

## PRODUCTION FOLDER

Creation  
at Vidy

# MATHIEU BERTHOLET

*Luxe, calme*



**Creation March 2018**  
**8 - 18.03**

# LUXE, CALME

## Text and direction :

Mathieu Bertholet

## Scenography :

Sylvie Kleiber

## Dramaturgy :

Guillaume Poix

## Staging assistant :

Manon Krüttli

## Lights :

Yan Godat

## Make-up and hairstyle :

Francis Ases

## Costumes :

Anna Van Brée

## Music selection and interpretation :

Daniele Pintaudi

## With :

Véronique Alain  
 Tamara Bacci  
 Rebecca Balestra  
 Joël Hefti  
 Julien Jacquéroiz  
 Frédéric Jacot-Guillarmod  
 Baptiste Morisod  
 Louka Petit-Taborelli  
 Daniele Pintaudi  
 Nora Steinig

## Production:

MuFuThe  
 Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne

## Coproduction :

Théâtre de Valère  
 Comédie de Genève  
 Théâtre Populaire Romand

## With the support of:

Pro Helvetia-Fondation suisse pour la culture –  
 ThéâtrePro Valais

Spectacle Lauréat du concours Label+ théâtre  
 romand 2016



**From 8 to 18 March  
2018**

**Charles Apothéloz**

Thursday	8.03	7:00 pm
Friday	9.03	8:00
Saturday	10.03	6:00
Thursday	15.03	7:30
Friday	16.03	7:30
Saturday	17.03	2:30
Sunday	18.03	2:30

Length : 107 min

**Theatre**

Fr., En. subtitles 15-18.03



**VIDY** +

**Introduction:** Fri. 9.03, 7:00 pm

## PARENT(S)/CHILD(REN)

Enjoy a show while your kids  
 discover the theater world...  
 Starting from 6 years,  
 reservation required (subjected  
 to availability)

**Saturday 10.03**, 17h45 - 19h45

*Luxe, calme* (Parents) +

Workshop & snack (Kids)

OR

Workshop & snack only (Kids)

## Luxe, calme TOURING

2018

**TPR, La Chaux-de-Fonds (CH)**  
 22 - 25.03

**Comédie de Genève (CH)**

10 - 15.04

**Théâtre de Valère**

18.04

# INVITATION TO THE VOYAGE

Think, would it not be  
 Sweet to live with me  
 All alone, my child, my love? —  
 Sleep together, share  
 All things, in that fair  
 Country you remind me of?  
 Charming in the dawn  
 There, the half-withdrawn  
 Drenched, mysterious sun appears  
 In the curdled skies,  
 Treacherous as your eyes  
 Shining from behind their tears.

There, restraint and order bless  
 Luxury and voluptuousness.

We should have a room  
 Never out of bloom:  
 Tables polished by the palm  
 Of the vanished hours  
 Should reflect rare flowers  
 In that amber-scented calm;  
 Ceilings richly wrought,  
 Mirrors deep as thought,  
 Walls with eastern splendor hung,  
 All should speak apart  
 To the homesick heart  
 In its own dear native tongue.

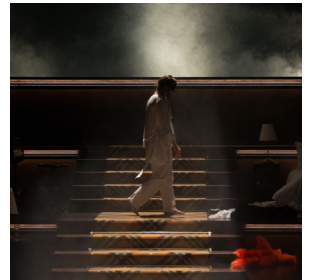
There, restraint and order bless  
 Luxury and voluptuousness.

See, their voyage past,  
 To their moorings fast,  
 On the still canals asleep,  
 These big ships; to bring  
 You some trifling thing  
 They have braved the furious deep.  
 — Now the sun goes down,  
 Tinting dyke and town,  
 Field, canal, all things in sight,  
 Hyacinth and gold;  
 All that we behold  
 Slumbers in its ruddy light.

There, restraint and order bless  
**Luxury** and voluptuousness.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, *FLOWERS OF EVIL*,

TRANSL. BY EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY, 1936



©Mathilda Olmi

# NOTE OF INTENTION

## TO SEE THE ALPS, AND DIE: ROMANTICISM AND MOUNTAINEERING

To see the Alps, and die: Romanticism and mountaineering

The landscape of Lake Geneva and the snow-capped Alps are intimately linked to the luxury hotel trade. As if palaces were necessary to properly watch a sunset; as if one needed the comfort of a balcony or the perfect frame of a bay window to justly appreciate the changing colours of this powerful and threatening nature, where *the suns, rainy-wet / through clouds rise and set*.

