

# LA SERPILLERE DE MONSIEUR MUTT

Dance for a young audience  
Performance  
Marc LACOURT



Production

**MA**  
compagnie



LA MANUFACTURE  
COEN NEUVILLE-À-AGUTTAINE  
BORDEAUX • LA ROCHELLE

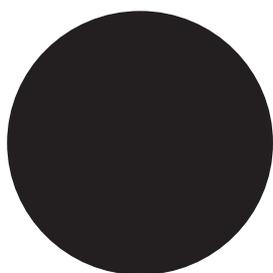


# LA SERPILLERE DE MONSIEUR MUTT

Choreographer Marc Lacourt likes to put together stories that give life to objects. He takes them out of their corner, cupboard or box and presents their contours.

Some of them step sideways, break out into a dance and under the light of the projectors or become the stars of the stage. Mr. Mutt's Mop invites you to follow the story of art, the delicacy of gestures and the pleasure of a dance with the complicity of children.

- **Dance for a young audience**
- Duration: **35 minutes** (with discussion)
- For children starting at **4-6 years old**
- **From preschool to grade 1**
- Space: **50/70 children** (school age)  
**75 people** (All Audiences)



**Teaser**  
**click here !**

## L'équipe

- Staging / choreography :  
**Marc Lacourt**
- Performance :  
**Marc Lacourt or Pierre Lison**
- Set/soun : **Pauline Valentin or Abigaïl Dutertre or Laurent Falguieras**
- Production-diffusion :  
**Manu Ragot**

## Contact

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Production-diffusion :  
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## Credits

**A coproduction of** L'éCHANGEUR CDCN Hauts de France, La Manufacture CDCN Bordeaux Nouvelle Aquitaine, Très Tôt Théâtre, scène conventionnée d'intérêt national Art, Enfance, Jeunesse - Quimper.

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**Residences:** Théâtre et conservatoire de VANVES, L'échangeur CDCN Hauts de France, La Manufacture CDCN BORDEAUX Nouvelle Aquitaine, Théâtre Jean Gagnant - CCM LIMOGES, Très Tôt Théâtre QUIMPER, THV Saint Barthelemy d'Anjou.

**MA compagnie** is support by Ministère de la Culture - DRAC Nouvelle-Aquitaine (aide à la création), Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Ville de Bordeaux.



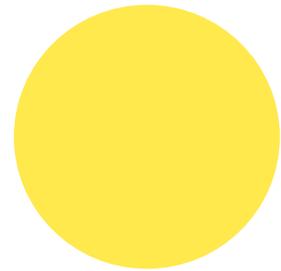
# THE SHOW

**Rubbing, polishing, cleaning, waiting in a corner, often alone or beside the broom... that's the life of Mr. Mutt's mop. And after all, if everybody sticks to their own place, there will be no trouble...**

However, all it takes is a little step sideways, a dance with the mop and you have the Mona Lisa or the great Nijinski. It slides, jumps, plays with us, spins around in the air all by itself magically, stops, waits... waits for us in the hope of inventing other dances still.

**It could be a lightning bolt.**

Or simply an ephemeral duo to imagine a big game where people laugh about the way things are. Art can be everywhere. All it takes is one step to the side, one slightly different look for things to no longer remain in their place and instead start dancing. Children will be included as active spectators, accomplice in a brief work in which everybody will take part.



# INTENTION

Back during the Ice Age, humans went into caves to draw and conduct **mysterious ceremonies**, the remains of which are still found on the walls and floors of these caves today.

They also adorned the walls with paintings and sculptures, but why is still an enigma to us.

However, this initial gesture – which could have been a scratch on the ground, polishing a stone or lining up objects – has continued to move humans, who for centuries have **improved, diverted or reinvented this artistic gesture and have continued to ask: why do we need and why did they need to draw, sculpt or dance?**

Then one day, **Marcel Duchamp presented a urinal**, a faux pas in art.

Artists no longer need to make works. They are already around us; all you have to do is turn your head, pick them out and name them. He reinvents a new idea of art. Ideas are becoming art, but the gesture of spinning, turning backwards, rubbing and balancing still remains.

**These reflections are presented during the performance of *Mr. Mutt's Mop*.**

Always in an educational way, I try to play with children's complicity around the idea of art, and maybe like Beuys says, around a work that is disguised and can be made out behind the fabric that works towards other sensory experiences.

