

# The Cunning Little Vixen

*“a production that jostles conventions, reinvents how we listen to and perceive classical music. A challenging work accesible to all...”*



Conceived and directed by **STEPHAN GRÖGLER**  
Set Design and Sculpture by **ARNE QUINZE**

An opera by LEOŠ JANÁČEK / abridged version for sextet by  
DIDIER PUNTOS within an installation by ARNE QUINZE  
lighting design by JESPER KONGSHAUG

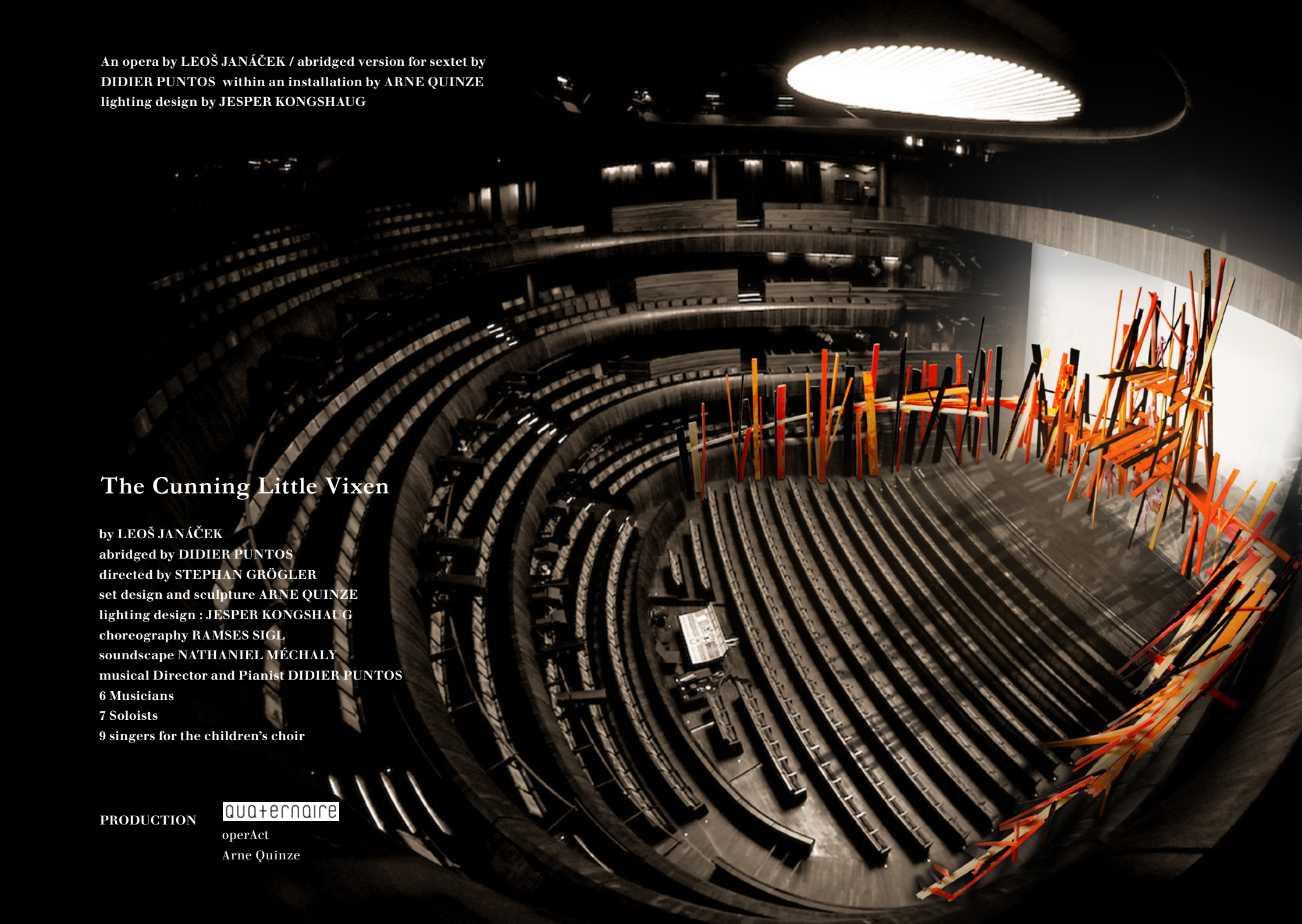
## The Cunning Little Vixen

by LEOŠ JANÁČEK  
abridged by DIDIER PUNTOS  
directed by STEPHAN GRÖGLER  
set design and sculpture ARNE QUINZE  
lighting design : JESPER KONGSHAUG  
choreography RAMSES SIGL  
soundscape NATHANIEL MÉCHALY  
musical Director and Pianist DIDIER PUNTOS  
6 Musicians  
7 Soloists  
9 singers for the children's choir

