



Ci-dessus/above: Jeanne Moynot & Anne-Sophie Turion. « Bordel », 2017. (Ph. Marc-Antoine Serra)  
Page de droite/right: Jeanne Moynot & Anne-Sophie Turion. « Belles plantes », 2019. (Ph. Antonia Auday)

## Jeanne Moynot & Anne-Sophie Turion Belles plantes

**Belles plantes [Beautiful Plants], the latest duet by the young Jeanne Moynot and Anne-Sophie Turion, is about time, and is based on their anxiety regarding the future.**

Jeanne Moynot and Anne-Sophie Turion say so themselves: on stage they form an old couple. "Old" is no trivial term in their vocabulary. It contains a long temporality consisting of varied events, a precious fidelity and an affectionate while tenuous knowledge of the other. Time indeed, its flow, its path to old age, is the central subject of *Beautiful Plants*, their new duet following several residencies at the Théâtre Garonne in Toulouse, at the Centre National de la Danse, the Montevideo venue in Marseille, and a presentation of the "premises" at the Hors Pistes Festival at the Pompidou Centre in Paris. It is interesting to consider this theme in the light of their two previous creations (the performance *Bordel [Mess]* in 2017, then *Le Poil de la Bête [The Hair of the Beast / Hardiness]*, their first

show, in 2018), which exorcise childhood obsessions and traumas, getting rid of a too troublesome experience: a material act for Anne-Sophie, who went about putting some order into her belongings, a psychological evacuation for Jeanne, who foresaw a radical change in her life. Today they seem to be reaching a turning point, a phase of transition, posing the immeasurable question of the times, allowing them to explore on stage their anxiety about what is to become of them. "Today I'm 33 years old. Free, OK! But to go where and with whom?" asks Anne-Sophie. "I'm 33 years old and I'm homosexual. I realized this not long ago. I'm going to die, I'm going to commit suicide," says Jeanne in turn, acting out her own catharsis. This latter will even be represented more directly, corporeally, via a rap scene of incisive extravagance. Astonishing distancing. Their performance archly interweaves autobiographical narrative and the tale told, to the point of completely discombobulating the viewer, no longer able to disentangle experience from fiction.

### PROUSTIAN MADELEINE

The title *Beautiful Plants*, if it refers to the first summer job held by Jeanne, who was a florist, is also the evocation of a youth soon withered, as beautiful plant also means "a fine figure of a woman" in French. The sce-

deux artistes qui n'hésitent jamais, par des silences ou de longs monologues, à décrire des réalités violentes et dérangeantes en y ajoutant un vernis sucré d'impertinence. Les jeunes femmes n'ont pas oublié leur âme de petite fille, seule capable de flirter avec leur conscience d'adulte et de dédramatiser des propos radicaux. Pour autant, rien dans leur spectacle n'est innocent. Chaque geste, chaque intonation sont porteurs de sens. Pour nous transmettre l'émotion de ce qui nous échappe. ■

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Jeanne Moynot est née en /was born in 1985.

Elle vit à /She lives in Pantin.

Anne-Sophie Turion est née en /was born in 1985.

Elle vit à /She lives in Paris et /and Marseille.



nerary of the show is therefore floral, consisting of cut flowers, more or less fresh, which surround two chaises longues, metaphors for old age, and a place conducive to conversations about the past. In the background large screens decorated with colourful, hand-drawn patterns in the impressionist style. This device is the duo's "box of Proustian Madeleines", which is accompanied by the dancer Christophe Ives to make palpable by the body and its shadows the successive tones of the imperceptible changes of physical states. There is a sensation of gentleness and slowness in these infinite curves that mimic an ineffable process of transition. Here symbolism joins thought developed in the *I Ching* or *Classic of Changes*, seminal manual of Chinese thought, in which one understands that the East conceives of time as a crossing without beginning or end. Death is perceived, not as completion, but as renewal integrated into a cycle. "The silent transformation does not force, counteract anything, does not fight; but makes its way, let's say, infiltrates, extends, ramifies, becomes globalized — spreads like an oil stain", writes the philosopher François Jullien in his essay *Les Transformations Silencieuses* [*Silent Transformations*](2009), which inspired the two artists. And the fact is we don't see ourselves growing old. So how can action on the stage, place of the

ephemeral, capture the passage of time, impossible to circumscribe, if not by returning to the Platonic conception of its division or its personification?

#### TIME TRAVEL

"Flashback, fast forward, Western thought in cuts, oriental thought in fades," say the pair, because the show can only be articulated around "time capsules" invoking in turn the memory of Anne-Sophie's mother's garden and the coming out of Jeanne, a present reality with a spectacular effect. Intelligence is located here, when temporality becomes a means of expressing unsaid things that one hides for a lifetime. What hurts, what is taboo, unrestrained, head-on. Jeanne's homosexuality or the fate of the elderly in retirement homes. At times a tiny endoscopic camera explores a fragile pistil with sexual contours and a cheap pizza with broccoli in close-up becomes the groves of the maternal garden. Poetically, these images reactivate memories and operate as a precise, absurd analysis of *mise-en-scène*, which they never cease to question. A view of behind the scenes is like diving into their artistic subconscious. Both coming from a background in the visual arts (National School of Decorative Arts in Paris for Anne-Sophie, Villa d'Arson in Nice for Jeanne), they are developing a stage writing that in-

tegrates their plastic, visual arts thinking. This is materialized by a hilarious bundle of bric-brac, artisanal, emphatically moved around the stage.

The two artists overturn theatrical codes to create stage tableaux that intersect pictorial art, musical freestyle, the performance approach and the energy of the stand-up. Humour meddles with gravity, burlesque with melancholy, intimacy with difference. It is the course of life and its tragic twists and turns that interest these two artists, who never hesitate, by silences or long monologues, to describe violent and disturbing realities by adding to them a sweet varnish of impertinence. The young women haven't forgotten their little-girl souls, the only ones capable of flirting with their adult consciousness and defusing radical remarks. However, nothing in their show is innocent. Every gesture, every intonation carries meaning, in order to convey to us the emotion of what escapes us. ■

Translation: Chloé Baker

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