.E#1)” with Jess Curtis, a performance between circus and dance. Since 2005 he has worked on the theme of balance inspired by multiple performances and drawings. He works as a juggler and dancer with the Cirque Plume “Toile II”, (1995), the Cahin-Caha company in “ChiencrU-Cirque Batard” (rawdoG-Bastard Circus) (2002/2000) and with the Martin Schwitzke company “Passage Désamboite” (Dislocated Passage). He participates in “Dialogue sous Chapiteau” (Dialogue under Bigtop) next to Pierre Doussaint (1993), the projects “Gravité Zéro” (Zero Gravity) and “Trajectoire Fluide” (Fluid Trajectory) by Kistou Dubois (2001 to 2003/1996), we see him next to Francois Verret in “Memento” (1997) (codirected by Jacques Reboitier), next to Haim Adri “Anamnes Acte II” (2006/2007), next to Roland Auzet “Théâtre des operations” (2007), and especially next to Mark Tompkins with whom he held a two year residency in Strasbourg from 1999. He discovers “instantaneous composition” as well as “contact improvisation” and participated in the production of “La Vie Rêvée d’Aimé” (the dream life to love) (1999) and “Remixamor” (2000). Since 2006 he has practiced the Feldenkrais Method.



Elie BLANCHARD : French visual artist, combines performance, video, music and installation. His visually hyper-structured universe reveals itself to be a destabilising and poetic experience. He uses simple and tangible materials such as paper, glass, motors, and light to create an abstract and minimal world through which he enjoys showing the artisanal process of fabrication. He collaborates with the Transforma artists, Sati, Cheveu, Eric Languet ... He produces his performances (“Asynthome”, “Inside the black box”, “Eile”, “Where do you from come?”) in numerous festivals and live venues. His first exhibit, “Dark White and Sunny Black” was presented in 2011 at the Agora Theatre, Evry.





# Cultural Events

During and around the periods of residencies and release dates, the collective is keen to propose cultural events related to this production.

The events are adapted to suit the occasion and to suit all types of audience. For example, we have previously created :

- encounters with audiences and discussions around our research
- short workshops around video, music and acting
- several day training courses for amateurs or professionals around such topics as in situ performance, playing the game of theatre, juggling, and musical and scenic composition.





# Production

This is a production from The Incubator (Association licence n° 2-1038739), administrative structure courtesy of the “Martine a la Plage Collective”.

Co-production :

Les Migrateurs (The Migrators)– Association for the cultural distribution of circus arts at Strasbourg (67), France

Le Club - Artist residency centre of Chaille (41), France.

Maurice Sand Theatre - La Châtre (36), France

# Partners

Centre Region – partners as part of the “ID en Campagne” (rural idea) program aimed at projects that create cultural events around the La Châtre region.

Espace Périphérique (Peripheral space) – Artistic residency centre dedicated to contemporary circus arts, Paris (75), France

Numediart – Digital research laboratory, Brussels (BE)

La Métive - Aubusson (23)

La Maison de la création (The house of creation) – distribution and production center in Brussels (BE)

Un Pas de Coté (A Step to the side) – Association that support circus arts in St Lézin (49), France

La Fabrik – Artistic residency centre in Marseille, France

CircusNext -A cultural service providing support to European circus authors

Le Manège Mons - A cross border platform for production and distribution

Mons Fondation 2015 - European cultural capital 2015 (BE)

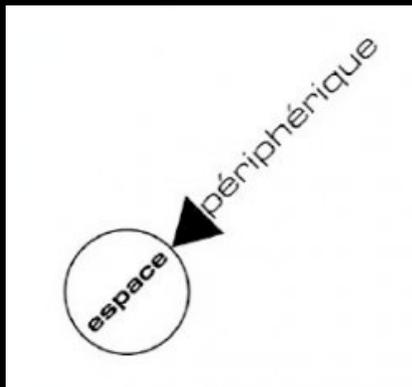
La Confédération Paysanne (The Farmers Confederacy) – Tranzault (36)

Jazz Club Mitzpe Ramon (Israël)

FAAAC – Alternative and Self-managed Factory of Arts and Creations

MJCS – Artistic Residency centre of La Châtre (36), France

ALTHO S.A.S. – potato chips manufacturer in Bret’s (56), France



« Le cerveau vide,  
les yeux ouvert »  
2010



« Plurielles »  
2008



« Mars 07 »  
2007



# The Collective's Biography

The “Martine à la Plage Collective” has been developing multidisciplinary contemporary production since 2005. It is based at La Châtre (Indre – Centre Region – France). The core of the Collective is constituted of four artists, Hèleène Motteau (film producer), Bertrand Depoortère (photographer et projectionist), Laurent Bouquet (musician) et Johan Swartvagher (juggler, performer and teacher of theatre-related juggling) .

