

# 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*

