

## **KEY NOTES and PERFORMANCES**

(lvh/ak d.d. 22-3-09)

### **1. Thursday June 18: BRETT BAILEY interviewed by BRENT MEERSMAN**



**BRETT BAILEY**

Brett Bailey was born in Cape Town in 1967. He studied English literature and drama at the University of Cape Town. He completed a post graduate diploma in performance studies at DasArts, School for the Advanced Study of Drama in Amsterdam. He was awarded the Standard Bank Young Artist of the Year for Drama in 2001 and won the FNB Vita awards for Best Costume Design and Best New South African Script for *Big Dada* in 2002. This provocative play also won him the Fleur de Cap director's award. Apart from being a playwright, designer, director and stylist, he is the founder of Third World Bunfight—a nonprofit South African theater company focused on forging a truly African theater with untrained black performers from local townships and rural areas. His acclaimed iconoclastic dramas, which have played throughout South Africa, Europe, Australia, Zimbabwe, Reunion Island, Uganda, and Haiti, include *Big Dada*, *Ipi Zombi*, *Inumbo Jumbo* and *The Prophet*. The last three plays “of miracle and wonder” (also published as a collection under that title) are testament to a groundbreaking voice in African theatre. His plays are considered to have ‘funky energy, haunting magic and colourful imagery’.

Bailey has directed a Dutch interpretation of the Medea saga, by Oscar van Woensel. Titled *Medeia* (2003) the work is structured out of the lyrics of contemporary rock and rap music, and it explores the fine divide between violence and desire.

In februari 2009 he curated *Infecting the City*, a new art festival that has emerged out of the Spier Performing Arts Festival. This site-specific series of collaborative and performance works transformed the Cape Town city centre into an theatre venue, pushing the boundaries of street performance.



**BRENT MEERSMAN**

Brent Meersman was born in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1967. His first job was as a news photographer in 1989 at the height of the turbulence that saw the closing days of apartheid. He has had an eclectic career – business entrepreneur, property developer, managing director of a hotel, and in the theatre world, he has acted as performing artists’

manager, producer, marketer and impresario. He has spent much of his time travelling – over 50 countries – having visited every continent including Antarctica.

Since 2003, he has been the performing arts critic for the *Mail and Guardian* covering theatre, opera, ballet and dance. In 2005, he started South Africa's first theatre blog:

[www.realreview.co.za](http://www.realreview.co.za). He teaches a semester course on Arts Journalism at the University of Cape Town in the Film and Media Studies Department.

In 2004, he had a brief career in a different kind of theatre – politics. He was the Campaign Manager for the Independent Democrats in the 2004 General Election and then served as Patricia de Lille's Chief of Staff in her parliamentary office for seven months.

His first short story was published in *The Invisible Ghetto* (1993). His poetry has appeared in *New Coin* and *Botsotso*. Meersman has also written a novel about a new opposition party headed by a charismatic woman leader fighting its first election. *Primary Coloured* gives a behind-the-scenes account of "how election campaigns, parliament, politics and money works in the new South Africa". The book is a controversial roman à clef of South African political life, drawing (often comic) portraits of well known people in politics and business who interact with the fictional characters.

## 2. Friday June 19: KOULSY LAMKO



**KOULSY LAMKO**

Koulsy Lamko was born in Chad (Central Africa), octobre 1959. He is a poet, playwright, novelist, author of scripts, cultural agent, actor and university lecturer. Lamko left his country for Burkina Faso in 1979 due to the beginning of the civil war. There he became acquainted with Thomas Sankara and involved with the Institute of Black Peoples in Ouagadougou. Lamko spent ten years promoting community theater in Burkina Faso through the Theater of the Community and helped found the International Festival of Theatre for Development. Winner of numerous prizes for his dramas and brief narratives, his work has been presented by theatercompanies in Africa, Europe and Canada.

A regular attendant at the Limousin Festival International des Francophonies, he briefly lived in Limoges, France. He then moved to Rwanda, where he read for his doctorate at the National University in Butare while founding the university's Center for the Arts and the Theater, and was teaching theater and creative writing. His doctoral thesis was on emerging theatrical aesthetics in Africa. His experience in Rwanda led him to write his novel, *La phalène des collines* ('The butterfly of the hills'), about the 1994 genocide. He produced a Poetry CD in 1997. His publications: *Le camp tend la sebile*, 1993; *N'do kela ou l'initiation avortée*, 1993; *Tout bas...Si bas*, 1995; *Comme des fleches*, 1996, *Le mot dans la rosée* in *Brèves d'ailleurs*, 1997; *La tête sous l'aiselle*, 1997; *Regards dans une larme*, 1990; *Le repos des masques*, 1995; *Sou sou sou gre gre*, 1995; *Exils*, 1993; *Aurore*, 1997; *La phalène des collines*, 2000; *Le Serpent à Plumes*, 2002; *y Au large de Karnac in Europe vue d'Afrique*, 2004.

At present, Koulsy Lamko is staying as a guest of Amsterdam Vluchtstad, in the former apartment of Anne Frank and her family at the Amsterdam Merwedeplein.

