

# PEAK MYTIKAS

(ON THE TOP OF MOUNT OLYMPUS)

AN 8 HOUR - PERFORMANCE



AT THE TROUBLEYN LABORATORIUM ANTWERP

***WORLD-PREMIÈRE:***  
***SATURDAY 6 MAY 2023 (14:00 - 22:00)***

SATURDAY 13 MAY (16:00 - 24:00)

SATURDAY 27 MAY (16:00 - 24:00)

SATURDAY 3 JUNE (14:00 - 22:00)

CONCEPT & DIRECTION: JAN FABRE

TEXT: JOHAN DE BOOSE

MUSIC: ALMA AUER

DRAMATURGY: MIET MARTENS

LIGHTING DESIGN & TECHNICAL: WOUT JANSSENS

CHOREOGRAPHY: JAN FABRE & IVANA JOZIC

PERFORMERS: ALMA AUER, ANNABELLE

CHAMBON, ANNY CZUPPER, CÉDRIC CHARRON,

CONOR DOHERTY, GUSTAV KOENIGS,

IRENE URCIUOLI, IVANA JOZIC, MATTEO FRANCO,

PIETRO QUADRINO & STELLA HÖTTLER

GUEST DRAMATURGY: SYLVIA SOLAKIDI

COSTUME DESIGN: KASIA MIELCZAREK

VELVET CAPES:

ARAVINDA RODENBURG BESPOKE TAILOR

SOUND ENGINEER: SAM GEERTS

TECHNICIAN: KEVIN DECKERS

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & SURTITLES:

JOOST CLAES

PRESS & COMMUNICATION:

SOPHIE LUKERSMITH

PHOTOGRAPHY: HANNA AUER

INTERNATIONAL TOURING MANAGEMENT:

ALDO GROMPONE

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TROUBLEYN/JAN FABRE IS SUPPORTED  
ARTISTICALLY & FINANCIALLY BY A FLEMISH AND  
AN ITALIAN MAECENAS.

WITH SINCERE THANKS TO THE BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS & GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
TROUBLEYN/JAN FABRE VZW



PEACE, LOVE, UNITY,  
RESPECT  
P.L.U.R

# AN 8 HOUR PERFORMANCE

## CHAPTER I. THE TRANS RAVE (0H00 - 1H35)

- 1.1 DIONYSUS 1: THE OLYMPIC CABARET  
*"Welcome on the stage of the Olympus..."*
- 1.2 THE RAVE  
*"Once upon a time"*
- 1.3 CHORUS 1: PEACE/WAR  
The Peace Song: *"What is the aim of every war..."*
- 1.4 PROMETHEUS 1: ON ODOUR  
*"Gods live high to keep an eye on us"*
- 1.5 WHEN THE HUMANS CAUGHT THE FIRE
- 1.6 CHORUS 2: LOVE  
The Love Song: *"Why is love the greatest thing"*  
The Fire Solo: *"Once upon a time"*

## CHAPTER II. THE LAMENT OF OEDIPUS (1H35 - 3H35)

- 2.1 OEDIPUS 1: SWOLLEN FOOT  
*"Call me as you like it: king, coward, gruesome clown..."*
- 2.2 THE COMFORT OF SMELL
- 2.3 OEDIPUS 2: STONE ME  
*"To know or not to know, that is the question."*
- 2.4 THE WEDDING TABLE DANCE  
*"Once upon a time"*  
A Mourning Scene
- 2.5 OEDIPUS 3: THE MASK OF THE BLIND FACE  
*"Am I – are we not all chased from paradise?"*
- 2.6 THE CHORUS CLEANING THE FIELD OF SKULLS  
*"Once upon a time"*
- 2.7 OEDIPUS 4: THE PARADOXES OF OEDIPUS  
*"I hate the mist of ignorance and  
got the light of misfortune."*

