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Hallo

BAM Harvey Theater
Oct 15—17 at 7:30pm

Running time: approx. 60 minutes, no intermission

Concept, direction, choreography,
stage design, and performance by
Martin Zimmermann

Dramaturgy by **Sabine Geistlich**
Stage design development, technical project manager
Ingo Groher

Composed by **Colin Vallon**
Direction and choreography assistance
Eugénie Rebetez

Costume design by **Franziska Born**
Lighting design by **Sammy Marchina**
Sound design by **Andy Neresheimer**
General stage manager, extra **Roger Studer**
Stage direction **Sarah Büchel**

Season Sponsor:

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Major support for theater at BAM provided by:
The Francena T. Harrison Foundation Trust
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The Morris and Alma Schapiro Fund
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Technical concept, stage design **Christiane Voth, Ingo Groher**
Construction, stage design **Ateliers Théâtre Vidy Lausanne, Ingo Groher**
Motorization, stage design **Thierry Kaltenrieder**
Costumes **Franziska Born, Bea Zimmermann**
Theater painter **Michèle Rebetz-Martin**
Accessories **Atelier CLSFX Paris, Eric Rhis**
Lighting direction **Sammy Marchina**
Sound direction **Franck Bourgoïn**
Technical production **Sarah Büchel**
Communication **Yvonne Kummer**
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General manager & booking **Alain Vuignier**
International producer **Claire Béjanin**
Artistic direction **Dimitri de Perrot, Martin Zimmermann**

Produced by Verein Zimmermann & de Perrot

Coproduced with Châteauevallon – Centre National de Création et Diffusion Culturelles; Espace Jean Legendre, Compiègne - Scène nationale de l'Oise en prefiguration; KVS - Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg; La Filature, Scène nationale – Mulhouse; Le Merlan, scène nationale à Marseille avec le Pôle Cirque Méditerranée (CREAC de Marseille, Théâtre Europe, La Seyne sur Mer); Le Volcan, Scène nationale du Havre; Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg; Maillon, Théâtre de Strasbourg – Scène européenne; Migros culture percentage; Theater Casino Zug; Théâtre de la Ville, Paris; Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne; Zürcher Theater Spektakel. With support of Ernst Göhner Stiftung. Thanks to Schauspielhaus Zürich. Final rehearsal and premiere at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne in November 2014.

Zimmermann & de Perrot are backed by a cooperative contract of support between the city of Zurich's department of cultural affairs, the cultural affairs service of Canton Zurich and Pro Helvetia, Swiss Arts Council.

Since 2006 Zimmermann & de Perrot have enjoyed the support of Foundation BNP Paribas for development of their projects.

zimmermandeperrot.com



Photo: Agustín Rebetez

I am not trying to remember myself.

I am giving up on seeking clues and collecting information, in the hope that I will thereby understand the world better. I am not a code cracking machine.

I am stopping the practice of knowing what the other thinks.

I neither orient myself based on the surroundings, nor set forth to find a place where I'm comfortable.

I shall no longer want to function.

I endure the fear that the roof will fall in on me, and that I will be buried under it.

I let go of the dread of always falling into the same hole.

I accept the feeling of not being able to be myself, and to remain misunderstood.

I head straight for confusion.

I cannot use a ceiling as a floor.

I cannot start over.

I cannot fly.

I bide my time, until objects find me.

I'm through with being my own minder.

Martin Zimmermann

Zurich 2014

POETRY OF THE ABSURD

Interview with Martin Zimmermann

After 20 years on stage, you are going solo for the first time... Finally?

Martin Zimmermann: I'd always wanted to do a solo piece, but it simply never transpired. Until now I've most often created in collaboration, mainly with Dimitri de Perrot. But now I've reached a point where it has become obvious to create a solo piece in which I'm both the director and actor—even though I knew it wouldn't be easy and I'd be putting myself out on a limb. For that reason it was—and is—important for me to know that I have a well-versed team I can count on, providing me valuable support and assistance to realize the piece.

You developed a figure for Hallo. Who is it?

MZ: When I observe the people around me, I cannot help but see figures. Every figure fascinates and touches me. Behind every face there's a multifaceted personality. Depending on the moment, mood and circumstances, we shift from one variation of the self to the next. In *Hallo* I wanted to try depicting these various facets, playing with them, distorting, accentuating and continually confounding them. It's essentially impossible to know who you really are. But to me that doesn't seem to be the central issue. For me it's more important to be able to come to terms with the different forms of the self, to accept them.