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## PERFORMANCES

### ***ORPHEUS***

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> of June



Directed and written by: **BRETT BAILEY**

Production: Third World Bunfight

Cast: Ace Bonde, Mxolisi Bosvaark, John Cartwright, Bebe Lueki, Jane Rademeyer, Abey Yakwe, Nondumiso Zweni

Music: Bebe Lueki

Soundscape: James Webb

Set and costume design: Brett Bailey

For the past fourteen years, the South African director Brett Bailey and his company Third World Bunfight have been creating provocative theatre about Africa. In *Orpheus* he takes us, as evening descends into night, to a remote location, far from the civilized world. It is a poetic remake of the mythological tale of Orpheus with an African tint. On his quest to retrieve Euridyce, we follow Orpheus into an African Underworld, where we are confronted with the eternal torments of the Third World: disease, child labour, sex slaves and refugees. But even in this hell, Orpheus' music offers comfort and underscores the potential to create a better world.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes. Total duration is 3 hours, including travel time.

Location: *Orpheus* is an outdoor event. Please wear fitting clothing. Sensible walking shoes are an absolute necessity. There is no catering at the site.

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### ***THE WHITE BODY***

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of June

Based on text on voluntary slavery of Étienne de La Boétie



Concept, choreography, scenography, video images, light and costume design: **EA SOLA**  
Music: Nguyen Xuan Son  
Readers: Hoang Cong Dang, Nguyen Kim Khanh  
Dance: Luong Xuân Thanh, Pham Chi Cuong, Ngo Thanh Phuong  
Coproductioin: Théâtre de la Ville, Hong Kong Arts Festival, Holland festival, Auckland Festival, Grand Theatre Groningen  
World premiere: 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 - Dutch premiere: 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2009

The French-Vietnamese choreographer Ea Sola has shaken the world with her evocative works. Her choreographies reveal the humanity beyond beauty and movement. For Ea Sola the body is not only physical, it is a place of history, politics and love. *The White Body*, a new work, is Ea Sola's reflection on Asia in its quest for globalisation. She turns to a seminal text of modern democracy – *The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude* by French philosopher Étienne de la Boétie – to question the place of individual freedom in this turbulent age of modernity and consumerism. Fusing theatre, dance and live music, this brand new work will stimulate mind and senses.

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes, no interval  
Language: French with Dutch surtitle  
Location: Bellevue Theatre

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### **ANTONIONI PROJECT**

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> of June

After the movie scripts of *L'Avventura*, *La Notte* and *L'Eclisse* by Michelangelo Antonioni.



Toneelgroep Amsterdam  
Director: **IVO VAN HOVE**  
Adaptation and dramaturgy: Bart Van den Eynde  
Scenography and light design: Jan Versweyveld  
Vido: Tal Yaredn  
Costume design: An d'Huys  
Caste: all actors of Toneelgroep Amsterdam  
World and Dutch premiere: 14-6-2009

Following his successful adaptation of the Luchino Visconti film *Rocco and his Brothers* for the Ruhr Triennale 2008, director Ivo van Hove has now combined a film trilogy by Michelangelo Antonioni (1912-2007) into an expansive panorama of an ever-changing world. In *L'Avventura* a young woman does not know what to make of the advances by the lover of her best friend, who has mysteriously disappeared. *La Notte* describes the disintegration of a marriage in the course of an all-night bacchanale in a luxury villa. And in *L'Eclisse* a young man and woman flirt against the background of the Milan Stock

Exchange. Three films portraying normal adults: modern people struggling with love and faithfulness but equipped with outdated moral codes in a rapidly changing world.

Duration: 4 hours, 30 minutes

Especially for the participants of the colloquium, the performance of Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of June will be subtitled in English.

Location: Municipal Theatre Amsterdam (Rabozaal)

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***HIOB*** – after the book *Hiob* by Joseph Roth

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> of June



Münchener Kammerspiele

Director: Johan Simons

Dramaturgy: Koen Tachelet

Cast: André Jung, Hildegard Schmal, Sylvana Krappatsch, Wiebke Puls, Edmund Telgenkämper, Steven Scharf, Walter Hess.

Set design: Bert Neumann

Costumes: Dorothee Curio

Music: Paul Koek

Mendel Singer, like the biblical figure Job, loses everything that is dear to him: his wife, his sons, his religion. But just as he hits rock bottom, a miracle suddenly happens: his youngest son left behind when Mendel emigrated to America, has become a successful composer and has gone in search of his father. With his son's music in his ears, Mendel Singer finally finds peace. The outstanding artistic team of Johan Simons (stage direction), Koen Tachelet (adaptation), Bert Neumann (sets) and Paul Koek (music) has produced a touching stage adaptation of Joseph Roth's *Hiob* (1930). The Austrian newspaper *Der Standard* called *Hiob* 'one of the most moving plays staged in Munich for a very long time.'

Duration: 2 hours 10 minutes, no interval

Language: German with Dutch subtitles

Location: Municipal Theatre Amsterdam (Grote zaal)