Martine à la Plage creates events of various shapes and sizes. Solos, duos, trios, and quartet productions have regularly toured around Europe. Countries toured include France, Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Hungary, Serbia, Italy, Belgium, Slovakia, Germany, Czech Republic, Portugal, and Spain. Whether in an indoor venue or an outdoor public space, these productions actively engage with the audience and make no concession with regards to the artistic content.

In parallel, the collective has been very active with FAAAC (Alternative and Self-managed Factory of Arts and Creations) in establishing the artists' residency venue at La Châtre, which opened in 2008. The venue welcomes around 20 companies a year and is working on cultural events in rural places in collaboration with the local authorities of La Châtre – St Sévère.

Since it's creation, the Collective has included, according to the requirements of specific tours and productions, contributors such as Thibault Condy et Solène Galais (light design), Laurent Serra et Jean-Daniel Fricker (outsiders gaze), Olivier Ripeloux et Olivier Thillou (sound engineer), Aurélie Caffet et Mathilde Archambault (broadcast and distribution), Franco Debiere (dancer and performer), Benoit Bornes, Emily Tissot, Fredy Montigny, Paul Motteau (musicians), Clément Demaumont (driver and cultural attaché).

Since it's foundation, Martine à la Plage has been supported by: the DDJS (Regional Direction for the Youth and Sports) of l'Indre, the INJEP (National Institute for the Youth and Popular Education), French institutions, the Crédit Mutuel Doundation, the CAF de L'Indre, the Civic Services program and the Centre Region (ID en Campagne 'rural ideas' program).

# Productions

2006

At the Foot of the Sofa – performance by Johan Swartvagher – 100 times)  
Foutaise One Man Band & projections super 8 (concert by Laurent Bouquet with projections by Bertrand Depoortère – presented 90 times)  
Taco Tour (photographic exhibition by Bertrand Depoortère – 60 exhibitions)  
Le Cheval de Turin (documentary by H  l  ne Motteau – 20 projections)

2007

Mars 07(performance by Laurent Bouquet and Johan Swartvagher – 80 times)

2008

La th  orie de le ressenti (the theory of feeling) - instrumental album by Laurent Bouquet

2009

Just Full (electro album by Laurent Bouquet)

2010

Sans Titre (Untitled) - performance by Johan Swartvagher, music by Laurent Bouquet, light design by Sol  ne Galais)  
Ici et L   et Ici et L   (here and there and here and there) video installation by H  l  ne Motteau, Johan Swartvagher, and Laurent Bouquet)  
Le cerveau vide les yeux ouverts (the brain is empty and the eyes open) photographic exhibition by Bertrand Depoort  re)

2012

Supercherie – instrumental album by Laurent Bouquet with 4 guests  
Improvisation – in-situ improvised performance by Johan Swartvagher and guests

2013

Ceci n'est pas un urinoir (this is not a urinal) – performance by Franco Debi  re and Johan Swartvagher, video by H  l  ne Motteau, music by Beno  t Bornes  
Foutaise-Milou's – Bach revisited for oboe and computer by Emily Tissot and Laurent Bouquet

« Foutaise one man band »  
2006



« Ici et L   et Ici et L   »  
2010



« Sans Titre »  
2010





# CECI N'EST PAS UN URINOIR

RITUEL PERFORMATIF



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SAND - MAISON DE LA CRÉATION - NUMEDIART -  
LE MANÈGE DE MONS - FONDATION MONS 2015 -  
LA MÉTIVE - UN PAS DE CÔTÉ

DANSE - MUSIQUE - JONGLAGE - CINÉMA  
[MARTINEALAPLAGE.INFO](http://MARTINEALAPLAGE.INFO)