The stage design for Hallo brings to mind a shop window... a metaphor for self-dramatization?

MZ: The body is always a central part of the setting. Without one you could not have the other.

I make use of the limitations and pitfalls that arise with a flexible stage set to bring forth the body's viability in a theatrical space. The collision and interplay between the figure, décor and objects provide foundation for the content of the piece. In *Hallo* I constantly find myself in uncomfortable situations that I am forced to work my way through and liberate myself, lending the piece a tragicomic note. Using the shop-window-like frame as the setting has to do with my first profession as a window dresser: in the past I displayed products in a favorable light—now I place myself on display.

The showcase evokes thoughts about living in a world of consumption and fashion, but also such topics as “illusion and reality” and the desire for approval, to be seen and noticed. But above all, it gives pause to reflect on such existential questions as: Who do I really see when I look in the mirror? Am I looking at reality? Am I a different person than I think I am?

I have the impression that in your piece you look at the how the human being struggles through the absurdities of life day in and day out. Do you find life absurd?

MZ: I have the feeling that I will never completely understand the human being—not even myself.

Our entire existence strikes me as absurd. But that's not to say I perceive it as something negative, and it has nothing to do with resignation. On the contrary: I'm especially attracted to the absurd. It's a daily source of amusement for me. Precisely therein lie the things I find truly interesting. For instance, in the circus—in and of itself absurd—because somehow or other it's always about the same thing: survival. That's poetry for me. This form of art has always fascinated and inspired me. And with this poetry, I try to create my theater.

How does this poetry come to be?

MZ: The creative phase of a piece lasts between five and eight months. Every creative process is a new adventure. My many years of experience do not shield me from staring at the blank page each time. During my apprenticeship as a decorator and my studies at the circus school, I acquired the tools necessary to be able to make my pieces. But I'll never understand the creative process, not even after years of experience and success. The process of creating is and will always remain a great mystery to me. While working with the dramaturg Sabine Geistlich, our main concern was not about having a linear dramatization, but much more about taking a look at human existence from the outside, without moralizing or drawing conclusions. It's an attempt to portray a sketch of a life with a great deal of sensitivity.

Gwénola David in conversation with Martin Zimmermann, published in Le cirque contemporain en France, Hors série de La Terrasse, October 2014.



MARTIN ZIMMERMANN was born in 1970 and grew up in Wildberg, a small Swiss village. After studying set design, he graduated from the Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC) in France. Following his return to Zurich in 1998 he began to work as a choreographer and director. Since then, Zimmermann has worked in partnership mainly with the composer and director Dimitri de Perrot with whom he co-directs the company Zimmermann & de Perrot. They have performed their productions around the world. Several of their pieces were created at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne: *Hoi* (2001), *Gaff Aff* (2006), *Ōper Ōpis* (2008), and *Hans was Heiri* (2012). With *Hallo* (2014, premiere at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne) Zimmermann has created a solo piece for the first time. The figure in *Hallo* moves about in a space that simultaneously represents his inner and outer world, leading to a constant change of roles for the figure: at times the observer, at other times the observed. Martin Zimmermann lives and works in Zurich.

SABINE GEISTLICH studied medicine, specializing in psychiatry and psychotherapy. She has her own psychoanalytic practice in Zurich, and has worked as dramatic advisor to Zimmermann & de Perrot for the past eight years.

INGO GROHER (born 1972) trained as a ceramicist, and from that background specialized as a multitalented theater engineer. For more than 10 years he has carried out the technical concept, site management, and construction of Zimmermann & de Perrot's stages.

COLIN VALLON (born 1980, Switzerland) studied classical piano before shifting to jazz at the age of 14; he later studied at the Swiss Jazz School in Berne. In 1999 he founded the Colin Vallon trio and has been touring all over the world. Vallon is among the most respected contemporary jazz pianists in Switzerland. His records for the international label ECM Records and he has won several prizes and competitions such as the Third Montreux Jazz Festival piano competition. He composed the original music for *Hallo*. Colin Vallon lives and works in Berne, Switzerland.

