

press book

crush

Cie les escargots ailés
création 2022



For his latest creation, André Mandarin composed an aerial performance on the theme of love. In the same way that the new generation rebels against gender stereotypes, four artists launch themselves, both on set and on the aerial cradle, into the giddiness of love, of relationships, and of identity. Mind-blowing!

I am Brazilian. When I was a teenager, my sentimental and romantic education was dictated by my culture, and telenovelas... impossible and enthralling love stories with arguments, separations, reconciliations, and happy endings. All of it filled with myths, and macho - heteronormative stereotypes. Perhaps it is why, ever since I was a child, I was always in love or wanted to be.

the starting point

My desire to create a show about love and desires was confirmed after a workshop in a secondary school, as I noticed these questions occupied a great place in the everyday lives of adolescents.

To tackle this theme, it seemed obvious to choose adolescence as a starting point. This phase filled with "firsts", with new encounters, with romantic intrigues, where emotions, dreams, and the idealization of love coexist with break-ups and deception.

There is one word that reflects all those aspects of romantic relationships while evoking the intergenerational relation that I wanted to portray in the show. The duality of the word, between love and destruction, perfectly summarizes the ups and downs of a romantic relationship as it can both be idyllic and violent. It became its title: CRUSH.

the intention

I offer you an opportunity to imagine love in its every forms.

Who has never loved before?

Both on track and on set, there are four persons: Marie, Lili, Matias, and Serena... Each of them is looking for their other half. Between acrobatics and dizzying lifts, they make and unmake the duos according to the potential combinations.

With bare hands, hand-to-hand, on the ground and in the air, they make the notions of confrontation, desire, affection, and separation resonate.

Without any provocation or demand, these acrobats are part of a generation that yearns for more liberty and singularity, with a desire to be themselves, and more importantly to be comfortable with themselves.

They delight in erasing the rules of gender and in reversing the inequalities between man and woman... Neither boy nor girl, they refuse to be defined by others, hoping for a less stereotyped future.

For centuries, the myth of romantic love has been prancing around in the collective unconscious. The model of the ideal heteronormative couple has been encrusted in our minds thanks to clichés that were imposed upon us from birth, modeling our idea of romance. Liberating themselves from these ideals, they take possession of the games of love and desire in an impressive acrobatic act.

The "crushes" come one after the other, sometimes real, sometimes virtual, but always unique. There isn't only one way to love! Love is changing, sometimes animated – but animated towards oneself and towards others. Whether it is romantic, sentimental, affectionate, physical, chemical, or just a crush. It is triggered by an encounter, by a surprise! Something that was neither planned, nor expected: chance! A "coup de foudre", to fall in love...

And to talk about these various ways to love, I forged a parallel between the duo in the circus and the couple that they form, this intense relationship between the flyer and the catcher that requires them to trust each other.

I quickly chose the aerial lifts and the cradle act to portray such a relationship: the cradle a fixed rectangle, hanging horizontally, where the catcher hangs from his knees and, upside down, lifts the flyer.

The cradle is a matter of complementarity, trust, and reciprocal attention. Beyond the swinging, rotation, dislocation, traction and letting go of hands and feet, cradle acts are suited to the experience of tension between the high and the low, the heavens and earth, and life and death. The danger, the fear of the literal fall evokes, in this show, the fear of separations, break-ups.

The writing process went along with a technical work with two people, then four. We took the time to find the right connections, to switch partners, so each person could express themselves and showcase their own technique in the group. So the acrobatics can become a theatrical dialogue, choreographic movements, and take on their full meaning.

It is a game where the bodies launch themselves, hang, catch each other, embrace each other, fall, and love!



CRUSH - Cie Escargots Ailés © Philippe Cibille



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a myth as a source of inspiration

Among the various things I read, I got my inspiration from the ancient Greek myth of **Hermaphroditus and Salmacis**, a speech delivered by Aristophanes and written 2500 years ago by Plato in his Symposium. He explains we were once double beings, or “two halves of an orange” as the Spanish would say.

This myth is particularly interesting to me for his paradoxical and allegorical aspects, but also because of all the questions it raises: bodies merging together, eternal love, faithfulness, monogamy, androgyny, soulmates...

What if Zeus's separation was not clear-cut but fragmented? And what if we don't have only one soulmate in a lifetime but several?

