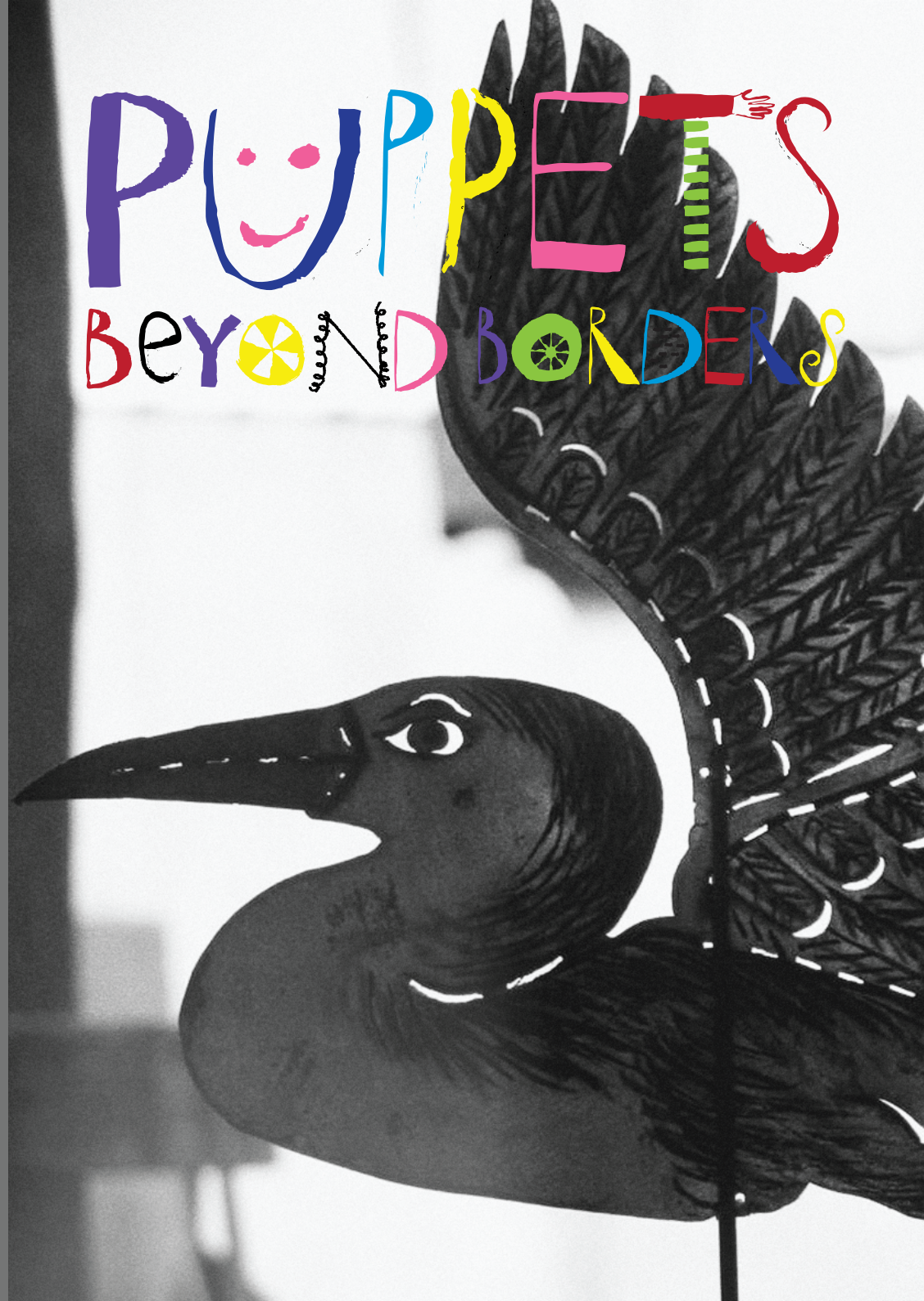


PUPPETS BEYOND BORDERS



GOETHE
INSTITUT

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FRANÇAIS

CAMBODGE



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BIRMANIE



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Préface

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Les Instituts français du Cambodge et de Birmanie ont combiné leur force avec le Goethe-Institut de Jakarta pour initier une rencontre régionale entre des marionnettistes et des artistes du théâtre d'ombres venant de Birmanie, du Cambodge et de Thaïlande d'une part, et des marionnettistes allemands et français d'autre part.