## CHAPTER III. THE INFLAMING OF FIRE (3H35 - 4H40)

- 3.1 THE SNAKE DANCE & THE HUMANS WITH THEIR SEX ON FIRE
- 3.2 PROMETHEUS 2: THE THEFT OF FIRE  
*"I, immortal son of Titans,  
child of giants and a giant myself..."*
- 3.3 THE WAR TABLE DANCE
- 3.4 CHORUS 3: UNITY  
The Unity Song: *"Are we one or cut apart..."*
- 3.5 DIONYSUS 2: EAT ME  
*"Are we greedy yet? Are you dying yet?"*
- 3.6 THE WAR TRAINING  
The Chorus Songs of Peace – Love – Unity – Respect  
The fight between Eteocles and Polynices

## CHAPTER IV. THE RESURRECTION OF ANTIGONE (4H40 - 6H40)

- 4.1 ANTIGONE I: I LISTEN TO THE LAW  
*"Who dares to say that I – Antigone –  
don't listen to the law?"*
- 4.2 THE DANCE OF THE DEAD BROTHER &  
THE CHORUS WITH THE SKULL ON THEIR HEAD
- 4.3 ANTIGONE 2: DO I ALREADY SMELL?  
*"What do I smell, do I already smell?"*
- 4.4 THE SMELL OF LOVE  
Gnossienne n. 1 in f minor by Eric Satie  
A Mourning Scene
- 4.5 ANTIGONE 3: THIS HOUSE IS NOT MY HOUSE ANYMORE  
*"This house is no longer my house."*
- 4.6 THE SMELL AND LAUGHTER ECSTASY  
*"Once upon a time"*
- 4.7 ANTIGONE 4: NONONO  
*"Who is it? Is it me Antigone?  
Woman, virgin, virago, heretic..."*  
A Mourning Scene

## CHAPTER V. THE NEW BEGINNING (6H40 - 8H00)

- 5.1 THE SPORT TABLE DANCE
- 5.2 DIONYSUS 3: ON THE SACRIFICE FOR PLUR  
*"As Prometheus offered fire to humankind,  
" I, Dionysus, give you all the flavours  
and colours of the wine..."*
- 5.3 FROM THE PROFANE TO THE SACRED SCENE (THE ORGY)
- 5.4 CHORUS 4: RESPECT  
The Respect Song: *"Who do we respect the most?"*
- 5.5 PROMETHEUS 3: FROM THE VALLEYS  
*"See them sitting with their fatty asses  
on the Nose of the world..."*
- 5.6 CHORUS : PLUR FINALE  
*"There is no better law than the law of human beings.  
But no one breaks the law easier than human beings."*
- 5.7 THE RAVE  
*"Once upon a time"*

PEACE

WHO WILL BE THE FIRST TO DIE

TRUTH WILL DIE AND MAN WILL LIE

# *A SENSUAL NIGHTMARE*

JOHAN DE BOOSE  
AUTHOR

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Four years ago, I was travelling from the armpit of the Adriatic Sea between the Dalmatic islands, towards the Greek coast. Near Mljet, the island where, according to the legend, Odysseus spent seven years with the nymph Calypso, I received a phone call from a theatre maker, who is a friend of mine. Whether I would like to write a piece about the lechery and the madness of the Greek pandemonium. I am not certain anymore about how his words sounded precisely, but I was immediately persuaded. The title of the piece was Peak Mytikas, like the top of the mountain of the gods, Mount Olympus. Mytikas literary means nose. The ancient myth would be revised: Prometheus did not actually steal the fire from the gods but he obtained it thanks to a cunning deal. The gods, who lived up there in dilapidated camps, hoped that humans would use the fire to prepare delightful meals that they, the gods, would be able to smell on their mountain top called Nose. Humans would bring to gods pleasure and consolation. And so it happened. But soon, rose to them not only the smell of what was cooked, but also the one of burnt corpses. Peak Mytikas would become the story of the destruction and perversion of humanity.

The rest of my boat trip continued in rapture: I reread the ancient Greeks that I once had tasted in the original language, and in mature age I took the opportunity to rewrite them in the wounded language of the 21st century, from the perspective of 25 centuries of experience that separate me from the Tragedians that I loved in such an unbridled way. As a sensible poet I looked at the coastal land, where originated the oldest stories of our Continent, and at the remotest branches of the Alpes and the Carpathian mountains, from where passed the artery of our civilization. Over there, behind the tree-covered mountains named Bal-can, literally „blood and honey”, stands Peak Mytikas, the head of the mountain that was nothing but a nose. freed the bridles of my imagination.