Originally, there were three categories of human beings: male (man+man), female (woman+woman), and androgynous (man+woman). We were a ball with four legs and four arms, like the duo in the circus: often represented next to each other, carrying one another, or embracing each other, as if they were one. Feeling overly powerful and perfect in this way, these beings decided to try and replace the gods. Zeus, in order to calm them down, cut them in two with his thunder; a “**coup de foudre**”... (thunderbolt...)

In a panic, every half began looking for their other half – whether they were of the same or the opposite sex.

This myth around our incompleteness is the founding myth of romantic love. It remains a model for sentimental education everywhere.

From our birth, we have been lulled with sappy love stories from novels, fairytales, songs, and films. All these stories became myths and forged a confusion between true and idealized love. It can be toxic.

But nowadays that binary way of thinking doesn't allow us to understand our own reality anymore. We belong to one gender or the other, sometimes both, regardless of our sexual preferences. The color pink, a shaved head, long hair, piercings and tattoos, make-up and nail polish, the right to be shirtless... “masculinity” and “femininity” belong to everyone.

The morals and the very way we meet and flirt have evolved. Seduction has been digitalized and individualized.

the writing

The dramaturgy of CRUSH is fragmented. The outline is composed of individual scenes. There is no plot strictly speaking, and no chronology either. It allows each situation to keep a certain pace and, moreover, their ephemerality to be highlighted.

Everything is moving in this play with changing lights as its scenography plays on different levels. The device designs a playground that favors romantic encounters.

A team of creators and designers collaborated during the entire process of writing to combine their perspectives and share their expertise in order to consider the show in its entirety.



CRUSH - Cie Escargots Ailés © Philippe Cibille

the choreographical movement

I was accompanied by two artists: Damien Fournier, dancer and circus choreographer from the national center of circus arts (CNAC), and Sibille Planques, dancer and choreographer trained at the choreographic center in Toulouse.

A horizontal and a vertical reading of the show is possible thanks to the combination of different disciplines: circus, theater, and dance. In CRUSH, the danced movement is based on a vocabulary that draws its force in an organic, intuitive, and emotional mobility. It plays with motions from everyday life.

The aerial circus creates poetic moments and suspended instants. It allows the confrontation between three elements: the body, the circus apparatus, and the space that surrounds it all.

a frontal and circular stage

The creation was made for two spaces: circular and frontal. This choice is inherent to the theme of CRUSH which was written as a movement, a meeting, a manifesto that we want to share. The circular space is simple, direct, and desacralized: the frontal writing will be the same: empty, naked, making the technical elements (equipment and staff) visible to all to knock the fourth wall down.

the scenography

A cradle was designed and created especially for the show.

As in every creation of the company, I wondered about the place of the apparatus in the scenography. It has to be an integral part of the configuration and must be equipped with systems that allows it to be assembled in places that are not necessarily equipped for the circus. First in an artistic approach, but also in an approach that encourages the development and the promotion of contemporary circus, and to raise awareness among the greatest number of spectators, aiming at a local and international influence.

For CRUSH, I entrusted Mathieu Lecoutey, scenographer and constructor, with this mission.

The originality of the device which was especially created for the play lays in its double cradle, placed side by side with an angle of 45 degrees, and in its spiral staircase with steps made of corrugated iron that has been punched out so it lets the light pass through and allows us to have a glimpse at the bodies.

The stairs are a space for passage, for more or less anonymous encounters. Here, it will allow the acrobats to climb the apparatus daily, without any physical effort. It gives access to the footbridge, like a balcony that obviously reminds us of the mythical scene between Romeo and Juliet.

The landing mat, beyond the security aspect, evokes the bed which symbolizes rest, dreams, sexuality, and intimacy.

The set is filled with leaves that continuously fall from the ceiling at a different pace. A leaf detaches itself from the tree and surrenders to the wind. I see metaphors of giving up previous knowledge, losing bearings and gaining freedom. It is a transitive state, ephemeral, a detachment. It reminds me of the passing of time, the end of spring, of adolescence, of a romantic idyll...

Moreover, "autumn" can become "fall", a poetic turn.

the musical creation

The intention of composer Uriel Barthélemi

To talk about desire, about love... The music in the show is stamped with RnB, one of the most sensual music of the modern world. Uriel is a composer, drummer, and electro-acoustician. He chose to collaborate with jazz singer Claire Parsons, a Luxembourgish composer and musician, originally from Great Britain.