Grâce au talent et à la sensibilité interculturelle de Manuel Lütgenhorst, directeur artistique du projet, des marionnettistes d'ombres et de bois d'Europe et d'Asie du sud-est ont appris les uns des autres. Le spectacle de ce soir, qui est né de cette rencontre, constitue un superbe hommage à la modernité de cette tradition artistique vieille de plusieurs siècles et à sa formidable capacité à amuser, à émouvoir et à capter de multiples héritages. Art populaire et art religieux tout à la fois, vecteur d'expression de la critique sociale, instrument de la transmission d'un répertoire complet de contes traditionnels, l'art de la marionnette joue un rôle central et très vivant dans les cultures de l'Asie du sud-est.

• *Bon spectacle !* •



**Franz Xaver
Augustin**
.....
Directeur du
Goethe-Institut
pour l'Asie du sud-
est, l'Australie et la
Nouvelle-Zélande



**Fabrice
Etienne**
.....
Directeur de
l'Institut français de
Birmanie



**Olivier
Planchon**
.....
Directeur-adjoint de
l'Institut français du
Cambodge

Vorwort

••••

„Puppenspieler über Grenzen“ ist eine künstlerische Begegnung der besonderen Art, die das Goethe-Institut Indonesien gemeinsam mit dem Institut Français in Kambodscha und Myanmar initiiert hat: Burmesische, kambodschanische und thailändische Schattentheater-Ensembles treffen auf Puppenspieler aus Deutschland und Frankreich. Dank der kundigen Vermittlung und der interkulturellen Sensibilität von Manuel Lütgenhorst, der das Treffen als Künstlerischer Leiter betreut, kam es zwischen den Puppenspielern aus Europa und Südostasien zu einem höchst produktiven Austausch.

Die heutige Vorstellung wurde aus dieser Begegnung geboren und zollt der Modernität der jahrhundertealten Kunstform des Puppenspiels Tribut; ein Theater, das gleichermaßen unterhält, bewegt und Traditionen überliefert. In Südostasien spielt das Puppentheater bis heute eine wichtige und sehr lebendige Rolle, es ist gleichzeitig volkstümliche und religiöse Kunst, spielerischer Ausdruck gesellschaftlicher Kritik und Erzählung uralter Geschichten.

• Wir wünschen Ihnen eine wunderbare Vorstellung! •



**Franz Xaver
Augustin**
.....
Leiter des
Goethe-Instituts
in SO-Asien,
Australien,
Neuseeland



**Fabrice
Etienne**
.....
Direktor des Institut
Français Birmanie



**Olivier
Planchon**
.....
stellv. Direktor
des Institut Français
Cambodge



Preface

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The French Institutes of Cambodia and Myanmar have joined forces with the Goethe-Institut in Jakarta to initiate a regional meeting of Burmese, Cambodian and Thai Shadow Theater with German and French puppeteers: “Puppets Beyond Borders”.

Thanks to the talent and intercultural sensitivity of Manuel Lütgenhorst, Artistic Director of the project, shadow- and figure-puppeteers from Europe and Southeast Asia have learned from each other. Today’s show, which was born from this encounter, is a beautiful tribute to the modernity of this century-old artistic tradition and its tremendous capacity to amuse, move and inherit from. Folk art and religious art, means of expression of social criticism, instrument of transmission of an entire heritage of traditional tales, puppetry plays a central and very much alive role in the cultures of Southeast Asia.

• Enjoy the show ! •



**Franz Xaver
Augustin**

.....
Director of the
Goethe-Institut in
SE-Asia, Australia,
New Zealand



**Fabrice
Etienne**

.....
Director of
the French Institute
of Myanmar



**Olivier
Planchon**

.....
Deputy-Director of
the French Institute
of Cambodia



Message de Directeur Artistic / Grußwort des künstlerischen Leiters / Notes from the Artistic Director

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We are looking for indigenous culture in the expression of a common theme. We are looking for difference in expression and storytelling. We are thinking about HOME, or “Home Sweet Home”. With all the criticisms we have about our own social and political surroundings, most of us still prefer being at home to being away. Why do we rather deal with the issues we face at home, than just pack up and leave? And if we leave, what makes us want to go back home so urgently?

Puppet groups from five cultures – France, Germany, Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand – meet for an artistic exchange, exploring the theme HOME. The puppeteers engage in an initial two-week-long workshop and first shows at the Empty Space in Chiangmai. From there they travel on to Phnom Penh and Yangon for further workshops and shows, taking the art of puppetry truly beyond borders.

Each ensemble came equipped with a newly developed piece on the central theme, created purely from their own point of view, with their own cultural background. They will present these pieces to each other and weave their stories together to form one piece of puppet theatre, which will be constantly evolving and transforming throughout this artistic journey through Southeast Asia. A Burmese/Cambodian film team will accompany the tour, producing a co-directed documentary about this very unique artistic exchange.

