

Verticale  
Création . Théâtre.



## **Stabat Mater Furiosa** by Jean-Pierre Siméon

Also available in original French version



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**Directed by**  
Yves Lenoir

**Text interpretation**  
Catriona Smith Morrison

**Music creation and interpretation**  
Patricia Dallio

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## About the play

*Stabat Mater Furiosa* is a refusal; the refusal of a women ravaged by war to understand her foe: man of war. Her voice is a cry for life; the cry of all women who understand that life also means death and that there is no explanation for that. But war is an unacceptable, unbelievable and infernal machine. Putting a stop to such horror, that seems so inbred in man, means going back to the beginning, back to our own childhood and back to that of our future children: In order to one day end the storms and violence of self destruction, each new child must understand that he is born with blood on his hands. And thus hope may glimmer: from the breath of life, from the sound of words and from the innocence of happy days.

## Words from the actress

We must urgently assemble the crowds. Everybody must come. Men, boys, brothers and “you who passes by” must all gather round. No need to put out chairs, we’ll sit where we can, or stand, and listen. Listen to the poem and its paradox. A deeply lyrical poem, it will both gently push and harshly bully us into questioning the very meaning of humanity.

And where words will fail, Patricia Dallio’s music and sounds will take over.

We have performed this poem in some of the most beautiful theatres in the east of France, in Paris and at the Avignon theatre festival. We recreated a public square and invited the audience to join us on stage. We wanted them to live the thought and not to analyse it as it as something “interesting” or “worth seeing”. We created a highly theatrical happening that demanded not audience participation, but active watching. Now we are returning to my original desire to perform the poem in real public spaces – peace time places that would be threatened by war: libraries, schools, houses...

And now that I have so incessantly repeated the words, in French, in English and in French again, I think I am beginning to really see what Siméon was getting at. This poem is a cry for life. The paradox is that to condemn violence one must be stronger than violence itself. And the seeds of danger are sewn in the banality of everyday life. So another kind of strength must be found, one beyond that which can be found in harsh smacking words that make us tremble as before gunfire; strength in proximity, in beautiful language and in words that recreate gentleness and vibrancy. For while there is dialogue, there is negotiation instead of fighting, and where there is a love so strong for beautiful things, war cannot resist.

Catriona Smith Morrison, July 2011

## Words from the musician

Over the last three years, during which we have performed *Stabat Mater Furiosa*, I have come to realise just how important these words are. The emotions I have felt listening to Catriona’s recital have been similar in rehearsal as in performance... with or without the set... with or without the lights...

Of course I believe in creating form. But what about those living in remote areas, with no access to the kind of theatre needed to receive our type of production?

I know these kinds of areas well, and I also know how moved the inhabitants would be to hear Catriona’s interpretation. But perhaps it would be more pertinent to gather a crowd in a communal space close by, where people know where they are, rather than expect them to make a long drive into town to attend a theatre they have little time for.

The music has become indispensable to our production; it is the counterpoint of the action. That is why I will accompany Catriona and play my part, not as I usually do with large instruments and sensors, but in a simpler more compact form with just a computer and a set of portable speakers.

Patricia Dallio, February 2011

## Stabat Mater Furiosa : an extract

I use only my voice so close to silence and  
with only the sweet resolve of the poppy  
to question you  
all I need is the vice of words  
tempered in the constant fire of sorrow  
but I don't ask  
why or how  
my question comes before the why and the how  
I ask what it is  
what is the nervous energy which runs from the  
neurons  
to the ends of the arms  
and makes the finger tug the trigger  
of an automatic weapon?  
and which is automatic the weapon or the action?  
what is this cold feeling which rules the murdering  
hand?  
what does the eye that aims really see?  
what is the noise of entrails bursting in the ear of  
the killer?  
what is the release in the muscles after killing?  
what is it to be when the other is no more?  
what is the certainty of having to kill?  
what is the feeling of having killed?  
what is the overpowering energy of the finger when  
it pushes  
the button that creates disaster?  
what is the motion of the foot that moves the dead  
body  
to make sure it is dead?  
and what is the act of mercy that puts the victim  
out of his misery?  
I know my questions  
are like asking  
what is the intention of the frost that kills the  
fruit  
of the wind that kills the branch  
of the knot of sand that kills the spring  
I know my questions  
have no answers  
and that's why I ask them  
to end for ever the rhetoric of effect and cause

Translated by Michael West

## Jean-Pierre Siméon: The author

Poet, novelist, play-writer, critic and professor in French, **Jean-Pierre Siméon** taught for many years at **L'institut universitaire de Formation des Maîtres de Clermont-Ferrand**, his town of residence. He is the author of five novels, of children's books and of eight theatre plays.

Co-founded with Christian Schiaretti of *Les Langagières Festival* at **Le Comédie de Reims** and is at present associated author at the **Théâtre National Populaire** at Villeurbanne.

Has been a member of the poetry commission at the **Centre National du Livre** and has collaborated as literature and theatre critic for the French newspaper **L'Humanité**. Participates in the editing committees of several revues and co-manages with **Jean-Marie Barnaud** the *Grands Fonds* collection at **Cheyne Editeur**. Jean-Pierre Siméon is also the artistic director of the *Printemps de Poètes festival* since April 2001;

Over the last twenty years his entire poetry collection has been published by **Cheyne Editeur**. This poetry collection, which contains around twenty volumes, has gained him several awards.