The partition uses a writing which blends relentless groovy rhythms with warm and sensual voices. Navigating through different moods, playing with different styles, the music explores numerous combinations of rhythms, until abolishing the notions of genre and creating its own multicultural identity.

Uriel Barthélemi plays with the illusion between instrumental and electronic timbres to add some magic to the narration, as well as a certain depth and density to the different sounds he explores.

The show is played with recorded music. A version with live music was played at Le Manège de Reims and remains a possible option for each booking.

Uriel Barthélemi,

drummer, composer, electro-acoustician.

<https://www.urielbarthelemi.com/tag/bands-musical-collaborations/>

Claire Parsons,

singer, songwriter et musician.

<https://www.parsonscloire.com>

the costumes

The intention of creator Laura ChobEAU

To support the original aim of the show, the costumes follow a masculine-feminine trend. Playing with the imposed dress codes, Laura fools around by subverting them, reinterpreting them.

To turn an object into clothes, into an accessory, something we can put on and off, hide or show. To express yourself!

To play with forms and sizes, long, short, oversize... To use it in order to structure a body, emphasize a certain personality trait or on the contrary to erase it, normalize it, or even neutralize it.

Whether they are male, female, or non-binary, it is not about dressing a gender or a sex, but a person free to define their own identity.

the light creation

The intention of creator Paul Galéron

To talk about love in the twenty-first century, the screens that surround us all must be taken into consideration: computers, phones, televisions. It is quite obvious that the means of seduction have evolved in a digitalized way.

These notions are conveyed through the presence of an object, a technological form that can be considered as reassuring as oppressing, a moving light ceiling that can go up or down. The idea of a network, that should be considered a whole in reality, composed of a multitude of screens can be recognized in the way each light is used on set: each unit exist independently but they can also function as one.



Cie les escargots ailés / andré mandarino

www.lesescargotsailes.com

The Cie Les Escargots Ailés was founded in 2000 by André Mandarino. His work was inspired by numerous aesthetic influences and completely fits in the universe of contemporary circus with innovative and eclectic propositions.

Though different collaborations, he develops a language that associates aerial circus with choreographic, musical, and theatrical forms.

Research, creation, and transmission are the keywords of his artistic project. They form the DNA of the company.

For 22 years, the company has been developing their work on contemporary circus and increasing their research on aerial disciplines as a form of expression and writing material; to ultimately find a danced movement and theatrical corporeality.

The artistic project of the company was established thanks to this research work that feeds creation and develops the audience of contemporary circus through numerous projects of artistic education.

Strongly dedicated to raising awareness among the greatest number, the company has been developing a repertoire of creations since 2012 which was created for young spectators, family shows suitable for all audiences. However, the latest creation, Crush, is aimed at an audience of teenagers and adults while remaining familial and suitable for all.

The show is the opportunity to come together as a family and to share a common experience. We want to encourage interaction, exchange, and the sharing of knowledge and experience between people of different ages.

To keep subverting the apparatus, reinventing the movement, transforming the bodies to stimulate thinking. André's double culture is an inspiration for the writing process which relies on a combination of genres. He likes to interrogate himself, to create a link between his own practice of the circus and his interrogations on the world.

artistic staff

Marie Guibert

Lili Dufour

Micaela "Serena" Leitner

Matías Cienfuegos de la Cerda

Artistic director: **André Mandarino**

Choreography assistant: **Damien Fournier**

Artistic direction Assistant: **Sibille Planques**

Music: **Uriel Barthélémi**

Singing: **Claire Parsons**

Light Creator: **Paul Galéron**

Costumes: **Laura Chobbeau**

Make-up: **Rakoo Andrade**

Construction designer: **Mathieu Lecoutey**

Stage manager: **Emmanuelle Humblot Van Raes**

Administration: **Anne Delépine**

Booking and head of production: **Magalie Masure**

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marie guibert



Marie is a circus flyer from Vietnam whose specialty is flying during the cradle act. After practicing the fixed trapeze for years, Marie fell in love with the cradle act at Arc en Cirque, a regional circus school in Chambéry, France. After three years of training at the École de cirque de Québec (ÉCQ), she flew for South America where she practiced the Korean cradle act. When she came back in France, she created the Zazú company with Lili Dufour. She mostly flies with Lili, her dedicated partner, but she likes to multiply her catchers. During her career, she had the opportunity to work with acrobats such as Lân Maurice Nguyen, Noémie Armbruster, Mourad Bouayad or Alain Reynaud. Marie is now working with other companies of contemporary circus such as La Cie Sid or La Compagnie Azein.

lili dufour



Lili was trained at the national school of circus, first in Châtellerault, France, then two years in Rosny-sous-Bois (ENACR), which belongs to the national center of circus arts (CNAC). She specialized as a catcher during the cradle act. She met Marie and, after a season in the traditional circus of Pinder, they decided to create the Zazú company. Also fascinated by gymnastics and dance, she improved her floorwork thanks to Gaga's training courses and workshops. She tries to combine her experience with the aerial circus to the bodily language of dance. She also practices the art of hair hanging, hand to hand circus, acrobatic dance, banquine and has a decided taste for acting.

