

Martin Zimmermann

LOUISE

Avec 4 interprètes



Mardi 3 & mercredi 4 février 2026 • 19h30
au Grand Théâtre

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Durée **1h15 (pas d'entracte)**

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Q&A 03.02.26

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Conception, mise en scène, chorégraphie

Martin Zimmermann

Créé avec & interprété par **Bérengère Bodin, Marianna de Sanctis, Rosalba Torres Guerrero, Methinee Wongtrakoon**

Création musicale **Tobias Preisig**

Dramaturgie **Sabine Geistlich**

Scénographie **Simeon Meier, Martin Zimmermann**

Collaboration artistique & chorégraphique **Romain Guion**

Création costumes **Susanne Boner**

Création lumière **Ueli Kappeler**

Création son **Andy Neresheimer**

Création régie plateau **Doris Berger**

Construction décor **Schauspielhaus Zürich,**

Metallkonstruktiv Zürich

Confection costumes & mannequins **Schauspielhaus**

Zürich, Susanne Boner

Motorisation **Markus Binder**

Assistant plateau **Noah Geistlich**

Équipe technique **Doris Berger, Franck Bourgoin, Jérôme Bueche, Ueli Kappeler, Lea Meierhofer, Andy Neresheimer, Jan Olieslagers**

Administration, distribution **Alain Vuignier**

Productrice internationale **Claire Béjanin**

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Production **MZ Atelier**

Coproduction **Schauspielhaus Zürich; Fabriktheater Rote Fabrik Zürich; Theater Winterthur; Theater Casino Zug | TMGZ; Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg; Théâtre de Carouge; Le Manège, Scène nationale de Maubeuge; maison delaculture de Bourges / Scène Nationale; Kurtheater Baden**

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Avec le soutien de **la Ernst Göhner Stiftung; de la Fondation Jan Michalski & de la Landis + Gyr Stiftung**

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Remerciements **Tanzhaus Zürich; Theater Neumarkt; Darko Soolfrank**

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Martin Zimmermann/MZ Atelier est soutenu par la ville de Zurich affaires culturelles, le service aux affaires culturelles du Canton de Zurich et Pro Helvetia – Fondation suisse pour la culture. Martin Zimmermann est artiste résident à Le Manège / Scène Nationale de Maubeuge.



Âge recommandé •
Recommended age

LOUISE

FR Elles renversent les rôles, bouleversent l'ordre établi, désobéissent aux injonctions. Elles sont anarchiques et prodigieuses. Elles sont hilarantes et mystérieuses. Elles sont féroces et exquises. Elles sont toutes Louise.

Dans un grand laboratoire étrange et pénétrant se déroulent des événements insolites : on y expérimente la matière humaine sous toutes les coutures. Quatre artistes (Bérengère Bodin, Marianna de Sanctis, Rosalba Torres Guerrero et Methinee Wongtrakoon) jouent tour à tour les dirigeantes, les cheffes, mais aussi les cobayes, les malades et les bonnes à tout faire de ce lieu où règne la tyrannie. Dans ce jeu de rôles palpitant, les corps, les esprits et les âmes s'indignent et se rebellent. Les protagonistes brouillent les pistes pour mieux sauver leur peau. Et c'est grâce à leur force inouïe, leur colère noire, leur humour déconcertant, leur chic fou et leur joie de vivre qu'elles vont infliger un revers cinglant à la tyrannie. La créativité et le plaisir défient l'abysal, et un nouveau champ des possibles s'ouvre avec éclat.

La nouvelle production de Martin Zimmermann, *LOUISE*, parle de résistance et d'envie de liberté de mouvement. Le chorégraphe suisse, plusieurs fois primé, développe depuis plus de 25 ans depuis Zurich un théâtre sans paroles dont le mélange de cirque contemporain, de danse et d'installations scéniques spectaculaires séduit le public du monde entier.

EN They reverse roles, turn the existing order upside down, disobey instructions. They are anarchic and wonderful. They are uproarious and mysterious. They are wild and exquisite. They are all Louise.