**With softness and laughter, I try to accompany children in moving towards this mystery of art. What is it that makes it so that a moment, however short or small it may be – a dance, a gesture, a drawing –, can tell us so much about humanity?**

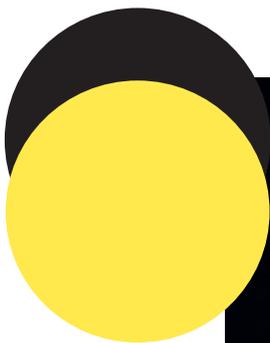
What less productive gesture than balancing an A4 sheet of paper, a chair upside down or a bicycle wheel on a stool? However, the concentration, delicacy and technique of the gesture contribute to a poetry that I find moving in its perseverance and its desire to describe the world.

## Art is subversive yet gentle.

I also believe, like Camus, that art has a social purpose; and like Beuys, that it can be therapeutic. However, I'm not looking to transmit a message with Mr. Mutt's Mop. I am looking to create the message. The gesture, the organization of the presence, the way of doing things – leaving behind clues that I hope speak about art as a place to play with our engagement with the world.

We have to look at children, who delicately spin a chair, a urinal, a dry bottle. They feel, experience that this gesture can be much more than the fragility of things when balancing a sheet of paper or scratching a cave wall. **I think that together, a first glimpse is created, and that it might be a bit subversive with respect to the reality of things and objects in life. Of course, it is mainly a big game where laughter and pleasure must always play a role.**

As opposed to *Tiondeposicom* (my previous project), I wanted to create this performance with the idea of an empty, abstract space.



**I wanted the first thing that people see to be the dance**, with its ability to move them, make them perceive a mystery without the need to explicitly relate it.

By doing so, I can delve into narrative form and leave it however I like without losing continuity.

Then, bit by bit, objects come into place, along with the touching yet absurd relationship that we sometimes maintain with them.

**I want every child to engage with the dance and objects step by step, to take part in the transformation of the space.**

## The works of art that have accompanied this work.

### Marcel Duchamp

*Ready-mades*

*In 1913, Marcel Duchamp presented a "sculpture" called Bicycle Wheel. Two everyday objects were assembled and glued to one another by the artist: a bicycle wheel and a stool. In this case, nothing was done by the hand of the artist, who was creating a three-dimensional collage by assembling two everyday objects. Originally a painter, Duchamp rose up against the painters that he referred to as "turpentine addicts" and "the retinal stupidity" associated with this art. He pronounced himself closer to the style of Leonardo, and defined painting as a mental thing. His *Nude Descending a Staircase* caused a sensation in New York and made him famous. Going beyond the nude, with it, he sought a method of reducing movement in space.*

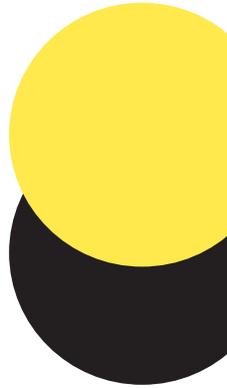


*Porte-bouteilles, (Bottle-rack) 1914 (1964)*  
Séchoir à bouteilles ou Hérisson  
(Bottle-Drier or Hedgehog)  
Galvanized iron bottle rack  
64.2 x 42 cm (diam.)

*In 1914, with the famous *Porte-bouteilles (Bottle-Rack)*, purchased at the City Hall bazaar, Duchamp created the concept of ready-mades: "an ordinary object elevated to the dignity of the work of art by the mere decision of the artist" (Abridged Dictionary of Surrealism, André Breton, 1938).*

*The hand of the artist no longer intervenes in the work. All skill and all aesthetic pleasure connected with the perception of the work are made void. The creator's traces have disappeared and been reduced to the mere choosing and titling of the object. The title which from the outset names the object most directly, *Porte-bouteilles (Bottle-Rack)*, will assume increasing importance; later the object would be rechristened *Séchoir à bouteilles ou Hérisson (Bottle-Drier or Hedgehog)**

*Yet the choice of this object was not an insignificant one. Glasses and bottles had invaded Cubist painting, from which Duchamp wished to escape since it was, in his words, like a «straitjacket». Analytical Cubism's bottles and glasses broken down into countless transparent facets were succeeded by the real object, opaque and made of iron, welcoming them with the prickliness of a hedgehog.*





*Fontaine (Fountain), 1917*  
Upturned urinal, porcelain  
63 x 48 x 35 cm

In 1915 Duchamp left for the United States. Continuing with his ready-mades, he added inscriptions to them, like the one on a snow shovel, *In Advance of a Broken Arm*. It is only verbal logic that, through humor or puns, transforms the ordinary object into something else: a precipitation of the likely future. Duchamp was to lay increasing stress on this verbal dimension which, by insinuation, involved the mind of the viewer in the perception of the work. The delectation of the eye was succeeded by that of the mind.