Her experience allowed her to work with artists such as Nikolaus, Joao dos Santos Pereira, Les Frères Ben Aïm and Le Cheptel Aleikoum. She now performs for other companies of contemporary circus such as La Cie Sid or La Compagnie Azein.

matías cienfuegos de la cerda



Matías began his training in Chile, where he was born. He specialized at Elevarte Circo Yoga as a catcher during the cradle act. He is a versatile artist, always searching for a specific, sensible, and personal technique. As a cosmopolitan artist, both Chilean and Croatian, he travels the world while continuously improving his technique, in Argentina then in Belgium. Since then, he has worked for several companies, festivals, and circuses in Chile, Argentina, France, and Spain. He created the duo Sirca Marea with Serena.

micaela « serena » leitner



Micaela, known as Serena, was born in Argentina but her family is from Austria. She started as a gymnast. She was then trained as a flyer during the cradle act at CACU, a circus school in Argentina, where she developed her training by participating in different training courses and workshops on theater and dance. She is a hard-working and eclectic artist. Serena works for numerous Argentinian, Spanish, and French circus companies such as the Cirque Karl Borsberg, La Compagnie Cartel, and Stars Europe.

andré mandarino



André Mandarin became a director, artist, and circus professor after a double training at the national circus school of Rio de Janeiro and at the national center of circus arts in Châlons-en-Champagne, France. He started theater when he was nine and began training to be an acrobat at seventeen.

Both French and Brazilian, André Mandarin places interdisciplinarity at the center of his perspective. "Hanging" between two different cultures, his research work is based on a subtle combination of genres, swinging between a certain fluidity of movement, poetry, and technique. In 2000, he created his own company, Les Escargots Ailés, and directed: *Cirque d'un homme seul* – *D'hormone et d'esprit* – *Le passeur* – *Hurleur* – *Abiku* – *Au bord* – *It's raining cats and dogs* – *Chauve-souris* – *Loin et si proche* – *Le passeur* (transmission and rewriting).

He plays with other companies as well: Cie Fattoumi-Lamoureux, Cie les Tréteaux du Cœur Volant / Pascualito, Cie Pal Frenak, Cie La Soufflerie / Nicolas Derieux, Théâtre 80 / Françoise Longeard, Cie Acronote / Sae-Jung Kim, Cie Chloé Moglia et Mélissa Von Veply, Cie Arts des Airs / Bruno Krief et Armance Brown, Cie Eolipile / Lin Yuan Chang, Carre Blanc Cie / Michèle Dhallu.

damien fournier



Damien Fournier is a choreographer, dancer, professor, choreographic assistant, and a former circus artist trained at the national school of circus arts of Rosny-sous-Bois (ENARC) and at the national center of circus arts (CNAC) as a hand-to-hand catcher. Since he left the CNAC, he danced with Francis Viet, Pal Frenak, Pierre Doussaint, Josef Nadj, Guy Allouche, Giorgio Barberio Corsetti, Helder Seabra, Kitsou Dubois, Damien Jalet, and Alexandra Waierstall, among others.

Since 2006, he collaborated with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui as a performer, choreographic assistant, and rehearsal dancer in several shows of the company.

