

Simurgh

Création 2001

Spectacle déambulatoire suivi d'un final fixe
capacité public : 5000 personnes

Inspiré du conte persan *Le langage des oiseaux*
écrit par Attar, poète du XIII^{ème} siècle

Photo: JP Estournet pour Plasticiens Volants



Avec le soutien du Festival « Juste pour Rire » de Montréal



Simurgh

Le conte persan écrit par Attar au XIII^{ème} siècle est la base de la trame du Langage des Oiseaux : “ Cette histoire est une épopée mystique où les oiseaux cherchent leur roi, le Simurgh, et arrivent finalement à son palais, derrière sept mers, pour découvrir qu'ils sont eux-mêmes le Simurgh et que le Simurgh est à la fois tous et chacun...”

(Borges)



Photo: Jean Pierre Estournet

Personne ne peut dire si cette histoire est vraie, car personne ne sait quand ni où elle s'est passée...

Un jour donc, on ne sait où, tous les oiseaux du monde s'étaient rassemblés. Le ciel et la terre étaient voilés par leur multitude. Imaginez le bruit, les couleurs !

La huppe prit la parole. Elle eut du mal, la huppe, car elle était toute petite, et il fallait que tous l'entendent. Elle leur dit : “ Oiseaux, oiseaux, oiseaux ! Nous pouvons être fiers, oiseaux ! Fiers de connaître le monde comme nul autre ne le connaît. Le ciel est notre royaume, mais il n'existe pas dans ce monde de royaume sans roi ! Comment se fait-il que nous soyons privés de roi ? ”

Les oiseaux se grattèrent la crête. “ Un roi ?... A quoi sert un roi ? ” Alors la huppe reprit la parole : “ Oiseaux, oiseaux, notre roi se nomme Simurgh ! Nul ne l'a jamais vu, mais je sais, moi, qu'il existe. Un roi habite bien dans un palais, j'ai vu ce palais, c'est bien qu'il existe, ce roi ! Oiseaux ! Il est temps de partir à la recherche de notre roi le Simurgh, Oiseaux, le Simurgh !... ”

Simurgh



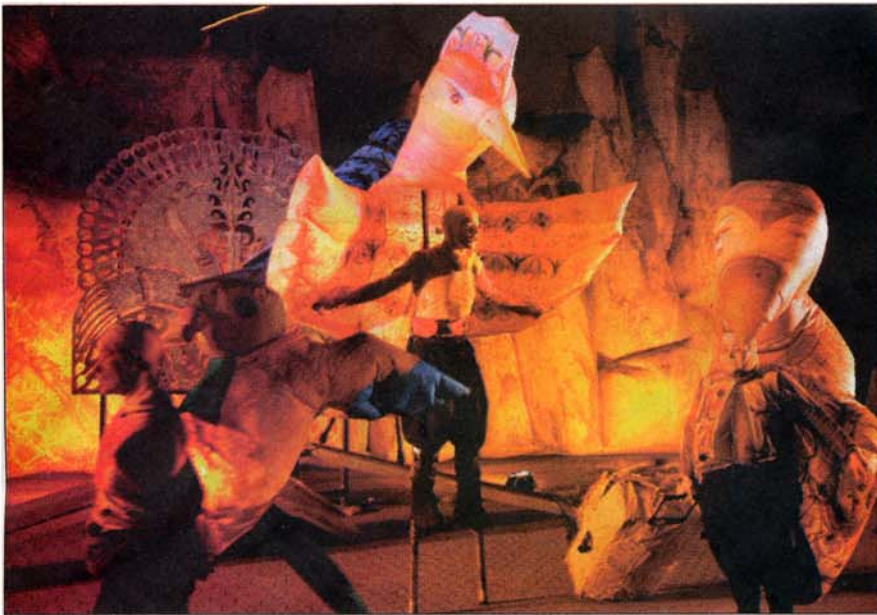
Photos : Iris Gerlach et Jean-Pierre Estournet



Simurgh à Cologne



Simurgh à Cologne



Part of the show



The big bird. —Photos by Iona Bateman

Simurgh 'a big success'

By Nancy Oteifa

KUWAIT: The show of the birds' journey "Simurgh" which is organised by Lothan Youth Achievement Centre {Loyac} took place Thursday at the Green Island park. This spectacular theatrical show performed by the famous French company Plasticiens Volants took place in the open air. Parents and children enjoyed the amazing play and the lovely weather in the Park. Loyac held this exclusive show as a gift to the Kuwaiti society.