His best-known ready-made, the famous upturned urinal rechristened *Fontaine*, dates from 1917. When it was submitted for exhibition at the Society of Independent Artists in New York, under the pseudonym R. Mutt, the jury to which he himself belonged rejected it, and the epic success of the ready-mades got under way with this scandal. The original ready-mades have disappeared and replicas remain which, as Duchamp put it, «convey the same message as the original». In his view, aesthetic criteria alone are not enough to define what art is and what it is not, and it will be the artist who calls into question the limits of art by pushing them further and further. The disappearance of the utility of the object proclaimed by its installation in a museum environment, and the new meaning conferred upon it by its title, would henceforth suffice to qualify as a work of art what had not been so a priori. Duchamp's radical and innovative approach laid the foundation for a great many interrogations of the status of art in the twentieth century, and for a breakthrough of the object into the domain of the plastic arts.

### **Joseph Beuys (1921-1986)**

Beuys expanded the idea of art to reality as a whole. His ritual actions aimed to release the plurality of the senses. Art would have a therapeutic virtue and the artist would be akin to a shaman. Objects and materials linked to an entirely personal symbolism anchored in his biography were involved in an art with social aims in a sick society.



*Infiltration Homogen for Grand Piano, 1966*  
Grand piano covered with felt and fabrics  
100 x 152 x 240 cm

By associating a piano, a musical instrument and carrier of sound waves, with felt, a material symbolic of life and survival for the artist, Beuys aimed to make this object an energy vector. The piano's sound potential is filtered through the felt. The object is disguised and can be made out behind the fabric which opens it to other sensory experiences. «The two crosses», said Beuys, «means the urgency of the danger that threatens if we remain silent [...]». Such an object is devised to encourage debate and in no case as an aesthetic product.»

Robert Filliou



The way it came up in this room is strange. During a rehearsal at the éCHANGEUR

CDCN studio, since the beginning of this project, I felt like having a washing tray, a mop, and a broom to show a first bit of the work. Mélanie, a mediator at the time, told me that that thing at the edge of the carpet (washing tray-mop-broom) was a work by Robert Filliou...

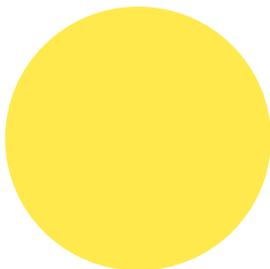
I remember that as a child around the age of 7 or 8, I saw that work in Beaubourg where it was presented. A lucky and strange coincidence, that artist had left a mark on me that remained very present...

## Innocence and imagination: the tools of permanent creation as a driver of change

That's the meaning of the expression "**art is what makes life more interesting than art,**" prolonging Dadaist thought from the beginning of the twentieth century, which stated that "life is more interesting than art." Filliou states that quality such as "innocence, imagination, freedom and in integrity," bridled starting in childhood, can become the driver of change. "The most important thing to teach children is to use their free time creatively," he writes, to help them to develop and later dive into the professional world with creativity and ethics. In contrast with a leisure society, which turns free time into a consumption format, Filliou suggests incorporating, into our lives, in all sectors of activity, "innocence and imagination" in order to "go from work as a punishment to work as a game," so that the change in values is echoed throughout the economic system and establishes a poetic economy.

This work is the result of an order from the éCHANGEUR CDCN, which only requested that it be for children between the ages of 3 and 6. I was very touched by this proposal, first of all, because it is my first order, and that is demonstrative of the deep trust of the cultural actors and the partners in this interaction with children, but also because it consists of putting on a show that may be the first performance that many children see.

What responsibility and what pleasure that of walking together along an **unknown path!**



# TECHNICAL INFO

## Non-dedicated spaces

(media rooms, party rooms, schools ...)