I wrote the text during my Odyssey across St Petersburg, Rome, the islands of the Mediterranean Sea and – tied as Odysseus to the sail of his ship – confined in the isolation of the pandemic in my ark in the Low Lands. It would take four years until the text, ripe as a fruit, would land on the stage of a theatre, ready to become peeled and served by a group of actors.

Every text grows from necessity, but this text has become sharpened and weighed through the developments of the time when it was written. On our planet, that was already ravaged from water shortage and heat, also spread, to make things worse, an illness that transformed residential areas into Places of the Scull, as if the years of the plague of Thebes had broken out again. I picked old masters from my bookcase: Samuel Becket, for whom the world was a deadly place where humanity waited for salvation that did not come; Heiner Müller, who had described the earth as a colourful mess; and Hugo Claus, who looked at the place where he was thrown to earth, as a frivolous joke. After the pandemic, the war in Ukraine broke out, which destroyed decades-long stability with a blow and would trigger centuries-long resentment. The Greek world of envy and bile still existed – I thought desperately, while already writing.

In Iran, girls who removed their hijab were forced into school classes like modern Antigones and were executed. The madness of our own time sneaked into the story of the gods on their Nose. Thousands of years of civilization and we still do not know where things stand with freedom and love. Humans, seeing blind, walk towards destruction.

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*Humans,  
seeing blind,  
walk towards  
destruction.*

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Humans rule upon the world and drag their own species into the abyss. Humans cry out their opposition against all kinds of injustice, but become chained and punished. Humanism has become a crime. From one day to the next, freedom becomes a fatal aim. The smell of burnt skin fills the room in my house, and we, 21st century mortals, we hope for salvation in vain. We console ourselves with treats that offer oblivion, because we can no more handle the madness or because we'd rather look away.

While I was writing Peak Mytikas, I realized painfully well that the world of ancient Greeks that lies merely 2,5 thousand years behind us, still exists, that it is still as horrible as then – or is it even more horrible? I sneaked in my text quotes from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which even now no one can utter without blushing from shame. I had to control myself and not slip into soft-headed idealism out of sheer despair, because there exist also valuable elements in it, because it is not about fighting for improvement, because the old dreams, as articulated by lucid poets, still narrate the difficult values. Soft-headed? How about that!

Then comes the moment of reality: eleven actors, who are among the best of our Continent, in the Troubleyn Company, get their teeth into the work with a genius theatre director. They offer everything they have – their body, their language, their humanity, the power of their vulnerability – to the service of the public. I witness this creative process, that, as always, proceeds with a lot of openness, generosity and imagination. The result is a catharsis, a world as a sensual nightmare, a universe in which the difference between life and death is eliminated. As it lasts long enough, it has the effect of a meditation or a trance. And – despite everything – this offers consolation. This is the reason why I immediately said „yes” when I was called by Jan Fabre four years ago, when I was at the Adriatic Sea, and he asked me to rob the Olympic gods with him.

— LOVE —

*GIVE US THE STRENGTH TO CHANGE THE WORLD*

*GIVE US LOVE, MAKE US CURL*

# ON STAGE



*Why does fear  
rule this  
world?*

*What are we  
all afraid of?  
What are you  
scared for?*



## UNITY

*LIFE IS CRUEL, LIFE DIVIDES  
DEATH IS NICER, DEATH UNITES*



*'The things in  
ourselves  
that we do not  
allow  
to enter our  
consciousness  
loom in our lives  
as fate.'*



# ONCE UPON A TIME

SYLVIA SOLAKIDI  
GUEST DRAMATURG

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Once upon a time, Oedipus killed a man on his way to Thebes. The man was his father; he did not know. Then, he resolved the riddle of the Sphinx, he became king of Thebes and he married the widowed queen. Jocasta was his mother; he did not know. When he found out, he blinded himself. His sons, Eteocles and Polynices killed each other and his daughter Antigone killed herself in the cave-prison in which she was confined after having buried Polynices against the orders of Creon, the ruler of Thebes.