PRODUCTION

qua+ernaire

operAct  
Arne Quinze





**OPERA AS A  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY  
ART FORM**

Stephan Grögler's first project with operAct is a groundbreaking production of Leoš Janáček's opera *The Cunning Little Vixen*, bringing together international contemporary artists renowned in their different disciplines. This unique melding of talents allows each art form to build and respond to each other, so that performance space, lighting, costumes, music and soundscape all combine to produce a new and innovative relationship between opera and audience.

**AN ENCOUNTER  
WITH  
JANÁČEK**

For this first performance, Stephan Grögler has chosen Leoš Janáček's seemingly innocent and melancholy fable. At once entertaining and profound, folkloric and sophisticated, Janáček's score reveals the eternal song of the earth, exploring the continuum between human and animal and the opposition of nature and culture.



**A PERFORMANCE  
WITHIN  
A SCULPTURE**

Conceptual artist Arne Quinze is the sculptor of the installation on the performance space. Made out of recycled wood, the intricate tangles of vertical slats will provide a startling setting for the magical, mysterious and highly symbolic landscape of Janáček's Slavic forest.

The installation, My home My house My Stilthouse, is based on the idea that everyone creates borders in search of both protection and shelter. Children start building their first houses, simple booth camps under a table with a white cloth. Then we begin wearing clothes and later building our own houses, founding territories and instating limits. As the installations' boundaries go beyond the stage the spectators become an integral part of the play. This effect generates a rare interaction you rarely find in opera and dares the spectators to become aware of their own boundaries.

The plasticity of Arne Quinze's work will allow the production to be staged in a wide variety of spaces as the set can be adapted to traditional opera houses, industrial buildings, museums, contemporary art centres, urban or suburban environments as well as natural settings.

The astonishing feature of this sculpture-installation is that it will englobe both the performers and the audience. The many different spatial perspectives will create unique and constantly shifting interactions between the singers, the musicians and the audience, seated underneath and within the sculpture.





**MUSIC  
AND  
INTIMACY**

This production requires a tighter, more immediate version of Janáček's music, in keeping with Stephan Grögler's vision of the performance as an intimate space for both audience and artists. Composer Didier Puntos has devised an unusual adaptation of The Cunning Little Vixen for sextet, with flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion. The sextet will convey all the richness of the score and its intense proliferation of colours, moods and atmospheres, in a sophisticated cycle of perpetual counterpoint.

**SOUND  
AND  
SPACE**

For this intimate version of The Cunning Little Vixen, sound designer Nathaniel Méchaly will develop an innovative soundspace. The delicacy of Didier Puntos' adaptation for sextet will be subtly enhanced through the almost imperceptible manipulation of resonance and echo effects, enveloping the audience with surround sound similar to a cinema experience.

**LIGHTING  
IMAGES  
PROJECTION**

Video and lighting design will be an essential part of the production and will be created by Jesper Kongshaug, who is widely recognized as Denmark's most radical and innovative light designer. He has most recently created the light design for performances by Hotel Pro Forma, Akram Khan and Paul Ruder. Besides theatre light he creates light for buildings and architectural projects.