We hope for a truly inspiring experience, opening up new perspectives on artistic production for all artists involved and taking the audience – home?



Manuel Lütgenhorst

Director Empty Space
Chiang Mai

Les Ensembles & les Pièces / Ensembles & Stücke / Ensembles & Pieces

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CAMBODIA

Royal University of Fine Arts – Theatre Department

The Shadow Theatre is a sacred art form in Cambodia. Large, highly detailed leather puppets are placed behind a white screen and their movements are highlighted by shadow. It's one of the oldest traditional forms of theater in Cambodia; it can be traced back to the Angkor period as seen on temple inscriptions. The puppets are not articulated, they are cut in great detail in buffalo skin. The artist who makes the puppets has to wear white clothes when he cuts the leather, and he has to finish his work in one day, not more.

Even after the show, the ritual continues: the puppets, which are not used for the show, are conserved in a particularly manufactured cupboard, which always needs to be placed facing the sunrise. An Chheaheng, Keo Dorivan, Sinn Samy, Pok Sarann are the four Cambodian puppeteers, who take part in the "Puppets Beyond Borders" project. They have all studied puppetry at the Theatre Department of the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, where they learned this century-old tradition of Shadow Theatre from its Masters. Their work represents the Cambodian puppets art at its best.

The Piece

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A homeless guy asks for hospitality to a peasant that agrees to his request. As a guest in the home unknown to him, he carefully observes every detail inside. When gently asked by his host to leave, he refuses and the two bear their dispute before the village chief, who asks whom the home belongs to. The unwelcomed guest is able to describe every detail of the house, while the real owner only has a very loose knowledge of his home, as details have become so ordinary and familiar to him. The village chief is convinced by the stranger,

but the owner brings case before the king.

Same questions, same answers. But the king asks one last question: How many stilts are in the house?

The owner is the only one to know, because when he built the house with his own hands, he had to carefully plant each stilt into the damp ground.

The King gives back the house to its true owner, putting the homeless guy in jail...

Les Ensembles & les Pièces / Ensembles & Stücke / Ensembles & Pieces

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FRANCE

Les Rémouleurs

The ensemble Les Rémouleurs was founded in 1983 and has developed into one of the most innovative puppet and shadow theatre groups in France. The group, which is comprised of puppeteers and comedians coming from street theatre, has made it a habit to transport their work not only to theatres but also to rather unexpected spaces – bars, farms, libraries or even churches – in order to reach out to an audience that might usually not find its way into a theatre. They are aiming to explore new artistic fields for puppetry, using texts from contemporary theatre, literature or science, while at the same time re-discovering old traditions.

The Piece

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Looking through the walls of an old Parisian building, just as if it was transparent, the piece explores what makes a home a home, wherever one is in the world – intimacy, hospitality, secret, tranquillity, shelter. At the end, a baby is born at home, and leaves home to discover the world. Home is home, only if you leave it to come back some day.

Les Ensembles & les Pièces / Ensembles & Stücke / Ensembles & Pieces

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GERMANY

Theater Handgemenge

Unlike other fringe theatre ensembles, which consist of regular members, the Theater Handgemenge more closely resembles a loose association of artists who come together in different constellations to put on theatre productions. The heart of the group is formed by the three artists Peter Müller, Pierre Schäfer and Anette Wurbs, all graduates from the renowned Ernst Busch Theatre Academy in Berlin, where they specialised in puppet theatre. Their co-productions with various theatres and fringe groups in Berlin and beyond are regular guests at international festivals.

The Piece :

Kasper – A German Piece

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The German Punch is getting worked up in his own tradition. With his very unique lack of respect towards conventions and taboos, he has taken his own and his Gretel's faith in his wooden hands over the years. But the devil continues to be a skilful seducer and the might of evil has an effect on the Punch – who is only human in the end. Whether eventually the Punch's wit and jest succeed is a question that needs to be answered anew everyday.

Les Ensembles & les Pièces / Ensembles & Stücke / Ensembles & Pieces

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MYANMAR

Htwe Oo Myanmar

Puppet theatre is one of the oldest art forms in Myanmar, having already entertained its ancient kings. The group Htwe Oo Myanmar tries to honour this century-old tradition in their work, sticking to long-established Burmese tales, characters, techniques and aesthetics. A unique approach is their strict gender-based division of the puppeteers, allowing male puppet characters to be guided only by male puppeteers and vice-versa, striving for utmost authenticity in the expressions of the puppets.

