

No reality now

VINCENT DUPONT
AND CHARLES AYATS



VINCENT DUPONT
J'y pense souvent (...)

No reality now —

What if there were other realities to which we had no access? Other lives, other worlds, other deaths, as close as they are imperceptible.

No reality now is an experiment **combining dance on stage and virtual reality**. It invites us into a beyond - inaccessible, unfathomable, unintelligible, like the death that it ventures to stage.

On stage, a storm interrupts a funeral wake. The rain begins to pour down, and the light trembles. Then suddenly, the image appears. You are not dreaming: **your VR headset has just taken control, plunging you into a parallel world.**

As you visualize yourself sitting in the very same place, the virtual copy of the stage distorts and takes liberties, **proposing a double interpretation of the piece**. A dialogue between these two visions then begins, like a diptych or a confrontation, expanding their own fields of resonance.

Teaming with immersive experience designer Charles Ayats, choreographer Vincent Dupont here revives one of his previous works, *Souffles*. Wagering that **virtual reality and live performance are complementary**, the two artists do not simply "augment" this 2010 piece; they propose **two simultaneous versions of it, the audience being able to move freely between each.**



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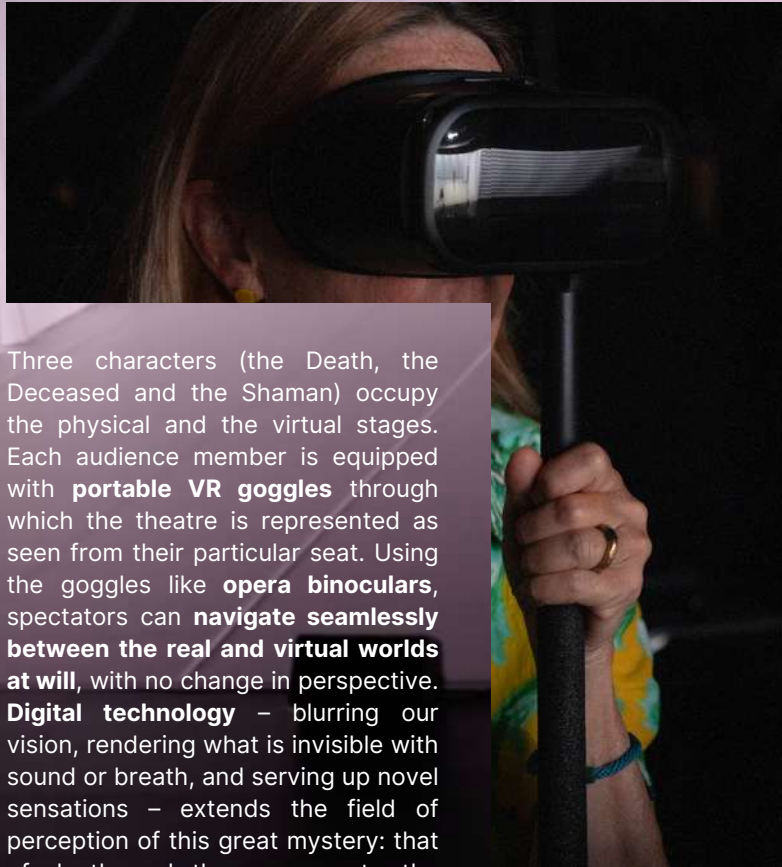


Souffles © Picture: Marc Domage



VR art direction © Florian Salabert

SPECTATOR EXPERIENCE



Three characters (the Death, the Deceased and the Shaman) occupy the physical and the virtual stages. Each audience member is equipped with **portable VR goggles** through which the theatre is represented as seen from their particular seat. Using the goggles like **opera binoculars**, spectators can **navigate seamlessly between the real and virtual worlds at will**, with no change in perspective. **Digital technology** – blurring our vision, rendering what is invisible with sound or breath, and serving up novel sensations – extends the field of perception of this great mystery: that of death and the passage to the beyond.



DARK
EUPHORIA
VINCENT DUPONT
J'y pense souvent (...)

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"Two stagings will pursue one another, from the minimalist physical stage to the virtually illustrated reflective world, linked by the dancers' performance. A diptych to be apprehended in a new way thanks to the VR goggles. We've opted for a handle attached to these "modern theatrical binoculars" to give each spectator the choice of looking at this shared collective hallucination whenever they want to."

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

No reality now uses augmented reality technology to **recreate the theatre venue, with the performers (actors/dancers) represented as avatars on a virtual stage**. Pre-recorded using motion capture sensors and a real-time 3D engine, the performers' movements and actions on stage are then reproduced in an immersive virtual environment live during the performance.