*Not this time.*

What you were told, is not necessarily so. In Peak Mytikas, Oedipus does not blind himself, but he performs blindness by putting on and removing a blindfold. He laments Jocasta and as he practises love and grief, he rejects the role of the innocent ignorant. Antigone does not bury her brother and she does not kill herself. She performs the “no” to Creon by setting herself and Polynices on fire, and creates a phantasmagoria that cannot be ignored, before fire consumes them.

Once upon a time, the titan Prometheus, stole the thunder of Zeus and offered the divine fire to humans. As a punishment, he was bound to Mount Caucasus and an eagle ate his liver every day.

*Not this time.*

What you were told, is not necessarily so. In Peak Mytikas, Prometheus does not steal the fire and does not get punished. He negotiates, instead, the sharing of fire between gods and humans. Humans will use the fire and gods will enjoy the smells. Gods became addicts of burnt human lives.

Once upon a time, Prometheus was still and silent, bound in a landscape of fire. This was the time of *Prometheus Landscape II*.

Can you see the light and feel the heat?  
Can you smell the smoke?

The smell from the attraction and the risk of fire is echoed in *Peak Mytikas*. This is the time of a landscape of human bodies overwhelmed by fire, of bodies that give birth to new fire.

Once upon a time, a warrior summoned his army with the cadence military song: “what is the pain that hurts the most?” The warrior was Eteocles.

This was the time of the Rope Skipping scene from the 24-hour performance *Mount Olympus*.

Can you hear the chains hitting the floor?  
Can you smell the sweat?

The smell of their war song is echoed in Peak Mytikas. This is the time of smell, of love, grief, agony, victory, death, sex and desire.



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*This is the  
time of smell,  
of love, grief,  
agony, victory,  
death, sex and  
desire.*

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Once upon a time, Dionysus organized an orgiastic dance with colours; performers and audience enjoyed the cathartic effect in their bodies.

This was the time of the final scene of Mount Olympus.

Can you see the glitter on the balcony walls of the theatre in the Troubleyn Laboratorium?

No, glitter will not be used this time.

Throughout Peak Mytikas, performers constantly remind you: “bodies are banned – seal your sex – destroy the joy”.

Really?

What you are told, is not necessarily so.

Can you smell the irony?

Once upon a time, sexuality was a field of experimentation.

Not this time. Contemporary laws safeguard bodies and their desires. Bodies are respected, as their limits are not being invaded. Bodies are kept safe from wounds. Who would object to safety? However, what these laws state, is not necessarily so. It is also safety from the challenge of living and interacting in our own bodies.

## *We are at Risk*

Safety has become dangerous. Can you smell the irony?

Humanistic ideals are expressed in human law, but their corporeal experience is not thought to be correct. Love that bodies share, is being questioned. Not the sentimental love of smooth emotions but the love of ambiguity and controversy that can bring change; love as a law of life. With love being silenced, law becomes raw and stale theory.

## *We are at War*

Rave mystics take over. In their war songs, they perform the ideals of Peace, Love, Unity and Respect (P.L.U.R.) of the rave community and they come to ecstasy during their contemplative dances to repetitive beats. In an alchemic ritual, they combine the four elements of the world, namely air (smell), fire, water, earth (sand), to acquire the wisdom of the philosopher's stone, the wisdom of how to transform the lead of their clean and regulated bodies into the gold of opened up corporeal subjects. They feel with their brains and think with their hearts, in search of the elixir of life, love that ranges from community love to orgy of danse macabre. These warriors summoned by Dionysus, use smell for the alchemic reconciliation of the opposites, starting from the trans of gender. They explore carnal and spiritual dimensions of sexuality to define being in the contemporary world.

This is the time of Peak Mytikas. Eight hours for the reinvention of the laws of being, in a nocturnal setting that is as borderline (il)legal as all rave events. A night that is still anticipating catharsis, as the alchemic transformation of being through acceptance of ambivalence is still going on. Rave warriors do not give up. They keep showing their open wounds that do not result from abuse but from the anarchy of love, the passion for life.