The Alps and the lake, however, have never been those picturesque, bucolic and rustic postcard landscapes. Not so long ago, the mountains represented only dangers, threats and insurmountable barriers standing in the way of fertile and sun-drenched lands, *the land where the lemon trees bloom*<sup>1</sup>. Goethe, while searching for the lemon trees, stumbled across these violent peaks, these deep blues, these valleys where the storms rumble, these glaciers that hold legends and souls in limbo. Goethe paved the way: for the mountaineers who conquered the Matterhorn and the Mont Blanc; for the British tourists who reclined in the sunshine and pure air of the mountains; for the poets who lived in castles and set revolutionary spirits and modern monsters there; for the visionaries who traced the railroad routes that reached the peaks; for the promoters who predicted the financial potential of this new alpine Romanticism.

In Goethe's wake, we built palaces.

We knowingly disposed new and dizzying railroads, thus uniting a rough but grandiose landscape, technology and romance; and at the end of the lines we erected the most grandiose palaces: the Caux Palace and the Rochers de Naye funicular; the Trois Couronnes hotel and the Pléiades train line; the Palaces of Lausanne on the Simplon railway, a direct line to the lemon trees in bloom. Each palace became its own invitation to the voyage.

The first night<sup>2</sup> on the lake, the boats on the blue. A telegram awaits you in your room. A wedding night. The bright eyes of a young virgin who knows nothing of her husband's mistress, fallen, thrown under a tram in Brussels.

The blue, the infinite blue of the lake, infinitely changing, lagoon blue, night blue, sky blue, dirty blue, full blue, the same blue as death<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> « Kennst du das Land wo die Zitronen blühen? », in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, J.W. von Goethe, 1796.

<sup>2</sup> *Premier soir*, Marguerite Yourcenar, 1929, Revue de France.

<sup>3</sup> *L'insoutenable légèreté de l'être*, Milan Kundera, 1984.



## IN THE RUINS OF AN ANCIENT TEMPLE

We needed all these external gazes, all these visions of the Alps and of Switzerland, in order to form this idyllic picture that we, the Swiss of today, have of our country. Others see better, one sees better from the outside. We needed German and British eyes in order to see our lake. But today, what has become of this idyll, these palaces, this alpine Romanticism? They have been replaced by other, more distant dreams. Air travel has made other landscapes accessible. Other places invite us to the voyage. The palaces stand empty.

The lake is placid, the mountains are restful, the air is bracing. Only a few stately houses have survived. Some other witnesses of a glorious past are about to fall into ruin. The type of guests has changed. These walls no longer host the first nights of a princely wedding, the dreams of an elsewhere-fallen nobility, the ramblings of not-yet-known poets. They have been taken over by clinics, convalescent homes, social-healthcare establishments. An end-of-life smell haunts the walls. Here the ills of passing time are mitigated, here one waits for time to finish passing, eyes fixed on this same lake, on these same Alps. In the 19th century, British, German and Russian travellers flocked to see our views, our trains, our palaces. Today they come here to die. Luxury tourism has become the tourism of old age and of death.

## I DON'T INVENT THE STORY, I USE IT

I don't invent the story, I use it. I compare two points in time of the same place. The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the first stone of the Caux Palace, the first train ride to the Rochers de Naye, the White Russians at the Trois Couronnes, the wedding night of a Belgian couple in a suite of the Montreux Palace; the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the broken windows of the Caux Palace, a last walk on the Rochers de Naye, the new Russians at the Trois Couronnes, that night alone at the Montreux Palace.

And always that same lagoon blue, those night blue peaks.

MATHIEU BERTHOLET

# EXTRACTS FROM THE TEXT

Mathieu Bertholet's text is composed of 229 numbered fragments. When it is performed on stage, it is no longer the author nor even the director who chooses the order in which the fragments are performed, but the actors. On the basis of a fixed dramaturgical structure which follows the seasons of a luxury hotel, they choose the fragments spontaneously depending on those they know and what is happening on stage, according to formal and thematic considerations.

