

NIGHTTOWN

Director's word / Note d'intention

Why *Ulysses*? Several years ago, when I began to ponder more seriously the possibilities (artistic, creative) available within the framework of a university theatre workshop I decided Emmet—the UNIGE English department theatre group, an acronym for “Embodied Metaphors”—could, perhaps, have more to offer than a staging of already existent scripts. While conducting research from within an English department, I wondered: might not the immense fund of literary material be turned—the work of dramaturgy—into a resource allowing the exploration of new alleys within the medium of the theatre? It is the comic and subversive dimension of Joyce's language that was the most immediately appealing element in the choice of *Ulysses* as root text for our production this year. Joyce undermines the convention of the play text by appropriating its form in chapter 15 of *Ulysses*. Written as a play script—complete with dialogues, character headings, and stage directions—Joyce's reworking of the “Circe” episode from Homer's *Odyssey*, i.e. the episode in which Ulysses' crew gets turned into pigs by the powerful eponymous enchantress, proves an almost insurmountable challenge to any actual staging. It is this challenge that we have taken up, for the object of Joyce's critique: (British) imperialism, political correctness, democratic elections, the church and the zealous defendants of rigid morality seems as worthy of derision as ever. The profound subterranean current of Joyce's chapter, the concern for another person's wellbeing elliptically mounted as an allegory for the reconciliation of two of the main monotheistic world religions, Christianity and Judaism, also deserves to be heard. Brecht considered that theatre is foremost about pleasure and understanding. I hope that at least one, if not the two, will be available in what we have distilled for you tonight from Joyce's masterpiece.

Cast (in order of appearance) / Distribution

Stephen Dedalus, narrator	Natania Prezant
Lynch (Stephen's friend), Navy	Martin Décosterd
Leopold Bloom	Alexandre Flahault
Rudolph (Leopold's father), J.J. O'Molloy (barrister), Dr. Crotthers, Virag (Bloom's grandfather), Biddy the Clap (Dublin commoner)	Adam Bunzl
Ellen Bloom (Leopold's mother), Private Compton (a British soldier), Dr. Mulligan, The Mother (Stephen's mother)	Xi Li
Shebeenkeper, Dr. Dixon, Florry (a prostitute from Mrs. Cohen's brothel), Cissy Caffrey (Private Carr's girl)	Caroline Martin
Private Carr (a British soldier, Private Compton's mate), Zoe (an English prostitute from Mrs Cohen's brothel)	Inès Moubachir
Paddy Dignam (actually, his ghostly decomposing corpse after his return metempsychosis from the shape of a dog of shifting breeds), Dr. Madden, the Watch (i.e. a police officer)	Jia Liu
Late Lord Mayor Harrington (Irish politician), A.J. Dowie (a zealous Christian), Dr. Punch Costello, Cuntly Kate (Dublin commoner), Corny Kelleher	Almuth Klingner
Mrs Bella Cohen, various voices from the crowd	Krista Kaufmann
Maginni (dance Professor)	Johanna Di Dio
Voice from the gramophone	Benjamin Weeks

Artistic team / équipe artistique

Adaptation and stage direction	Nicholas Weeks
Lights	Sébastien Graz
Graphic animations	Lucas Oettli
Video camera	Nirina Imbach

Thanks / Remerciements

La Comédie de Genève
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