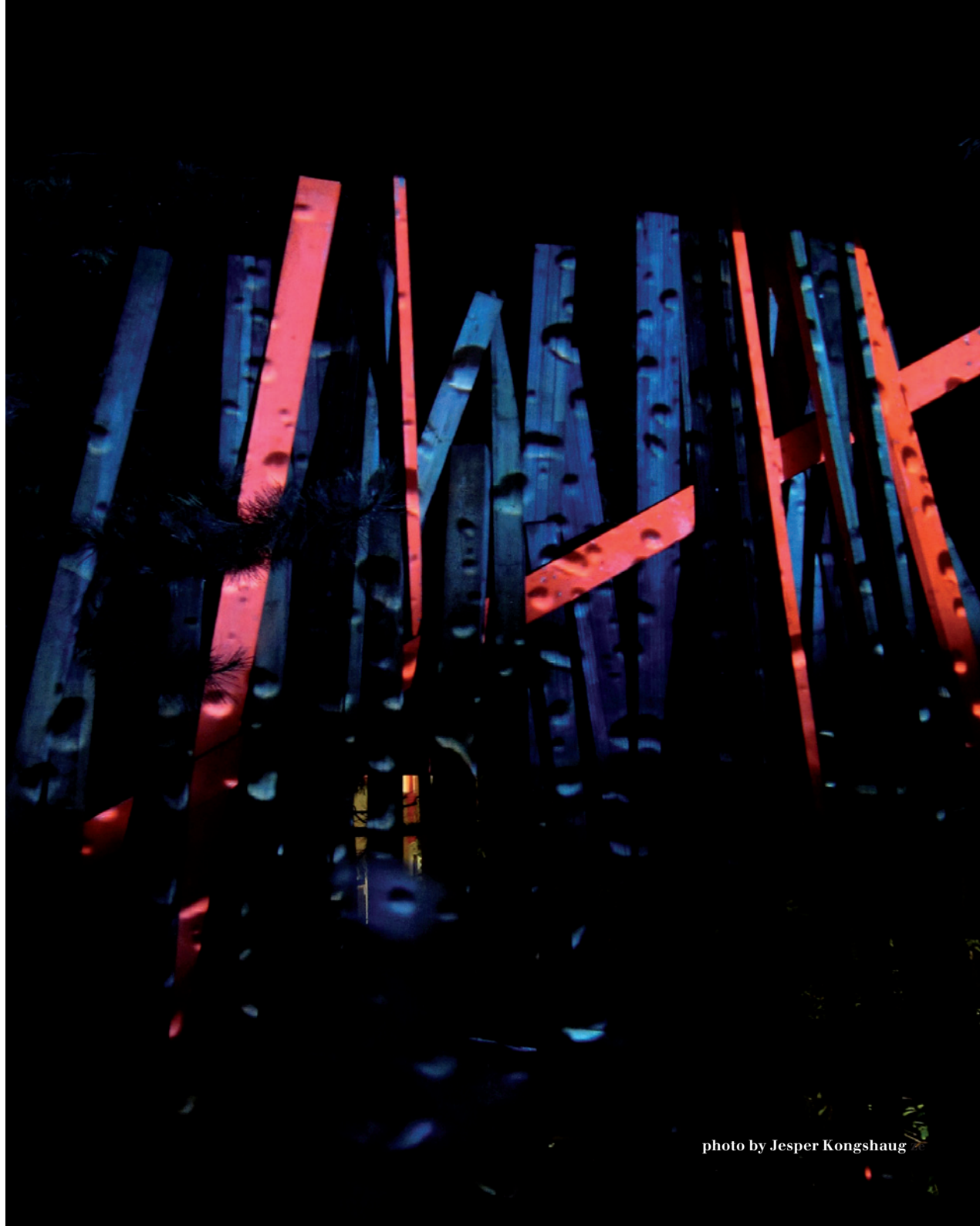
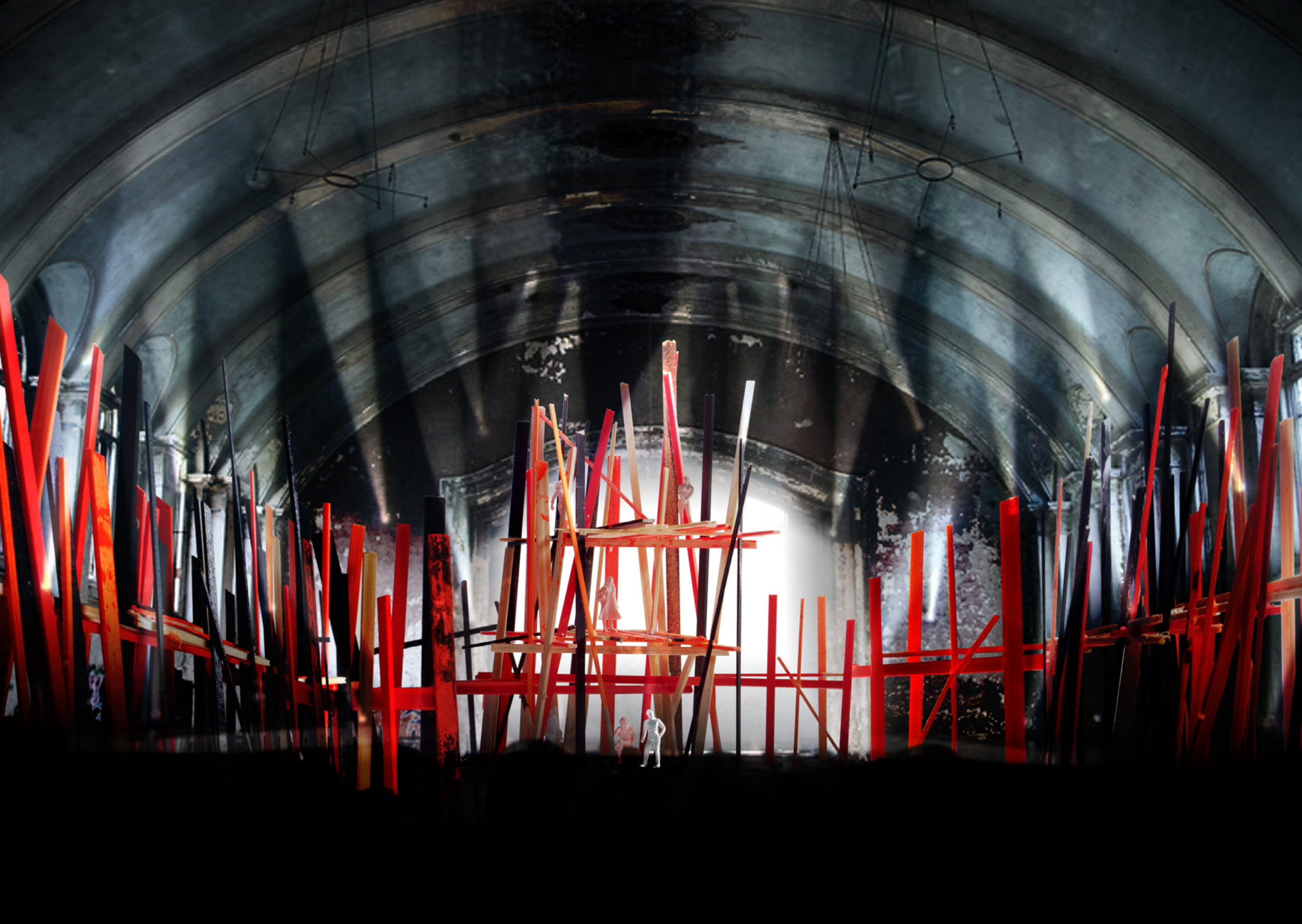