## 43.

Wishing you a pleasant stay at the Grand-Hôtel, where everything will be luxury and peace, Monsieur!

## 14.

- They say men bring their wives here to the Grand-Hôtel, and their mistresses to the Palace...

- I did not know that, Monsieur.

- You've been here for years... Come, my friend, don't you have any juicy stories to tell?

- Monsieur, I have nothing to tell... Imagine, Monsieur, if you were a character in one of my stories...

## 15.

There is assuredly no other country, not one part of our globe that is as strange and interesting as Switzerland. Everything that is most great, noble, exceptional, surprising, everything that is terrifying and horrifying; everything that can be dark, melancholy, romantic, gentle, seductive, celestial, calm and divine; all that is ideal in Nature seems to be concentrated in this small space, turning this country into the garden of Europe where all the worshippers of Nature converge, and where they receive, in exchange for their sacrifices, the purest and noblest rewards.

## 66.

The Grand-Hôtel (altitude: 3156 metres) is built so as to inflict the greatest possible abuse on the landscape. A piece of architecture lost in the middle of a set built by nature. Although the panorama from the balcony of the Grand Hotel is one of a kind, the opposite view onto this concrete monster is a punch in the face, a rape of Nature.

## 92.

Since out there, everybody pretends to not know what everybody knows; since everyone lives as if they didn't know, closing their eyes in the face of the obscenity of death like they would spit on pornography, you have come here to fully enjoy your final hour. Since out there, everyone seeks to avoid death in every way, we welcome you here, in front of this landscape, with faultless service and a qualified staff, so that you may appreciate your final moments.

## 167.

Does what you have seen alone exist? Does what we have seen alone, said alone, done alone, exist?

It is sad to leave someone: to have to, to let go.

It is even sadder to leave alone, to not leave anything behind.

**101.**

- Welcome to the Grand-Hôtel, Monsieur.

- I hope you will live up to the expectation.

- We are here for you, Monsieur. To make your stay as enjoyable as possible.



# MATHIEU BERTHOLET

## Text and direction

Mathieu Bertholet trained at the Berlin University of the Arts. He founded the MuFuThe company in 2007, of which he is artistic director. He was author in residence at the Comédie in Geneva in 2002 under the direction of Anne Bisang and at the GRÜ/Trasnthéâtre from 2007 to 2009 under the direction of Maya Bösch and Michèle Pralong. He co-instigated the MA in directing at the Manufacture in Lausanne and was co-supervisor of the playwriting department of the ENSATT in Lyon with Enzo Cormann until 2015. He has also taught at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve and danced under the direction of Cindy Van Acker and Foofwa D'Immobilité. Mathieu Bertholet's practice moves between different fields of activity, and he has developed a unique, demanding and radical mode of expression. His plays, published by Actes Sud Papiers, have been directed by Anna Van Brée, Anne Bisang, Maya Bösch, Marc Liebens and Véronique Bellegarde, among others. *FarbEn* received the 2009 Italia Award for best radio play, in a broadcast by Marguerite Gateau on France Culture. In 2003, he received the Encouragement Prize from the canton of Valais and in 2011, a bursary from the Leenaards Foundation.

He has directed plays that have been produced in partnership with, among others, the GRÜ/Transthéâtre, the Théâtre de Gennevilliers, the Théâtre du Crochetan and the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne. They have also been presented during Sujets à Vif at the Avignon Festival, at the Swiss Cultural Centre in Paris, at the Grange the Dorigny and at Nuithonie.

He is also a translator of German into French, having translated texts by Rainald Goetz and Rainer Werner Fassbinder. In 2016 he translated *Personne*, a rediscovered unpublished text by Ödön Von Horvath and *Nathan/Crassier* by G.E. Lessing/Jelinek, for the production by Nicolas Stemann at the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne.

He recently directed *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane at the Bâtie festival in Geneva.

Since July 2015 he is the artistic director of the POCHE/GVE, where he has been establishing, with the help of his permanent team and collectives of artistic creation, a theatrical laboratory for contemporary writing.