"This set-up seems to us the ideal tool; not to augment bodies and movements, but rather to alter our perceptions, to play with the subtraction, repetition, variation, or subjugation it provokes."

KEY POINTS

AN AUGMENTED DANCE AND VR PERFORMANCE

Based on the choreographic performance *Souffles* (Vincent Dupont, 2010)

- _ **100** AUDIENCE MEMBERS
- _ VR SET UP: HOMIDO VR GOGGLES + SMARTPHONES
- _ TECH SET UP: "**AUGMENTED THEATER**" (FRANCE 2030 LAUREATE)
- _ LENGTH : APPROX. 45 MIN.

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **VINCENT DUPONT** AND **CHARLES AYATS**

A Dark Euphoria and *J'y pense souvent (...)* co-production

FRENCH TOUR 2023/2024/2025

- 19+20+21 Sept. 2023, **Biennale de la Danse** - TNG au Pôle Pixel, Lyon
- 17+18 Nov. 23 : **Espace des Arts - Festival Transdanse**, Chalon-sur-Saône
- 28th Nov. 23: **Centre des Arts - Biennale Nemo**, Enghien-les-Bains
- 1+2 Dec. 23 : **CND Centre National de la Danse - Biennale Nemo**, Pantin
- 19+20 Jan. 24 : **Lieu Unique - Festival Trajectoires**, Nantes

- 2024-2025
- **Biennale Chroniques**, Aix-en-Provence
- **Octobre Numérique**, Théâtre d'Arles



watch the making of

CONCEPTION

VINCENT DUPONT

Performer and choreographer Vincent Dupont is an associated artist at the Maison de la Danse and the Lyon Biennale de la Danse for the 2023-2024 season. A multidisciplinary artist, Dupont combines diverse art forms into choreography. Theatre, film and art installations all have a place in his singular work: a dizzyingly surreal blend of the archaic with the ultramodern. In *Incantus* and *Air*, the dancers' breath is played through speakers, melding with the voices of a contemporary music ensemble. Amplifying the dancers' breath, heightens the reverberations of their movements through the space.

Dupont draws on the visual arts (Jachères improvisations is inspired by an installation by artist Stan Douglas), and the dramatic arts (*Mettre en pièce(s)* is a free adaptation of the play *Offending the Audience*). His work is both radical and transgressive. In *Hauts Cris* (miniature), Dupont sits alone in a cluttered, bourgeois living room, until his rage boils over into destruction. In *Refuge*, an allegory of duality, two manual labourers, stuck performing repetitive movements, sabotage the machine that alienates them.

In 5 apparitions successives Vincent Dupont shifts between different mediums, blurring the line between the visible and the invisible and experimenting with a diversity of images: analogue, digital and even subliminal. With pieces like *Stéréoscopia* to *No reality now*, he creates immersive installations that warp audience perception. Condensed from fragments of dreams, his work is an investigation of the line between reality and fiction, image and life, that cumulates in the mind of an audience aroused to heightened sensations.



No reality now © Picture: Marc Domage, 2023



Extraits vidéo CHIMÈRES © Images : Thibault Gabet

CONCEPTION

CHARLES AYATS

Charles Ayats is a writer director and immersive/interactive experience designer. His experience "Phi" was selected for the Arte/NFB Interactive Haiku project. He is passionate about making informative, meaningful, innovative, politically engaged work, in the form of web documentaries (such as, "Check-in", "Pas si bêtes les Animaux", and "Tati Express"), and video games, like Type:Rider, a three-part game on the history of typography, which he co-directed in 2013.

Always on the look out for new forms of story-telling, he often participates in hackathons (Artgame weekend, StoryHack Tribeca/Cern, Game in the city, HackLaMisère) as a way to enrich his previous experience and training (Cifap, Gobelins, Dixit, INA).



Extraits video CHIMÈRES © Images : Thibault Gabet

A lover of virtual reality, he adapted Marc-Antoine Mathieu's graphic novel **SENS** (2016) for VR. The work is a voyage through an invisible labyrinth exploring both the notion of the absurd and the place of the player within the game. He also co-wrote "**7 Lives**" (2019) an interactive VR experience directed by Jan Kounen, which blends interactive 360° surround video with real-time 3D graphics, and "**Le Cri**" (2019) based on the painting The Scream by Edvard Munch.

After making an augmented reality short film, **M.O.A** (2020), adapted from Alain Damasio's futuristic novel "**The Shealthies**", he is continuing his explorations in story-telling, bodies and space with live performance projects, including **Colonie.s** and **No reality now**.