In a probing and peculiar laboratory, absurd things unfold: experiments of all kinds are conducted with human matter. Four artists (Bérengère Bodin, Marianna de Sanctis, Rosalba Torres Guerrero and Methinee Wongtrakoon) take turns in

playing the roles of leader, of office boss, and of guinea pig, patient and slave to all in this place where tyranny reigns. In this thrilling role-play, body, mind, and soul rebel and resist. The protagonists cover their tracks to save their own skin. And thanks to their incredible strength, their raging anger, their quirky humour, their glitzy glamour, and their *joie de vivre*, they slap tyranny firmly in the face. With creativity and passion, they defy the abysmal, opening up bright new prospects.

Martin Zimmermann's new work *LOUISE* is about resistance and the urge to move freely. For 25 years, the multiple award-winning Zurich-based Swiss choreographer has been creating theater with no words using a mix of contemporary circus, dance, and stage installation.

DE Sie vertauschen die Rollen, stellen die bestehende Ordnung auf den Kopf, widersetzen sich Anweisungen. Sie sind anarchisch und wunderbar. Sie sind urkomisch und geheimnisvoll. Sie sind wild und exquisit. Sie alle sind Louise.

In einem durchdringenden und merkwürdigen Labor ereignen sich absurde Dinge: Mit der menschlichen Materie werden die unterschiedlichsten Experimente angestellt. Vier Künstlerinnen (Béregère Bodin, Marianna de Sanctis, Rosalba Torres Guerrero und Methinee Wongtrakoon) spielen abwechselnd Oberhaupt, Chefin, aber auch Versuchskaninchen, Patientin und Dienerin für alles an diesem Ort, an dem die Tyrannei regiert. In diesem spannenden Rollenspiel lehnen sich Körper, Geist und Seele auf und leisten Widerstand. Die Protagonistinnen verwischen Spuren, um die eigene Haut zu retten. Und dank ihrer unglaublichen Stärke, ihrer rasenden Wut, ihres schrägen Humors, ihres Glamours und ihrer Lebensfreude versetzen sie der Tyrannei eine grosse Ohrfeige. Mit Kreativität und voller Hingabe bieten sie dem Abgründigen die Stirn und es eröffnen sich strahlende neue Möglichkeiten.

Martin Zimmermanns neue Produktion *LOUISE* erzählt von Widerstand und dem Drang nach Bewegungsfreiheit. Der vielfach preisgekrönte Schweizer Choreograf entwickelt seit

mehr als 25 Jahren von Zürich aus Theater ohne Worte,
dessen Mischung aus zeitgenössischem Zirkus, Tanz und
spektakulären Bühneninstallationen weltweit das Publikum
begeistert.



“IN THE END, LAUGHTER CAN SAVE US”

MARTIN ZIMMERMANN IN CONVERSATION WITH ARTS
AND CULTURE JOURNALIST SUSANNA KOEBERLE

Susanna Koeberle: This is the first time you’ve developed a theatre piece featuring exclusively female characters. Why is that?

Martin Zimmermann An investigation of hierarchy and resistance through a focus on women is less influenced by traditional, often male-dominated concepts and stereotypes. Such an approach allows us to explore these themes more intricately and with fewer clichés.

As a father, I have been present for the births of my two children. This experience made me acutely aware of the unimaginable challenges endured by a woman’s body throughout her life. With the four performers of different ages, we delved into the taboos surrounding birth, death, sexuality, and gender, as well as into persisting inequalities.

SK: The title of the production, Louise, pays homage to the artist Louise Bourgeois. What role does her work play in your creative process?

MZ Our piece is, in a way, a dialogue with her. Louise Bourgeois was a perpetual explorer – not only of sculptures and materials but of herself. Our Louise shares this trait. Like Bourgeois, we work from the inside out. Like Bourgeois, we are searching for truth. Such a search requires you to remove layers, be thorough, aggressive, and messy, but also intuitive. For Bourgeois, the medium was stone; for us, it’s the bodies on stage.