This is the time to pull an alarm signal.

## RESPECT

*GIVE THE WORLD A SECOND CHANCE*

*LET US DO THE OPENING DANCE*

# JAN FABRE

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Photographer: Carlotta Manaigo

Jan Fabre (°Antwerp, 1958) is known, at home and abroad, as one of the most innovative and versatile artists of his generation. For almost 40 years, he has been creating work as a theatre maker, author, and visual artist.

He pushes the boundaries in every genre he engages with.

The great masterpiece came in 2015 with the acclaimed *Mount Olympus - To glorify the cult of tragedy* (a 24-hour performance). A monster production with 27 performers lasting a twenty-four-hour period that thematizes Greek tragedies. With his newest creation *Peak Mytikas (on the top of Mount Olympus)* An 8-hour production, Jan Fabre continues the search of Greek tragedies, focusing on the house of Thebes, the tragedies of Oedipus and Antigone.

*Peak Mytikas (on the top of Mount Olympus)* illustrate his thinking about theater: theater as a total work of art in which the word is given a well-considered, functional place alongside parameters such as dance, music, opera, performance elements and improvisation. The restraint with which Fabre uses text demands a new way of making theater.

# JOHAN DE BOOSE

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Photographer: Stephan Vanfleteren

Johan de Boose (1962). Belgian, Dutch speaking writer of novels, non-fiction, theater and poetry. He holds a Phd in History, Arts and Literature. Although specialized in Central- and Eastern Europe, he has always been interested in the cultural and historical heritage of all of Europe. He has worked for several magazines and for the Flemish radio and television, and he was a guest professor at different universities and art schools.

As a dramaturg and an actor he was engaged in experimental theaters in Belgium and The Netherlands. He collaborated with the Polish avant-garde director Tadeusz Kantor and translated his manifestos.

Johan has written outstanding historical novels about the Second World War from extremely different points of views, and about the divided Europe during the Cold War.

At this moment he writes a reflective and comprehensive book about Yugoslavia. Together with Troubleyn/Jan Fabre he created 'Belgian Rules/Belgium Rules' (2017) and 'Peak Mytikas (On the top of Mount Olympus)' (2023).

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“PEAK MYTIKAS’ IS THE REALISATION OF AN OLD DREAM: ONCE I PASSIONATELY READ THE GREEK TRAGEDIES IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE, NOW I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REWRITE THEM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMPLEX EARLY 21ST CENTURY WORLD.”

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# ALMA AUER

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Alma Auer (1991) is a Belgian musician, composer and singer based in Antwerp, Belgium. Coming from a musical family, she studied Musicology at the KU Leuven.

She worked previously with artists like Stef Kamil Carlens, Koen Van Mechelen, and performed on Tomorrowland in 2018. She also produces her own music under the name of Aurealma, for which she directs the music videos.

She joined the Troubleyn/Jan Fabre company as a composer for the productions of *'Elle était et Elle Est, Même'* (2021), and *'Simona, Gangster of Art'* (2023).

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"THIS IS SUCH A UNIQUE AND SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ME, NOT ONLY DO I GET TO COMPOSE THE MUSIC, BUT I ALSO PERFORM MY OWN MUSIC ON STAGE. IT WAS FOR ME ALSO VERY IMPORTANT TO SHARE A DIALOGUE WITH THE DANCERS ABOUT THE STYLE OF THE MUSIC. TO NOT JUST GIVE THEM A FINISHED PRODUCT AND THAT'S IT. IT'S VERY SPECIAL TO SEE EVERYTHING COME TO FRUITION ON STAGE AND HAVE SO MUCH JOY WITH IT AS WELL. I LOOK FORWARD TO SHARE THIS INCREDIBLY SPECIAL MOMENT WITH THE AUDIENCE."

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# PERFORMERS



*Alma Auer*

*Annabelle  
Chambon*



*Anny  
Czupper*



*Cédric  
Charron*



*Conor  
Doherty*



*Gustav  
Koenigs*



*Irene  
Urciuoli*



*Ivana  
Jozic*



*Matteo  
Franco*



*Pietro  
Quadrino*



*Stella  
Höttler*