*“Poetry is more than a type of literature. It is a question of humanity, and a humane question. Not in an abstract way, but rooted in an intimate, first hand experience, one of flesh and blood. That is the essence of poetry: to synthesize abstract and reality; between body and soul.”*

## Michael West

Michael West's plays include *Foley*, *Dublin By Lamplight* and *Freefall*, all written for the acclaimed Irish theatre company **The Corn Exchange**. He has translated or adapted many texts including *Death and the Ploughman*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Lolita* and *the Seagull*. His latest play is *Conservatory*.

## Verticale

Verticale was created in 2006 by Catriona Smith Morrison during her residency at **l'Atelier du Rhin – Centre Dramatique Régional d'Alsace**, Colmar, France (now called **la Comédie de l'Est**). The company's identity does not rely on a form or field within the theatre. The company prefers to provoke collaborations with different artists in order to create new and innovative projects. Verticale is the French feminine word for “vertical”.

It is simply the structure, the backbone from which work may begin.

In line with Catriona's artistic history, the company draws diverse influences from street theatre, comedy, tragedy, written texts and improvisation. The importance lying in the creation of artistic events that get to the essence of the task in hand, using necessary and available materials.

As well as producing *Stabat Mater Furiosa* and creating *La voiture X* in 2008, the company intervenes in various local theatre workshops and in 2010 created a regular group for young people with special needs.

In 2011 Verticale produced *Bang Bang – pour Valérie (a teen clown story)*, in collaboration with the Parisian company **Les Octavio**; specialists in clowns, burlesque and comedy theatre.

## sound track

Sound track was founded in order to provoke “THE CREATIVITY, THOUGHT, EXCHANGE, PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION of contemporary music and visual arts such as that of painters, film makers, Graphic and web designers etc...”. sound track is particularly interested in creations that bring together different mediums, i.e. music and video. Projects are chosen according to collaborative history, mixed mediums and research of latest technologies.

Collaborations include

*Sonocité* – DVDRom: A laboratory of eight duos of composer/artist, composer/web designer and/or composer/film maker experiment around the theme of modern city life.

*Chantier sonographique*: Live performance in a disused building site.

These works all reflect on the diversity of the research and inventiveness that can be found in the creators invited to collaborate with sound track.

CREATIVITY, THOUGHT, EXCHANGE, PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION means the desire to communicate and share different artistic view points, thus creating new opportunities and inventing new ideas together, discovering new places, centre points and people who provoke yet more thoughts and new horizons. It means a place where bridges are built, strengthening creative forces.

## Yves Lenoir – the director

Yves Lenoir is a theatre and Opera director, actor and writer. After training and the **Conservatoire d’Art Dramatique at Clermont-Ferrand**, he then studied Lyrical Art at the **Conservatoire de Paris**, where he specialised in Renaissance and Baroque music. He then began a three year residency at the **Atelier du Rhin – Centre Dramatique Régional d’Alsace** (now called **La Comédie De l’Est**) in conjunction with **Les Jeunes Voix du Rhin – Opéra National du Rhin**. He went on to become assistant director in Opera houses all over Europe; **The DNO** in Amsterdam, **The Covent Garden Opera House** in London, the **Staatsoper Unter den Linden** in Berlin, before rejoining **Matthew Jocelyn** with the **Opera National du Rhin**, and **Willy Decker, Francisco Negrin, David Alden** and **Dale Duesing**, all at the **Opéra de Limoges**.

As theatre director, he created *La jeune fille et la mort* by *Nicolas Genka* (produced by the **Compagnie Y. Lenoir** and **la Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand – scène nationale**), *Stabat Mater Furiosa* by **Jean-Pierre Siméon** (produced by **Verticale – creation.théâtre, sound track, la Comédie De l’Est – Centre Dramatique Régional d’Alsace, l’Allan – scène nationale de Montbéliard** and **Art Zoyd**). He is currently directing *Dans la nuit la plus claire jamais rêvée* based on writings by **Philippe Jaccottet** (produced by **sound track, CCAM Vandeuvre-les-Nancy – scène nationale, Le Nouveau Relax – scène conventionnée de Chaumont**). He also has plans to direct **Debussy’s Pelléas and Mélisande**.

## The original stage production

Was created on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at l'Atelier du Rhin – Centre Dramatique Régional d'Alsace (now called La Comédie De l'Est).

And has since performed at:

TAPS – scènes Strasbourgeoises (Strasbourg), L'Allan – scène nationale de Montbéliard, la Maison de la Poésie (Paris), la Coupole (Saint Louis), le Grillen – scène musicaux de Colmar, la Caserne des Pompiers (Avignon), Le Nouveau Relax – théâtre conventionné de Chaumont, l'Espace Grün – Relais culturel de Cernay and at the CCAM scène nationale de Vandœuvre-les-nancy.



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**Produced by: Verticale-création.théâtre**

**Coproduced by: sound track – musique pour l'image et le geste (Chaumont), l'allan – scène nationale de Montbéliard, Art Zoyd – Centre Transfrontalier de Production et de Création Musicales (Valenciennes), La Comédie De l'Est – Centre Dramatique Régional d'Alsace.**

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Directed by: Yves Lenoir

Artistic collaboration: Lionel Parlier

Actress: Catriona Smith Morrison

Musical creation and interpretation (keyboard and sensors): Patricia Dallio

Musical assistant: Carl Faia

Sound engineer: Xavier Bordelais

Lighting designer: Michel Bergamin

Set designer: Mathieu Bianchi

Construction of musical sensors: Olivier Charlet

Choreography: Virginia Heinen

Sound technician: Arnaud Rollat

Lighting technician: Bathilde Couturier