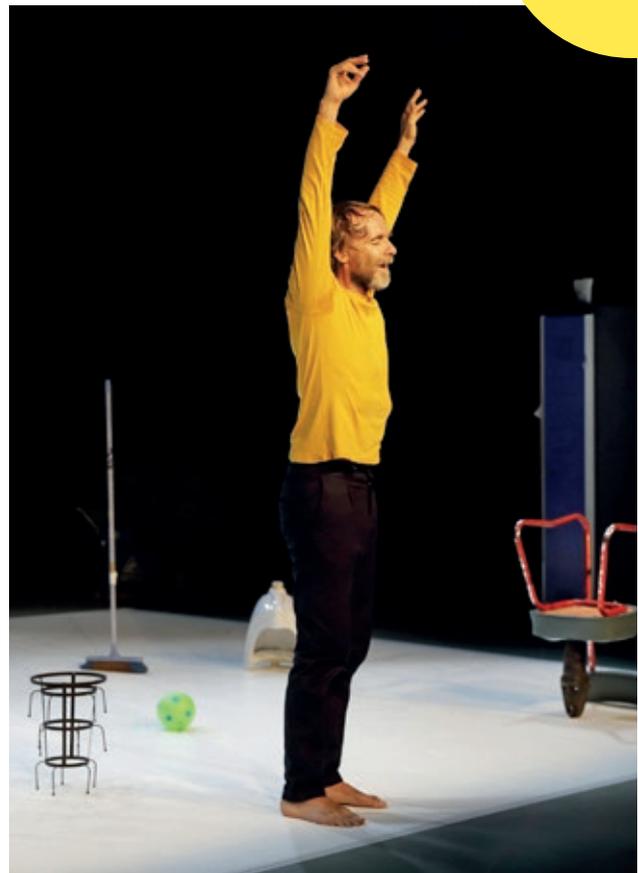
- **Scene space:** opening 6m/ depth 6m/height-X
- Platform: we use a white carpet
- **Sound:** independent outside of the theater
- **Light:** /
- **Seating:** cushions or ground rugs (2 rows maximum) and chairs/stools (2 rows maximum)
- **Set up time:** 3 hours
- **Disassembly time:** 1 hour
- **The organizer should add the configuration of the room to this set up time if necessary** (tiers or another seating system).

## Version for equipped drama rooms:

Technical information sheet underway

Grating necessary - good darkness

- **Light:** number of circuits: 8;2feet/ 6 profile spots
- **Platform:** black box





## ABOUT ME

### Who am I? My career in a few lines.

Born in 1973, Marc Lacourt is studying a degree in sports education (Bachelor's Degree in Science and Techniques of Physical and Sporting Activities). His choreography work has been strengthened by working with the choreographers Toméo Vergès, Pierre-Johan Sucand Magali Pobel (Cie Androphyne) and Laurent Falguiéras. Since 2012, he has been dancing for Ambra Senatore for the creation of John and Un terzo.

In combination with his experience as a dancer, he loves to take part in different workshops with children and teenagers at primary or secondary schools as well as at art schools, in Marseille and Besançon. During the two years, he worked with inclusive education-based classes (ULIS) in Vanves.

He hosts internships and workshops in prisons with men and women in Marseille, Nantes and Guadeloupe.

Marc Lacourt is or has been an actor for:  
C<sup>ie</sup> volubilis, *7 minutes* (2014) - C<sup>ie</sup> EDA (Ambra Senatore), *John* (2012), *Un terzo* (2013) - C<sup>ie</sup> Androphyne (Pierre-Johan Suc et Magali Pobel), *Ou pas* (2010) *Podium* (2016), C<sup>ie</sup> PLP, *Déjà vu* (2009), C<sup>ie</sup> Volubilis, *Ravalement de façade* (2011) - C<sup>ie</sup> Man Drake (Tomeo Verges), *Idiotas* (2007), *French chicken* (2007) - C<sup>ie</sup> B. Valiente (Norvège), *Helsk Game over*, *Body business* (2003), *Head* (2006) - Cie Odile Azagury, *La diagonale du loup* (2006) - C<sup>ie</sup> Pic la poule (Laurent Falguieras), *Ils m'ont laissé là* (2003), *Ane haut*, (2005) - C<sup>ie</sup> Le guetteur (Luc Petton), *La confiance des oiseaux...*



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LA SERPILLERE  
DE MONSIEUR  
MUTT

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33800 BORDEAUX

Production

**MA**  
compagnie

**ie**  
L'échangeur - CDCN  
Hauts-de-France

**LA MANUFACTURE**  
CDCN NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE  
BORDEAUX - LA ROCHELLE

**TRES  
TOT  
THEATRE**

**PRÉFÈTE  
DE LA RÉGION  
NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE**

**Nouvelle-  
Aquitaine**

**BORDEAUX**

Marc Lacourt is an artist associated with L'ÉCHANGEUR - CDCN Hauts-de-France de 2022 à 2024, as part of the scheme supported by the Ministry of Culture.