He draws his inspiration from a variety of sources such as acrobatic dance, acrobatic lifts, kung-fu, tango, and sign language to create a contemporary, rich, and diverse vocabulary. He teaches at the CNAC, at the municipal center of circus arts Lido in Toulouse, at the national school of dance in Marseille, and at the school of contemporary dance in Hamburg, Germany.

sibille planques



Sibille Planques is a dancer, choreographer, and dance teacher who trained in the school of dance Centre Chorégraphique in Toulouse. She holds a degree in "dance and disability" and studied the functional analysis of the bodily danced movement. She is a federal judge at the French federation of dance. She works with Nathalie Pubellier in the Conservatoire de Paris. She continued her training in Paris with Nina Dipla, Carolyn Carlson, Joseph Nadj, Daniel Leveille, and Susan Buirge. She danced with: Cie Rodolphe Viaud, Cie Wom Kim, Cie L'Estampe, Collectif DeCalm, Cie Eolipile / Lin Yuan Shang, ACTA Fabula, Israël Galvan, Cie K622 / Mié Coquempot, and Cie Par terre / Anne Nguyen.

uriel barthélémi



Uriel est batteur, compositeur, électro-acousticien. Il collabore avec de nombreux domaines du spectacle vivant depuis 2002 : danse, marionnettes contemporaines, théâtre, ainsi que les arts visuels. Conjointement à son travail de composition, il joue en tant que batteur/performeur pour plusieurs projets et mène un travail de recherche sur la liaison batterie et ordinateur. Ces multiples axes l'amènent à réfléchir sur la notion de performance et d'improvisation, à prendre en compte les notions de plasticité & physicalité du son, ainsi qu'à questionner la place de l'interprète (gestes, énergies, corporalité) et les contextes psychologiques frictionnels.

paul galéron



Paul fait ses débuts en tant que régisseur pour l'association le Chien à plumes. En 2012, il obtient son DMA régie de spectacle option lumière, au Lycée Guist'hau de Nantes. Il travaille depuis avec diverses compagnies en tant que créateur et/ou régisseur lumière : Cie Niewiem / Anne-Laure Lemaire, Cie L'Air de rien / Vincent Bardin, Cie L'Appel de la sirène / Eleonore Bovon, Cie Théâtre'âme / Danielle Israël, Cie Quotidienne / Jérôme Galan et Jean Charmillot, Cie EX' / Julien Mauclet, Cie Pièces et main d'œuvre / Gwenaël Fournier, Cie Deprofundis / Olivier Tchang Tchong, Cie la mécanique des limbes / Jade Collet, Cie Inhérence / Jean-Charles Gaume.

laura chobEAU



Laura est formée en couture flou à Reims et un diplôme d'habilleuse en région Parisienne. Elle crée en 2011 « Bouton de Fée » son auto-entreprise dans la corsetterie et le prêt à porter en parallèle de ses débuts dans le milieu du spectacle. De nombreuses collaborations avec des artistes photographes, modèles, maquilleuses et coiffeuses verront le jour. Elle se consacre désormais à l'habillage et au costume dans les théâtres et auprès des compagnies.

crush

familial show (12 years old and older)
frontal & circular

2022-2023 tour

20 & 21 oct. - 3 shows - Machinerie 54 à Homécourt
14 & 15 nov. - 2 shows - Manège Reims
24 & 25 nov. - 4 shows - Le Nouveau Relax à Chaumont
03 & 04 feb. - 3 shows - Art'Rhéna à Île du Rhin
10 feb. - 2 shows - ABC Bar le Duc
28 mar. - 2 shows - La Nef à St Dié des Vosges
09 mar. - 1 show - Le Prato à Lille
14 mar. - 2 shows - Le Cirque Jules Verne à Amiens
08 & 09 jun. - 3 shows - Le Trait d'Union à Neufchâteau

partners and sponsors

The creation is supported by the State of France, Cultural Ministry (DRAC Grand Est), the Grand Est Region, the Department of Marne, the city of Reims and ADAMI.

The creation is co-produced and hosted in residence by:

Le Manège, national stage of Reims - La Machinerie 54, subsidized theater in Homécourt - La Nef, Agglomeration Community of Saint-Dié-des-Vosges - Le PALC, national circus center of Châlons-en-Champagne - Cirk'éole, in Montigny-lès-Metz - Le Nouveau Relax, subsidized theater in Chaumont - The Grand CIEL Network (Cirque En Lien) of the Grand Est - The Théâtre de la Madeleine, subsidized theater in Troyes - Cirque Jules Verne, national circus center and street arts of Amiens

The company benefits from the professional integration assistance scheme of the national circus center in Châlons-en-Champagne, and from the Grand Est Cultural Agency.

With the support of the Quint'est Network (Burgundy Franche-Comté & Grand-Est) and La Fileuse, in the City of Reims.

press & booking



Magalie Masure

+33 (0)6 27 22 30 76

diffusion.escargotsailes@gmail.com

www.lesescargotsailes.com





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