She perceived her sculptures to be possessed by a certain magic that gave them the power to dispel inner and outer demons. She referred to this as exorcism. Fragments and

entire episodes from her life were translated into the artworks, hovering — dream-like — between the sometimes abstract, sometimes concrete. When one of her ideas became unsettling, disgusting, or repulsive upon execution, she embraced it. And when it turned absurd or humorous, she delighted in it, as if she had outwitted life itself. We share this outlook.

SK: How important is humour to you?

MZ My background is in circus and what has influenced me the most is the figure of the clown. After all, we are all clowns. We are tragicomic, eccentric creatures with demons and strange, dark emotions — yet we are also driven by an irresistible urge to laugh at the absurd. We don't always want to take ourselves too seriously and instead see the world dance even in its most chaotic moments. What fascinates me is what the complexity of this character demands of the performers. To create humour, you need a framework, a setting. You also need rhythm and precise choreography. What appears effortless on stage is, in truth, the result of hard, gruelling work. But through this effort, the magical in the momentary becomes tangible — it is human vulnerability that shines through. In the end, perhaps laughter really can save us.

SK: How would you describe your artistic form?

MZ We create a théâtre d'objets et de personnages — object- and character-based theatre — rather than spoken drama. The characters are raw but profoundly authentic, rather close to the individuals behind. It is never about imitation or acting. This is an art form that can only arise through collaborative exploration. The characters depend on one another, as much as we do in real life. At the heart of all my work is the human being. What motivates me, ultimately, is my love for humanity and for theatre.

SK: The stage plays a central role in your work. How so?

MZ My stage designs are spatial inventions with a life of their own. The stage elements — chairs, tables, doors, or staircases — aren't mere props but autonomous protagonists. Everything is equally active. In this particular piece, the stage is a kind of laboratory, a scientific workshop, a place for research and experimentation. Louise is a moving sculpture or a moving poem.

SK: Who is your work for?

MZ Everyone! The pieces address themes that are experienced universally. I'm not interested in delivering definitive answers or judgments. For me, theatre must be kaleidoscopic — full of layers, ambiguities, and shifting perspectives.

Translated from German by Manon Lacoste.

BIOGRAPHY

Martin Zimmermann

CONCEPT, STAGING & CHOREOGRAPHY

The choreographer, theatre director, stage designer and performer Martin Zimmermann, born in 1970, grew up in the small swiss village of Wildberg and, after an apprenticeship as an interior designer, he graduated from the Centre National des Arts du Cirque (CNAC) in Paris. With his final graduation piece, *Le cri du Caméléon*, he toured around the world for three years and returned to Zurich, where he began to develop his own visual universe. For more than 25 years, he has been inventing, choreographing and staging visual and physical theatre without words, mixing contemporary circus, dance, theatre and spectacular stage installations that enthrall audiences worldwide. Making art accessible to all and campaigning for more inclusion and diversity are issues that are particularly close to his heart. For his plays, he places everyday objects in parallel, often absurd worlds. He breaks with conventions, reveals the invisible, makes the improbable appear true and encourages the audience to think in new ways. At the core of his work lies the dialogue between the human body and objects that assume lives of their own. He allows them to meet and interact with each other in unstable and sometimes threatening environments. The human being in all its complexity is at the center of his interest. His plays are performed worldwide, including the BAM New York, TOHU-Montréal, Tokyo Metropolitan Theater, Théâtre de la Ville-Paris, Barbican à Londres, Sydney Opera House, Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne, le Hongkong City Hall, Théâtre de Carouge, Schauspielhaus Zürich, Festival d'Avignon, NTGent, Semperoper Dresden and the Fondation Beyeler art museum, to name but a few. Zimmermann's stage designs have won the Swiss Design Award three times in a row. In 2021, Martin Zimmermann received the

highest Swiss theatre award, the prestigious Grand Prix Performing Arts / Hans-Reinhart-Ring 2021.

Martin Zimmermann is Artist in Residence at Le Manège / Scène Nationale de Maubeuge.





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