photo by Jesper Kongshaug





## POLYMORPHIC COSTUMES

The organic costumes will use texture, volume and materials, evoking the furs and coats of animals. In the sensual and highly charged atmosphere of the forest, the costumes worn by both the human and animal characters will blur the boundaries between the protagonists, creating a dream-like atmosphere in harmony with Janáček's ambivalent universe.





**A FESTIVE  
EVENT**

This original and festive production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* will be accessible to the widest possible of audiences, from young neophyte opera-goers to connoisseurs. Depending on the performing spaces, audiences will be able to watch the sculpture-installation take form and, once the performances are over, the installation may remain in place as an autonomous piece of art. As part of the wider effort to reach out to audience members and to the general public, webcams will record the progress of the production from inception to performance. Arne Quinze's team will also edit a book documenting each installation, making this *Cunning Little Vixen* a moment of intense emotion long after the last performance has ended.





# The Cunning Little Vixen

*An opera by Leoš Janáček / abridged version for sextet by  
Didier Puntos within an installation by Arne Quinze .*

## ACT 1

*Summer  
Forest*

### **Capturing the Cunning Little Vixen.**

The Badger lies dormant in the afternoon heat where hordes of flies flutter.

Dragonflies dance. The forest warden pauses in his return journey and takes a nap. In his sleep, the Grasshopper and the Cricket start to sing. A young Vixen explores the woods for the first time. The forest warden wakes up and seizes the young, unconscious Vixen.

### **The Vixen grows up in the Gamekeeper's House.**

The Vixen refuses the Dog's advances and protects herself from being badly treated by the Gamekeeper's son. She is tired of her sufferings. She dreams of being emancipated, and of her liberty. Outraged by the economic and sexual slavery of the Hens, she becomes a feminist. But the Hens' conservatism is unbearable and she kills them. She confronts the Gamekeeper and flees.young, unconscious Vixen.

## ACT 2

*Forest*

### **The Vixen looks for her lodging.**

The fleeing Vixen finds the forest, and rudely evicts the Badger. She then settles down comfortably in her new home.