VR art direction © Florian Salabert

DEVELOPEMENT ——— ——— AND PRODUCTION

No reality now is an “augmented” reworking of the work *Souffles* created by Vincent Dupont. With a floating body, a grieving man and a shaman, it explores the mystery of life...

Souffles opens on a scene of a man prostrate with sorrow before a corpse. Vincent Dupont takes this everyday scene, rarely so starkly represented on stage, as the starting point for a uniquely strange and troubling ritual of grief and farewell. The Reaper has taken his due and all that remains is an empty shell, ready for a shaman from some unknown tribe to drag into the void. Death dances with the living and the shaman. They each move through space in their own unique way, then come together to aggravate and embrace each other. There is tenderness, and even lightheartedness. Life appears, seeping in where it is least expected, in the pain of goodbye.

<< *It is also a hollow prayer, devoid of faith. It speaks of the desire to understand the unbearable and to have done with a mystery that can only be solved with our own death. A spine-chilling witchcraft ceremony, Souffles combines contemporary coolness and archaic wonderment, while persistently contending with the ever-unresolved question of being.*

>>

Rosita Boisseau – 07.04.2011

translated from the french

Le Monde



AUGMENTED STAGE —

No reality now uses technology to transform a traditional performance venue into an augmented theatre, where the physical stage and its virtual copy are combined, and the virtual experience is synchronised with the on-stage performance in real time. With local, multi-user VR streaming, the audience members seated in the venue will be able to alternate between the live performance on stage and a virtual augmented version, using a set of VR goggles they can take on and off at will.

The system is made up of various technological components (the hardware, software and control platform for the VR experience) along with the written instructions and training modules required to use them in any performance venue:



[1] **“Synchronize”**: synchronizing the dancers on stage with their virtual avatars in real time using motion capture technology.

[2] **“Twin”**: creating a digital twin of the stage and seating in the virtual world. The virtual environment must be on the same scale as the physical space occupied by the performers and the audience, so that the navigation between the two worlds is smooth and spatially coherent. This involves identifying and positioning every set of goggles, each one of which is assigned to a specific seat in the audience.

[3] **“Navigate”**: enabling all audience members to view the virtual performance simultaneously, using VR equipment fit for the purposes and constraints of live performance (ie. portable, robust, easy to use and maintain, with local, multi-user networking and IT stability, etc.): specifically, light-weight, robust, portable VR goggles, equipped with a handle like opera glasses, in conjunction with a local, multi-user, live streaming server.

This technological system has been developed with our partner **Small Creative**.

TEAM

CONCEPTION

Vincent Dupont and Charles Ayats

DISTRIBUTION

CASTING

CHOREOGRAPHY AND SCENOGRAPHY |
Vincent Dupont

DANCE | Elsa Dumontel, Lazare Huet, Mey Provost

LIGHT | Yves Godin

SOUND | Vanessa Court, Maxime Fabre

VOICES | Valérie Joly

COSTUME DESIGN | Éric Martin

COSTUME PRODUCTION | Hélène Martin Longstaff, Didier Despin

ARTISTIC COLLABORATION | Myriam Lebreton

SET DESIGN | Sylvain Giraudeau

TECHNICAL DIRECTION | Sylvain Giraudeau or Anne Wagner Dit Reinhardt

SOUND BOOTH | Brice Kartmann

GENERAL AND LIGHT BOOTH | Iannis Japiot

XR TECHNICIAN | Anastasiia Ternova

NETWORK TECHNICIAN | Thibaut le Garrec



DIGITAL EXPERIENCE REALISATION

DESIGN OF AUGMENTED STAGE DEVICE | Small Creative

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIST | Jean Dellac

VR ARTISTIC DIRECTION | Florian Salabert

TECH ARTIST | Pierre Didier

DEVELOPERS | Sofiane Tihdani, Pierre Roquin

DESIGN VR ACCESSORIES | YouFactory

PROTOTYPE

RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY | Guillaume Depestèle

3D ARTIST | Nicolas Brunet

PRODUCTION

J'Y PENSE SOUVENT (...) | Marion Gauvent, Alexandra Servigne

DARK EUPHORIA | Mathieu Rozières, Marie Point, Raphaël Chénais

SUPPORTS

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CNC - DICRéAM

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Région Île de France

Région Sud

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INDUSTRIAL PARTNERS

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Centre des Arts - Enghien les Bains

Théâtre d'Arles

J'y pense souvent (...) is supported by

DRAC ILE-DE-FRANCE

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No reality now © Picture: Marc Domege, 2023

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