Loyac's aim behind this play was to create environmental and cultural awareness in the society and especially for the young ones. The show was very exciting as the people followed the moving show, enjoying the wonderful loud music and listening to the story in both Arabic and English. The French actors and actresses were dressed up as birds. They seemed huge

and very expressing having colours all over their faces. They moved between the audiences pretending and acting like lost birds searching for something.

Ten students from Loyac did a wonderful show and the two scenes they performed were very remarkable and outstanding. This show tells the story of birds flying from place to place in search of a king Simurgh. Sadly at the end when they reach their destination and after facing difficulties, hunger, thirst and many other problems they realised that what they were awaiting was only illusion and that their aims are more than this. There are a lot of messages and themes behind this play such as self-satisfaction and self and soul discovery. Loyac was expecting around 1,000 people on Thursday, but more than 1,500 attended the show and were so happy with the two hours walking show.

'Simurgh' earns praise

Loyac, French join hands for class act

KUWAIT, March 16, (KUNA): The Simurgh, the phoenix in Persian legends, is "a mirror set before your eyes; and all who come before its splendor see themselves, their own unique reality" and thus everyone carries the Simurgh in them, or so concluded the birds depicted in a play by Loyac volunteers.

The play "Simurgh", presented by the French Troupe in cooperation with Loyac Thursday evening, used the whole of the Green Island as its stage and took its audience from one location to the next, following the flock of birds that were on a quest for the bird they believed would solve all their problems - Simurgh.

The play is based on the "Conference of Birds" written by the Persian writer and poet Farideddin Attar, whose work was greatly influenced by Sufism.

The performance took place in the open air and the "mobile theater" traced the movement of the birds, thus actively engaging the public in the play and challenging them — and the birds — to continue to the end.

Events begin when the hoopoe bird calls on his friends to accompany him on a long journey to find Simurgh, the wise phoenix that lived atop Mount Qaf and would end all their misery and hardships.

He warns them, however, that to get to this mountain they would have to cross over seven valleys and seven rivers — no easy task — and along the way, many birds retreat, while others die or were devoured by monsters.

Only 30 birds endure, but once they reached the Emerald Rock atop Mount Qaf, they discover that Simurgh does not exist, but that his power was inside each and every one of them and that, united, they can rid themselves of oppression.

The story is not without Sufi symbolism, and the birds' journey clearly indicates the search for truth within oneself, with the various breeds of birds representing the different types of people, while the quest is the journey of life.

The props and costumes used by the performers created a colorful scene that was complimented by the natural greenery and palm trees on the island itself.

And to add further excitement to the show, the death of birds along the way was depicted using a large white screen on which shadows were projected amidst red and yellow lighting, while music created a mystic aura throughout the show.

"Si" means thirty and "murgh" means birds, and hence "si-murgh" literally means thirty birds. The seven valleys the birds cross are the valleys of search, love, mystic apprehension, detachment, unity, bewilderment, and fulfillment in annihilation.

Turkish Daily News

31.05. 2002

'The Language of the Birds' in Istanbul

There is a different atmosphere in the streets of Istanbul during the first days of summer. France's Plasticiens Volants Street Theater, sponsored by Garanti Bank Bonus Card, joined the Istanbul Cultural and Art Foundation's 30th anniversary festivities with its newest play, "The Language of the Birds - Simurg." It was a great joy to spend an hour with the famous theater in Istanbul.

Plasticiens Volants is one of the most famous street theaters in France. The theater group, which has performed in almost every European country, has received great interest in the United States and Australia. They participated the closing ceremony of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona and the opening ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

'The Language of the Birds - Simurg'

"The Language of the Birds - Simurg" is a Persian story written by poet Ferit el Attar in the seventh century. In this mystical story, birds look for their god Simurg, when they arrive at the palace of their king after

crossing seven seas, they realize that Simurg is themselves, that they are all Simurg, as a group and as individuals.

During their long journey, the birds have many adventures. All the birds in the world feel that Azrael is vigilant. A number of birds, including the Phoenix, which receives attention with its bright colors, gather around an Eastern style cage. The birds, asking each other the question, "Why don't we have a king?" go on a long and adventurous journey when Hoopoe says that it is time to find a king.

Lead by Hoopoe, a black stork, a bird of paradise, parakeets, penguins and ducks make friends with fish while crossing the seas. Simurg gives the birds a hand and takes them to the palace where the king of the birds lives, and which is his own palace.