The Piece :

Mwaa

they will be a not so rich husband and a (pregnant) wife... and maybe a son

there could be zogyi, the magician, (knowledge) advising to acquire more power.

there will be a journey on a big ship, earning money, seeing the world.

There will be good income
there should be a demon, creating danger
there could be storm... and a near thinking of the ship
there should be a moment of thank you and thoughts...
there should be the god of wisdom, advising to consider

there will be a coming home, to the wife and the son

there will be a new born baby.
there should be a hermit, giving a thought

There will be the puppets, mother and father and son

And the conclusion.....

The play "Mwaa" is about the connection of love between parents and children. It is a connection that begins even before birth. For the baby in the womb, his own growing must also bring a mounting awareness of his family. No baby discovers about the love of his family after he is born.

Les Ensembles & les Pièces / Ensembles & Stücke / Ensembles & Pieces

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THAILAND

The Makhampom Theater Group

The Makhampom Theatre Group was formed in 1981, less as a company of artists, than as a group of activists. Makhampom always followed a community-oriented, educative “grassroot” - approach to theatre, it was fundamentally an experiment in theatre within a NGO movement striving for progressive social and political change. The group formed as “an ad-hoc group of teachers, journalists, actors, and dancers” and most volunteers joined with the socio-political objectives of the NGO movement. This combination of a “loosely-defined” concept of “community theatre” and the oppositional ideology of the NGO movement is the basis for Makhampom’s identity as an unique organisation in the Thai socio-cultural lexicon.

The Piece : 3 seasons house

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The atmosphere at home can change like the seasons.

The summer is like a warm, hot lover, so many emotions, that when boiling up, they start to interfere with each other.

The cold of the winter resembles an alignment from home, a cooling relationship. At the same time it is a season of freedom.

A rainy season at home brings stormy emotions and fighting, which on the one hand conveys more understanding to relationships, and a more profound love can be developed. On the other hand, it can unsettle ties which have long been tightened.

But it is these 3 seasons that make us love home.

Les Partenaires / Die Partner / The Partners

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“Puppets Beyond Borders” is a joint initiative by the German Embassy in Yangon, Goethe-Institut Indonesia, the French Institute of Cambodia and Myanmar, the META HOUSE in Phnom Penh and the Empty Space Chiang Mai. This French-German collaboration is supported by the Elysée-Fund.



Empty Space Chiang Mai

Empty Space Chiangmai (ESC), built in 1998, is an independently run and financed international Center for Arts Education, Theater and Performance, Ceramics, and Asian Puppetry. Further it provides workshops in Sustainability, Northern Thai traditional performance art, and is a yearly home for the Long Island University ‘Global College’ Program. ESC has been supported by Asian Cultural Council, (ACC), Open Society (OSI), Gitameit Music Center Yangon, Chiangmai University, Center for Media, Arts and Design, Goethe-Institut, Institut Français and numerous individuals supporters



German Embassy in
Myanmar

The Embassy represents Germany in Myanmar and promotes the political, economic cultural and academic relations between both countries. The Embassy also offers consular protection to German nationals.

Les Partenaires / Die Partner / The Partners

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Goethe-Institut

The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany’s cultural institution operational worldwide. It promotes the study of German abroad and encourages international cultural exchange. The Goethe-Institut also fosters knowledge about Germany by providing information on its culture, society and politics. With its network of 150 Goethe-Instituts, numerous Goethe Centres, cultural societies, reading rooms and exam and language learning centres in 93 countries it has played a central role in the cultural and educational policies of Germany for 60 years.



Institut Français

Succeeding to Cultures France, the French Institute, based in Paris, is the operator of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs for the promotion of language and French culture abroad. The French Institute unites under its brand a network of 130 cultural institutions around the world. In Cambodia and Myanmar, the French Institutes implement the cultural and linguistic cooperation of the Embassy of France.

Les Partenaires / Die Partner / The Partners

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META HOUSE

In 2007 German filmmaker Nico Mesterharm and his Cambodian team opened Phnom Penh's META HOUSE in association with the International Academy at the Free University of Berlin. Cambodia's first art/communication/media center holds an ample art exhibition space and an open-air media lounge offering an excellent space for artists-in-residence and visiting artists to interact.

META HOUSE actively supports Cambodian artists and promotes the development of contemporary art in Cambodia through local and international exhibitions, workshops, community-based projects, artist exchange programs and by fostering links with South East Asian and international universities, galleries, curators, non-governmental and governmental organizations.

Mentions / Impressum / Imprint

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