*Winter  
Inn*

Drunk, the Gamekeeper hits the Schoolmaster because of his desperate passion for Terynka the gypsy. The Priest is haunted by sexual guilt and remorse. The Gamekeeper too turns out to be susceptible when he was being jeered at for having lost the Vixen. He leaves brusquely to look for her.

*Winter  
Forest*

The Vixen haunts the thoughts of the Schoolmaster and the Priest, as they stagger towards their dwelling places. Sparked off by the only passion of his life, the Schoolmaster believes he sees his fiancé Terynka. The Priest recalls his fatal meeting with a young seducer. Frenzied, the Gamekeeper looks for the Vixen in the forest.

*Spring  
Forest*

The Vixen finds a companion and is soon obliged to get married.

## ACT 3

*Forest*

The Poacher Harašta leaves for a visit to see Terynka, whom he is going to marry. He finds a dead hare, victim of the Vixen. The Gamekeeper warns him against poaching and sets up a trap for the Vixen. The Vixen and her companion play with their children. They discover the trap and scoff at the Gamekeeper's incompetence. Harašta returns for the hare. The Vixen first eludes scrutiny, but carried away by her wild mistrust of men, she gets herself killed.

*Inn*

The Schoolmaster bitterly regrets his lost opportunity – Terynka is going to marry today. Resigned to his old age, the Gamekeeper happily settles down for a calm nap in the forest.

*Summer  
Forest*

Inspired by the beauty of nature, the Gamekeeper's imagination awakens to a dazzling spirituality. He sleeps, while dreaming of the Vixen. A Frog reminds him of the immutable cycle of nature.

—

## Stephan Grögler

*Opera Director Stephan Grögler's most recent productions include Beaumarchais' trilogy: Barbieri di Seviglia, Nozze di Figaro, La Mère coupable at the Opéra de Rouen and the Opéra de Versailles.*



Born in Bern, Stephan Grögler studied violin and later directing at the Hochschule in Vienna. He soon began directing as well as designing his own productions: La Sonnambula (with Nathalie Dessay, Patrizia Ciofi and Michele Pertusi), La Bohème, La Traviata, Tancredi and La Cenerentola (Rossini), Viva la Mamma and Don Pasquale (Donizetti), Samson and Dalila, Cinderella (Massenet), Roland (Lully, with Christophe Rousset), The Beggar's Opera, The Rape of Lucretia and The Turn of The Screw (Benjamin Britten), L'Anima del Filosofo (Haydn), Der Kaiser von Atlantis (Ullmann), Der Zwerg (Zemlinsky) and Blaubart (Bartok).

His work has been presented in prestigious venues such as: The Santa Fe Festival, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, La Monnaie de Bruxelles, Le Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, Le Grand Théâtre de Genève, le Théâtre de Caen, the Operas of Marseille, Montpellier, Lyon, Nancy, Nantes and Angers, the Opéra Comique de Paris, the Vienna Staatsoper, the Bayerische Staatsoper...

In contemporary opera, he has directed La Rose Blanche (Zimmermann), La Mort de Socrate (Finzi/Carrière), Deux opéras by Peter Maxwell Davies, Eine Stravinsky-Milhaud Revue, Exercices de conversation (José Evangelista/Ionesco), Niobe and Medeamaterial (Pascal Dusapin), as well as et si Bacon, les Aveugles and Gulliver (François Cattin).

His interest in unconventional stagings led him to direct Johnny Johnson by Kurt Weill in a tent space in Caen and Acis and Galatea by Handel in an ancient church.

He has also overseen several productions for Le Bal de la Rose in Monaco, collaborating with Karl Lagerfeld and the painter-sculptor, Fernando Botero, as well as organising events for van Cleef et Arpels in Paris, New York

## Didier Puntos

*A graduate of the Ecole Normale de Paris (piano) and the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Lyon (accompaniment and composition), Laureate of the First Martigny International Chamber Music Competition (Switzerland), Didier Puntos has produced and performed numerous recitals, concerts and chamber music, in countries throughout Europe, as well as Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Morocco and Ethiopia.*



Invited regularly by the Solistes de Lyon-Bernard Tétu, he has also worked with the Debussy Quartet, the soloists of the Orchestre national de Lyon, and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Among his recordings are the complete works of André Messager's melodies (with baritone Jean-Baptiste Dumora) as well as Mozart and Beethoven's quintets for piano and woodwind.

