

ATELIERS MISUK

Maiti the Brave

A PERCUSSIVE FAIRY TALE FOR CHILDREN
AGED 7+



GARROWBY HILL, DAVID HOCKNEY

The Project

Maïti the Brave is a story of bravery, betrayal and forgiveness for families and young audiences. A music theatre piece, featuring song and percussion, it is performed by actress and singer, Nina Lainville and percussionist Rosie Bergonzi. This project is inspired by the extraordinary story of Maïti Girtanner, young French woman in the WW2 resistance and her meeting 30 years later with Leo, the German doctor who tortured her during the war.

“Stories are the secret reservoir of values: change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves, and you change the individuals and nations” Ben Okri

We live in a time where division, revenge and fear are put on the front page of our daily information. We need -children need- to hear different stories: Narratives where the protagonists are brave enough to live on, to contemplate empathy rather than obsessing on revenge. Stories of potential forgiveness or reconciliation with the other or themselves. As our vision and knowledge of the world gets wider by the day, we need to find ways in ourselves to cultivate empathy and create relationship and relatedness. Maïti is such a hero.

The Project

The story of Maiti the Brave deals with the very intimate and personal thematic of forgiveness or possible reconciliation (with someone/something else or with oneself) but the way we individually process these experiences will influence our lives collectively.

In this light and as part of the creating process of the show, we want to incorporate workshops with young participants with the belief they will authentically inform the writing and staging of the work for a family audience.

In the spirit of inclusivity, we are also keen to explore -within the structure and the presentation of the piece -ways to make everyone in the audience welcome, including people who find it difficult to follow the usual conventions of theatre (people with learning disabilities, movement disorders, autistic spectrum disorder and other neurological conditions).

We would like to create a trusting environment to give everyone permission to relax and respond naturally. We strongly believe that making theatre accessible to all makes it better and leads to more exciting experiences for everyone.



PAUL KLEE, SCENECIO

Maïti has the energy of a lioness and the voice of a bird. Together with her soft inner animal nestled in her body, they compose wonderful songs which Maïti sings to her whole village. Wondrous sounds and colours breathe out of her.

Her young neighbour Leo is different. He can't hear his inner soft animal and pretends he doesn't care about Maïti's songs. He is mostly alone and taciturn. But some nights, when the moon is high up in the sky and the cicadas have gone to bed, if Maïti listens carefully, she'll hear Leo sing her songs to himself alone in his house. This makes her happy and more fulfilled than anything else in her life.

The Synopsis

But, little by little, the menacing hat-gang threatens to take over the village. They hate music and colours but most of all, they hate these silly little inner soft animals who whisper songs to people. They wish to eradicate them forever. Leo is seduced by their sense of camaraderie and their strong and overriding sense of purpose. To impress them Leo decides to hurt his neighbour: one fateful day, out of sadness, rage and despair, Leo breaks Maïti forever. She cannot sing anymore and her inner soft animal is silenced.

How to keep on living with a broken body? Can Maïti ever forgive Leo? Can Leo forgive himself?

Maïti embarks on a long journey through the world to heal her broken body. Years and years later she comes back to her village. She finds Leo and together they will bravely forgive the unforgivable and forge a future in music by building a most wondrous music machine.

And so, the music played and life went on. Music was listened to, sunrises were celebrated. There was joy, there was sadness, there was a whole life lived to the full by Leo and Maïti the Brave and her scandalous act of forgiveness.

The Synopsis

Watch a short teaser
capturing the
essence of
Maïti the Brave:

[English Teaser](#)
[French Teaser](#)

*“You only
have to let
the soft
animal of
your body
love what it
loves.”*

Mary Oliver,
Wild Geese



I was inspired by Maïti Girtanner's courage, her authenticity and her incredible resilience. This story along with my own personal experience led me to a transformative reflection on empathy and the possibility, or impossibility, for forgiveness after trauma or crisis. My research has taken me to many sources: stories and testimonies of survivors and perpetrators of abuse all around the world, and medical papers about the psychological dynamics of abuse. I also had the opportunity to work with The Forgiveness Project, a UK-based charity which collects and shares stories from both survivors and perpetrators of crime and conflict who have rebuilt their lives following hurt and trauma. At the heart of The Forgiveness Project is an understanding that restorative narratives have the power to transform lives; not only supporting people to deal with issues in their own lives, but also building a climate of tolerance, resilience, hope and empathy.

My research inspired me to write a fairy tale based on my reflections which is now ready to be adapted into a music theatre piece for young audiences.

I hope to share the show with wide audiences internationally, including in the USA, the UK and France, all three of which are countries I call home. I have written the story in both English and French, and I am keen to create the work in both languages.

Notes from the author

Nina Lainville

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Team, Partners & Contacts

Nina Lainville is a Franco-British actress, singer and writer living in New York City. She performs as an actress and singer in London, France and NYC. Her vocal repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary and jazz to folk. Nina loves creating new pieces of theatre by combining styles and mediums, working with musicians, actors, dancers, composers and writers as well as working with non-professionals.

As well as performing on stage, Nina is also passionate about the social, political and healing power of creating music and art together. She has led a wide range of singing and music workshops in the UK, France and USA. She's worked and led community choirs (All Voices Choir, Le Tout Petit Festival, Clapham Community Choir, Sing Streatham!...), choirs for people affected by cancer (Sing with Us, Tenovus Cancer care and Carnegie Hall in NYC), under 5's music introduction in English and French (Tuneful Tots, Bilingual Beats, Chamber Tots at Wigmore Hall...), music workshops for people with disabilities (Live Music Now) and many more.

Nina Lainville



NINALAINVILLE.COM

Rosie Bergonzi is a graduate of The Guildhall School of Music & Drama, having completed her masters in Advanced Instrumental Study in 2016 and being awarded a Fellowship in Percussion the following year.

An active musician with notable performances including a world tour with Neneh Cherry (2018); BBC prom with the Chineke! Orchestra (2017); Musical Rumpus, an interactive opera for toddlers (2017); a sell-out performance of Drumming, performed to Steve Reich himself (2016); a solo set in the Barbican's Sound Unbound Festival (2015) and winning the Goldsmiths Concerto contest (2014) allowing her to perform as soloist in the Ney Rosaruo Vibraphone Concerto (2015).

Rosie is a founding member of the all-female percussion group Beaten Track Ensemble, a founding member of children's theatre troupe Wrangle, and she co-created Handpan and Saxophone duo, Boubakiki.

Rosie is passionate about creating music in a community setting. She leads and facilitates workshops including collaborative song-writing and instrumental pieces, and has worked with English National Opera, Spitalfields Music, Wigmore Hall, Aurora Orchestra and the Chineke! Foundation to deliver music sessions to groups across the UK.

Rosie Bergonzi



ROSIEBERGONZI.COM

Holly is a curator and producer based in London, UK. Her work spans music and interdisciplinary performance, festivals, public programming and education programs.

She is passionate about creating work which is meaningful, inclusive and impactful. Her work connects artists and audiences, through both performance and participation. She works across different art forms and cultures, and over the past decade, she has run artist residency programs, programmed festivals, produced massed singing events, launched digital festivals, and created educational courses for children, young people and adults.

From small studio spaces, underground tunnels, gardens and public plazas, to the world's most prestigious stages, Holly has worked internationally with cultural institutions including Southbank Centre (London), Lincoln Center (New York), Rockefeller Center (New York), National Sawdust (New York), Park Avenue Armory (New York), The Kennedy Center (Washington DC), The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts (LA), Contact Theatre (Manchester) and De Doelen (Rotterdam).

Holly Hunter



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