# PRESS REVIEW

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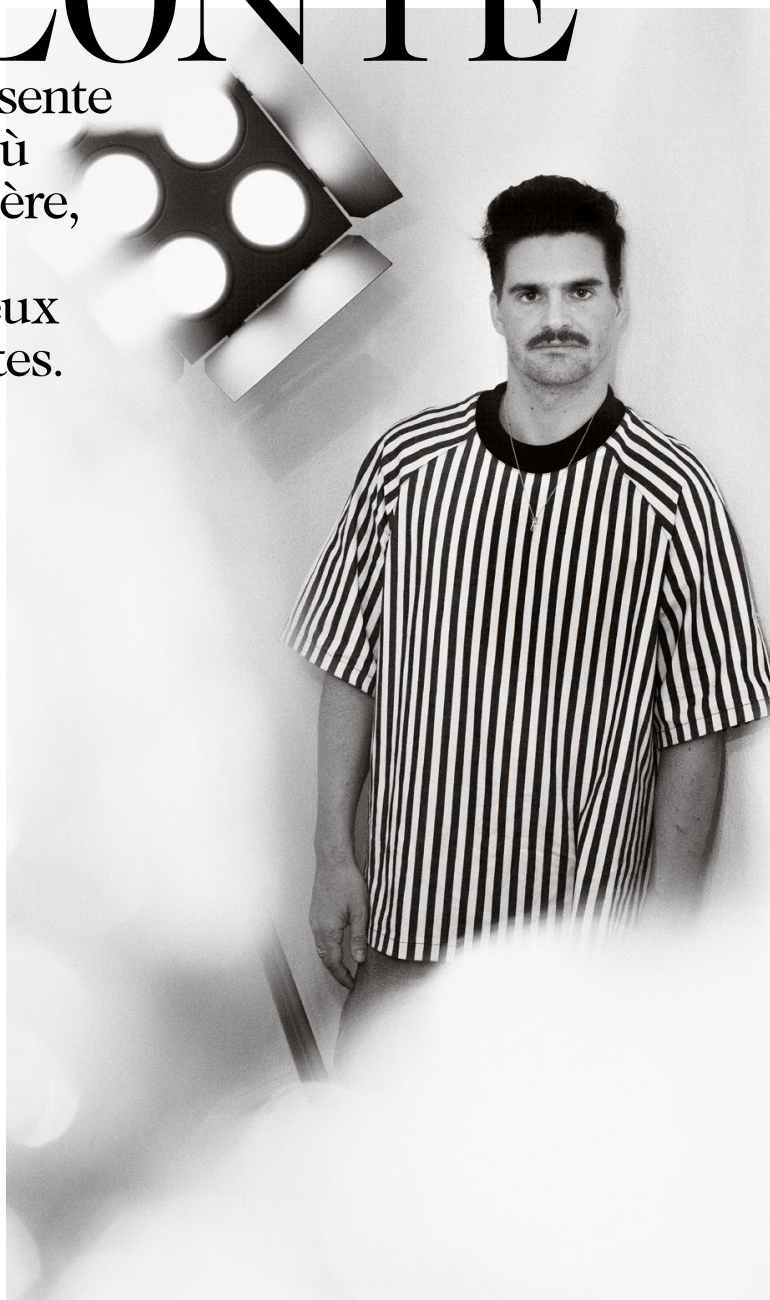
RENCONTRE

# LUXE, CALME ET VOLONTÉ

Mathieu Bertholet présente sa nouvelle création, où il se penche, à sa manière, sur l'hôtellerie de luxe et le suicide assisté, deux particularismes helvètes.