EUGÉNIE REBETEZ (born 1984, Switzerland) studied dance in the arts section of a Belgian high school in Louvain-la-Neuve before joining the ArtEZ International Institute of the Arts in Arnhem, Holland, where she earned a degree in dance and choreography in 2005. She went on to work with, notably, David Zambrano in Brussels and Amsterdam. Since 2008 she has been working with Zimmermann & de Perrot as performer, assistant to the directors, and now on *Hallo* as assistant for choreography and stage direction. Rebetez created two solo shows: *Gina* (2010) and *Encore* (2013), as well as various performance projects. She lives and works in Zurich.

FRANZISKA BORN (born 1973, Switzerland) lives and works in Zurich. She originally trained as a textile designer at the Zurich School of Art and Design. She runs her own business developing products and projects for clothing and interiors, spatial applications, and costume design. In 2003 she won the Swiss Design Award. Franziska Born has been designing the costumes for Zimmermann & de Perrot since 2008.

SAMUEL MARCHINA (born 1975, Switzerland) is responsible for the lighting design of *Hallo*. After his education as an electrician (audio and video) he began working as lighting director at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne in 1999 where he is deputy technical director. He has created lighting design in the fields of dance, theater, opera, and film.

ANDY NERESHEIMER (born 1971, Switzerland) has worked as a freelance jazz and pop sound engineer for about 20 years. He records in various Swiss studios, runs his own mixing and mastering studio, and as a sound mixer accompanies live bands on tour in Switzerland and abroad. He has been Zimmermann & de Perrot's sound designer, development engineer, and live-mixer for many years.

ROGER STUDER (born 1968, Switzerland) after his studies as stage manager and lighting technician, graduated as an actor from Franz





Schubert Konservatorium in Vienna (Austria) and performed on stage at Burgtheater Vienna, Altes Schauspielhaus Stuttgart, and Rote Fabrik in Zürich. From 2002 on he has been a member of the board of management at the cultural center Rote Fabrik in Zurich and at the same time has toured as stage manager and technical director of several productions such as *Platzmangel* by the renowned director Christoph Marthaler. Since 2011 he has been working with Zimmermann & de Perrot. In *Hallo* he works on and offstage: as stage general manager and as an extra.

SARAH BÜCHEL (born 1980, Switzerland) earned a degree in engineering for event and production technology and a Bachelor of Science with honors in engineering, technical management, and as a technician. After years of technical assisting at Schauspielhaus Zürich and Deutsche Oper Düsseldorf (Germany) and as set builder and lighting designer in the field of dance, theater, film, and TV, she has been working as technical director for Zimmermann & de Perrot since 2013.

ALAIN VUIGNIER (general manager, producer) has been the tour manager, producer, and administrator for Zimmermann & de Perrot since 2006, producing and touring *Gaff Aff*, *Ôper Ôpis*, *Hans was Heiri* (presented by BAM in 2013), and *Hallo*. He started working with Martin Zimmermann and Dimitri de Perrot from the beginning of their careers in 2002 (Company

MZdP). Prior to joining Zimmermann & de Perrot he was producer and tour manager of Nomades Dance Company (Vevey, Switzerland) and artist services manager at Theaterhaus Gessnerallee in Zurich.

CLAIRE BÉJANIN (international producer) has produced theater and opera throughout the world. She has been privileged to work as executive producer for Peter Brook's Bouffes du Nord and the Aix-en-Provence Festival. As administrative director of the MC93 at Bobigny she produced many varied productions by Deborah Warner, Robert Wilson, Peter Greenaway, Philip Glass, and Lev Dodin, to name a few. Her first collaboration with BAM was in 2005 on Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychose* staged by Claude Régy and starring Isabelle Huppert, and James Thiérrée on both *Bright Abyss* (2005) and *Au Revoir Parapluie* (2007). She was the international producer for The Bridge Project (produced by BAM, the Old Vic, and Neal Street and directed by Sam Mendes). Since 2009 she has been the international producer of Zimmermann & de Perrot, touring *Chouf Ouchouf* and *Hans was Heiri* which was presented by BAM in 2013. That same year she produced *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* starring Fiona Shaw as part of the Next Wave Festival. She is currently executive producer of the newly formed Repons Foundation—New York.

ZIMMERMANN & DE PERROT — Support

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General manager and booking: Alain Vuignier
Tel. +41 43 243 39 48
alain.vuignier@zimmermanndeperrot.com

International producer: Claire Béjanin
claire.bejanin@zimmermanndeperrot.com
www.zimmermanndeperrot.com