In 1986, Didier Puntos was named conductor of the Atelier Lyrique of the Opéra de Lyon, where he adapted and performed a version for two pianos, flute and cello of Maurice Ravel's L'enfant et les sortilèges. To this day, the production has been performed worldwide more than two hundred and fifty times and was also included as part of the 2009-2010 seasons at the Opéra de Paris and the Opéra de Lausanne. The television version was awarded the Fipa d'Or in Cannes.

Other adaptations by Didier Puntos include: La Périhole by Offenbach and La Chauve-Souris by Johann Strauss (performed at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées). In 2005 and in 2007, he created a piano and woodwind quartet version of Mozart's Così fan tutte at the request of the Opéra de Paris.

Didier Puntos' activities as a composer took an important turn in April 1999 with the Opéra National du Rhin's commission of L'Ombre des Jumeaux, choreographed by Michel Kelemenis. In 2002 he produced his opera, L'Enfant dans l'Ombre at the Théâtre de Villefranche sur Saône.



## Arne Quinze

*Arne Quinze was born in 1971 in Belgium and lives and works in Sint-Martens-Latem, Belgium.*

*In the eighties he began working as a graffiti artist, and although he never finished an official art education, his artistic expression dates from this period.*



*Selection of  
Upcoming  
Exhibitions  
& Installations*

Quinze creates large and small sculptures, drawings, paintings, and large-scale installations. Smaller works, sketches, and drawings are the basis and research for his large installations. Recurring fundamentals in his oeuvre are the use of multiple types of wood, including salvaged wood; electrical colors in fluorescent paint (yellow, orange, and black); and themes referring to social interaction, communication, rhythm, and the interplay of lines.

What drives Quinze is the belief in the possible realization of an idealistic society where all individuals communicate and interact. Quinze aims to bring people together and push them into a vigorous dialogue. His installations are built to provoke reaction and to intervene in the daily life of passersby confronted with his sculptures. Besides building architectural sculptures, he creates complex art pieces and video installations inscribing his vision in society of how people see themselves and society in the present and future.

AUGMENT REALITY PROJECT ROCK STRANGERS, commissioned by Becks, New York, USA, July 2011

WORKS exhibition, ZAEK Gallery, Hamburg, Germany, June 2011

EXHIBITION, Beijing, China, 2011

METAL STILTHOUSE, private installation, Marbella, Spain, 2011

WOODEN INSTALLATION, public installation, Brisbane, Australia, 2011

METAL STILTHOUSE, Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia, 2012

INSTALLATION, public installation, Belgrade, Serbia, 2012

ROCKS STRANGERS, public installation, Belgian coast, Belgium, April 2012

INSTALLATION, public installation, Michigan, USA, 2013

*The artist is represented by Gallery Guy Pieters located in Belgium & France and Galerie Thomas Modern located in Germany.*

FOR MORE REFERENCES GO TO  
**WWW.ARNEQUINZE.TV**

## Quaternaire

*Established in 2006 and based in Paris, Quaternaire is one of Europe's leading creative producing agencies, working with international artists to develop and deliver new projects to major venues and festivals across the globe.*



*Quaternaire  
currently  
represents*

Quaternaire is widely acclaimed for its contemporary, innovative cross art form productions (operas, concerts, dance, theatre, performances and live art).

Sarah Ford trained in the fine arts and has been working in the cultural sector in France for the past 15 years, representing major artists such as Robert Lepage, La La La Human Steps, Saburo Teshigawara, Wajdi Mouawad... She launched her own company Quaternaire 5 years ago and also recently developed the European network of circular spaces (360) with La Comète in Chalons en Champagne.

Having trained as a lawyer and after a career in the private sector and 3 years of professional travel around the globe, Renaud Mesini chose on his return to France in 2000 to work in the performing arts, in financial administration. Renaud joined Quaternaire in 2008 as Financial Director, attracted by the curated roster and the company's strong commitment to artists and the arts.

AKRAM KHAN (UK)

ANDY WARHOL/DEAN AND BRITTA (USA)

CRYPTIC/CATHIE BOYD (UK)

DIAMANDA GALÁS (USA)

HANDSPRING PUPPET COMPANY/WILLIAM

KENTRIDGE (SOUTH AFRICA)

HIROAKI UMEDA (JAPAN),

HOTEL PRO FORMA (DENMARK)

OVAAL (BELGIUM)

PAN PAN (IRELAND)

RYOJI IKEDA (JAPAN)

STEPHAN GROEGLER (SWITZERLAND)

TIGER LILLIES (UK)

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