This is a journey of deaths, quarrels and power plays. Cocks sharpen their

France's Plasticiens Volants Street Theater, sponsored by Garanti Bank Bonus Card, joined the Istanbul Cultural and Art Foundation's 30th anniversary festivities with its newest play, "The Language of the Birds - Simurg."

spurs, old birds fight each other. Some of them escape hunters, and a night bird is killed by vultures. These scenes bring the end of the world to mind.

The show is more like a festival

Around 20 people create a different visual dimension with balloons, decoration, and cartridges. The music, performed by four musicians during the show, is important for the perception of the performance as a whole. The artists, who are musicians and play birds, try hard to make the audience members whistle like birds.

While watching the play in the streets of Istanbul, people see that birds, fish and other living creatures understand each other with a common language and create love. It is also stressed that the major reason for the fear of birds and fish is people. The Plasticiens Volants Street Theater, which performs the song of a bird whose child is killed by a hunter in Turkish, gives the message to the people in Ortakoy square, "Don't you cry like this if your child dies?"

The second performance of "The Language of the Birds - Simurg" was performed at a night show in Taksim Square May 25. Istanbulites experienced a festival that will be remembered for a long time. We should thank Garanti Bank for giving this chance to the people of Istanbul.

Istanbul - Turkish Daily News



Le langage des oiseaux

« Le Phénix apparaît dans le feu, il déploie ses ailes et rassemble les oiseaux grâce au chant de son bec. La huppe entre dans une cage pour s'adresser à cette diversité de volatiles ». Ca commence comme ça « Le langage des oiseaux », le nouveau spectacle des « Plasticiens Volants », la troupe de théâtre de rue installée à Graulhet. Après « Ngalyod », le serpent arc-en-ciel de la culture aborigène, leur précédent spectacle, les Plasticiens Volants revisitent ici une légende Perse. « Le langage des oiseaux » est un texte du 12^e siècle écrit par le poète Persan Attar. Marc Bureau en signe l'adaptation.

Cela donne un spectacle au sens plus politique que mythique où domine l'importance du groupe. Ici, le peuple va devenir roi. Pour en prendre conscience, la communau-

té des oiseaux va se frotter aux embûches de la vie, y magnifier ses joies et être confrontée à la mort. Les survivants de ces épreuves, devenues des créatures ordinaires, s'apercevront qu'ils ne forment qu'un — en dépit de leurs différences — au sein d'une société communautaire. Car au départ, en proie à des questions existentielles, les oiseaux, semblent avoir besoin d'une psychothérapie de groupe. Ces volatils volubiles se posent sans cesse la question ? Pourquoi n'ont-ils pas de roi. La huppe — une sorte d'oracle, de sage — dévoile que les oiseaux ont un roi et qu'ils s'appellent le Symurgh. La Huppe affirme même savoir où se trouve son palais.

QUÊTE EXISTENTIELLE

Suite à cette révélation, débute

alors, dans l'allégresse et l'insouciance, la recherche de ce roi; en forme de quête existentielle. Comme les chevaliers d'Arthur partant à la recherche du Graal, les oiseaux s'en vont à la quête de leur roi. La joie du départ colore le plumage des oiseaux de couleurs flamboyantes. On parade et on se pavane. Ca frétille même sous les plumes. La parade nuptiale est le premier arrêt de ce spectacle déambulatoire. Elle symbolise la vie. Mais la quête se poursuit et le chemin, forcément est semé d'anicroches. Le temps se gâte. Le combat se prépare. Vautours, corbeaux et oiseaux de mauvais augure s'immiscent dans le cortège et y apportent noirceur et rivalités. Les coups de becs pleuvent alors. La guerre fait des victimes. La mort

est ici mise en scène dans le deuxième arrêt du spectacle. Ce tableau évoque les difficultés de la vie, la méchanceté des oiseaux entre eux, et à un autre degré, la chasse, la pollution dont ils sont victimes via l'image d'un albatros figé dans le pétrole.

Les survivants du combat reprennent péniblement leur route. Épuisés, ils ont perdu de leur éclat. Avec des couleurs neutres, ils forment un groupe plus cohérent. La cage qu'ils transportent prend peu à peu l'allure d'un oiseau.

Soudain, arrivés enfin au palais, le Symurgh apparaît face à eux. Ils découvrent que ce roi est à la fois tous et chacun d'entre eux. Le Symurgh disparaît alors dans un éclair d'artifice.

Th. J.

La Depeche 9 mai 2001