Texte ESTELLE LUCIEN  
Photographie LEA KLOOS

Pour lutter contre la procrastination, Mathieu Bertholet s'est résigné à engager une femme de ménage. «Parce que pour écrire, j'avais besoin que tout soit rangé et en ordre. Je passais beaucoup de temps à faire le ménage.» Or, en ce début d'année, il y a urgence. Les comédiens attendent leur texte. *Luxe, calme*, la nouvelle création de l'auteur de théâtre, est inscrite au programme de la Comédie de Genève et du Théâtre de Vidy à Lausanne, notamment. Pour tenir les délais, Mathieu Bertholet s'est imposé une discipline de moine: debout à 4 heures du matin, il écrit plusieurs heures avant de rejoindre la rue du Cheval-Blanc, au cœur de la Vieille-Ville genevoise, où il revêt son costume de directeur du théâtre Poche/Gve. Il y entame sa troisième saison. Enthousiaste, énergique, loquace, curieux et volontaire, le Valaisan avoue qu'il avait pourtant sous-estimé la tâche. «Lorsqu'on est directeur, on est responsable de tout. Si le vin servi au bar est mauvais, c'est de votre faute», relève-t-il. Désormais, le garçon aux faux airs d'Antonio Banderas semble avoir fini d'essuyer les planches, il peut y remettre un pied en tant



# LE TEMPS

Vendredi 2 mars 2018

A propos du spectacle:

*Luxe, calme*

Mathieu Bertholet

## «Luxe, calme» et suicide assisté

**De la beauté à la mort. C'est le trajet qu'accomplit la dernière création de Mathieu Bertholet, à Vidy-Lausanne, avant La Chaux-de-Fonds, Genève et Sion. Une balade au cœur des palaces suisses. Rencontre après une répétition**

Que la montagne est belle. Mais inquiétante, aussi. Voire morbide lorsqu'elle tue ses usagers. Et encore synonyme d'éternité puisqu'elle survit aux humains qui la célèbrent. La montagne vaut bien un palais? Elle en a eu des dizaines durant la grande période du tourisme helvétique qui a couru du milieu du XIXe siècle aux années 1950. Des hôtels grandiloquents, palaces boisés et feutrés où tout, des plafonds aux parquets, était étudié pour ravir les voyageurs en général et les Anglais en particulier.

Dans *Luxe, calme* qui débute ce jeudi à Vidy, Mathieu Bertholet raconte cette faste période et le charme suranné qui opère encore. Le long d'une proposition entre danse et théâtre, l'auteur et metteur en scène romand évoque aussi les cliniques que sont devenus beaucoup de ces lieux mythiques. Et, parce que c'est encore une curiosité suisse, le directeur du Poche finit son périple sur le suicide assisté. Sinistre? Non, car les acteurs, qui composent chaque soir une nouvelle partition, amènent une légèreté à l'opération.

**Le Temps: Une chose frappe lorsqu'on entre dans la grande salle de Vidy, c'est la beauté du décor. En même temps, on n'est pas totalement surpris puisqu'il est signé Sylvie Kleiber...**

**Mathieu Bertholet:** Oui, Sylvie est formidable. Elle m'accompagne depuis de nombreuses années et trouve toujours un moyen de traduire ma pensée dans l'espace. Ici, pour évoquer les grands hôtels, on a d'abord imaginé une construction à la verticale où, au-dessus du hall central, les chambres se

seraient empilées. Mais on a vite réalisé que l'élément important de ces lieux est le grand escalier où les clients aiment se croiser et se montrer. Il faut savoir que les dames de la haute société se changeaient deux à trois fois par jour et soignaient leurs arrivées. D'où l'idée d'utiliser la profondeur du plateau et d'y aménager ce décor à plusieurs niveaux sur lesquels Sylvie Kleiber a recréé un grand escalier, des chambres et une véranda en prenant soin de retrouver du mobilier et des équipements d'époque pour plus de saisissement.

**Comment vous est venue cette envie de travailler sur les palaces suisses de la Belle Epoque?**

J'ai longtemps habité une vieille ferme près de Blonay, au-dessus de Montreux, et, quand j'allais courir, j'étais surpris de voir que beaucoup de ces grands hôtels étaient soit fermés, soit transformés en cliniques. C'était très étrange, ces lieux en déshérence... Je n'avais jamais réalisé que, durant une période faste, la popularité de ces palaces avait été si vaste qu'ils avaient pullulé dans la Riviera et les régions alpines suisses. Au point où, par exemple, à Villeneuve, un tram des palaces avait été créé pour permettre aux clients de se déplacer d'hôtel en hôtel! Pareil concernant le Badrutt à Saint-Moritz. Pour satisfaire le confort des usagers, les propriétaires de ce palace ont construit la première centrale électrique de Suisse. Je trouve passionnant de constater à quel point ces lieux ont généré tout un commerce, toute une vie.

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