



***Théâtre Décalé***  
***presents :***

**The World of Harry Stork**

A performance of one hour, in three sections.

Three times the same starting point : a man prepares to eat his breakfast.

Three different stories, but three stories which belong together.

Three different directors, but only one character : Harry Stork, the Man in the Suit.

**Contacts**

Alan Fairbairn :  
0033 (0) 6 73 89 20 62

Performed by : Alan Fairbairn  
Directed by : Catherine Baÿ, Markus Kupferblum, Craig Weston  
Scenography : Eline van der Voort

***Théâtre Décalé*** - 6 rue Désiré Viénot – 93170 Bagnole, France  
theatredecalle @free.fr  
www.theatredecalle.com  
0033 (0) 1 43 62 65 12



### THE PROCESS

*A performance of one hour, in three sections. The times the same starting point : a man prepares to eat his breakfast.  
Three different stories, but three stories which belong together.  
Three different directors, but only one character : Harry Stork, the Man in the Suit.*

“ The World of Harry Stork ” , an absurd comedy for one eccentric character, a table and several eggs, is the third full-length solo show to feature Alan Fairbairn’s creation Harry Stork, who has already been seen in The Elasticated Man (1991) and No Joseph (1994).

Each section of the trilogy was worked on in isolation with a different director and created through a combination of improvisation and writing. Starting from the same premise every time – a man confronted with his breakfast – the three pieces found their own stories and, by some mysterious alchemy, connections began to emerge. Working with three directors means that each piece has its own atmosphere. The result is both innovative and surprising.

“The World of Harry Stork” is a modern clown performance with tragic resonances. It is situated in a décor which is at the same time playful and suggestive.

Our intention was to make comic theatre which flirts with absurdity and the surreal while not losing its connections with recognisably human dilemmas and situations. And above all to make people laugh ...



### THE SHOW

“The World of Harry Stork” is a show in three parts, and each part has been developed in collaboration with a different director. The result is intriguing and deliberately ambiguous. Do we regard these three sections as variations on a theme or as an evolving and continuous story ?

A man sits upright behind a curiously-angled table. He is dressed in a sober suit, while on his head perches an incongruous red pointy hat.

He waits.

It seems that room service has been delayed. Harry Stork’s world is a minimal one. There isn’t much on the stage, and there isn’t much for breakfast. An egg.

Harry wants to eat that egg. Nothing simpler than that. He even has a song prepared for the event. Then he can get on with the rest of his life. But he seems to be stuck in this breakfast-world and the eggs are taking over. They tease and frustrate Harry, appearing and disappearing, multiplying or changing size. Harry’s attempts to eat his breakfast lead him down a tortuous path through bewilderment and indecision to an ultimately surprising state of grace.

In each of the three sections, the starting point is basically the same. But each section has its own dynamic and its own peculiar set of difficulties. And the situation is maybe not so simple after all.

Harry is not the master of his own destiny ; it seems that some other power decides for him when and if he should have his egg, though we never discover what this other power is. The quirky set might be Harry’s home, or some laboratory for anthropological experiments, or even a transposition of Harry’s mental state.

Despite the strangeness, “The World of Harry Stork” is first and foremost a comic clown performance, though one with tragic resonances. The show is built on subtle visual humour, and text is used sparingly.

During its first run at the Zèbre in Belleville, performances were enthusiastically received by international audiences, including some children.



### THE ARTISTIC TEAM

On this occasion Alan Fairbairn has collaborated with three quite diverse directors. All three have worked closely with Alan Fairbairn in on various projects and all share a taste for darkly humorous clown theatre and innovative visual performance.

- Alan Fairbairn

Actor, theatre maker

Born 22.01.54 in Newcastle, UK. Lives in Paris.

Alan Fairbairn trained at the École Jacques Lecoq from 1985-1987.

Since 1988, he has been involved in numerous theatre productions as an actor/deviser. He has created his own company on two occasions (Théâtre Décalé in Paris, and Out of Synch in the UK) and has been a major collaborator in others (The Primitives, Belgium, and Confederacy of Fools, Germany).

His theatre work has involved world-wide touring and has included street theatre as well as indoor theatre. In addition, he has created two solo performances. All this work falls into the category of humorous and visual performance.

He has participated since 2004 in the highly successful production by Styx Theatre, 'Cabaret NoNo'

Alan Fairbairn has also worked as an actor in cinema and TV. He regularly teaches workshops in clown and mask and has also directed work (Avanti Display, Zirk Theatre, The Primitives, Hector Protector).



- Catherine Baÿ

*Director and choreographer*

Born in Paris in 1962, where she lives and works.

Before coming to theatre Catherine studied classical dance. In 1996 she directed the dance/theatre piece 'Relief' in which Alan Fairbairn was a performer. Since then her work has evolved towards performance art and there have been many devised shows in theatres and galleries. Her latest work, 'Blanche Neige' is a performance/installation for a flexible number of participants, and has been seen in several European countries including Italy, Russia, Germany and Switzerland.

She has recently mounted a series of projects for the *Fondation Cartier* in Paris.

- Markus Kupferblum

*Director, actor*

Born 12.06.64 in Vienna, Austria, where he now lives.

After studying as an actor at the Academy of Music and Dramatic Art in Vienna he trained in Paris at the Ecole de Philippe Gaulier (1986), during which time he met Alan Fairbairn. Their first collaboration was in 1989 when Markus was able to invite Théâtre Décalé to the Vienna festival. Markus subsequently directed Alan Fairbairn's Out of Synch company in two productions, 'Décalages' (1996) and 'Insomnia' (1999). He has become something of a specialist in directing opera, with many productions in several different companies. By way of contrast he also directed the award-winning clown performance 'Les Moustaches de la Reine' with his own company (Avignon, 1993).

From 1987 to 1994, he was Director of the Totales Theater in Vienna

He has taught clown in Vienna, in Paris, in London, in Canada, in South Korea, in Israel and in Italy.



- Craig Weston

*Director, actor*

Born 16.12.57, Spokane, Washington, U.S.A.

Resident in Belgium since 1985.

After studies in musical composition, Craig was at the Lecoq school in Paris from 1982-1984.

Since 1984, he has lived in Ghent. He works as freelance director, actor, composer and teacher.

Craig was a co-founder of Wissel Theater. The company was based in Ghent in the 80's, and created four original plays. The most successful "Où est la Bête ?" was performed extensively in Belgium, Holland, France and England (London Mime Festival) as well as in international theatre festivals in Granada, Spain and The Kitchen in N.Y.C

His most recent directing work includes "Tik" (an adaptation of Chekov's "Three Sisters" ) and "Koning Lear". Both productions enjoyed extensive tours of Belgium and Holland.

In 1995 Craig co-founded the company The Primitives, and to date, the company has produced four original plays for the theatre : "Up", "Cook It!", "Wash It!" and "Nog", as well as "Hark", "Cook It!", "Wash It!", "ZZZ" and "Swan Lake" for the street. (Alan Fairbairn was a collaborator in 'Cook It' and 'Wash It'). The company has played these productions in thousands of performances throughout Europe, Australia, Israel and Palestine, the USA, Canada and Japan.

He has taught physical acting at the Drama Conservatory in Ghent since 1994.



Théâtre Décalé

- Eline Van der Voort

*Set-designer and maker.*

Born in Holland in 1969; now lives in Paris.

Eline van der Voort trained as a dancer in Holland.

She completed two years of study in the dynamics of stage design (LEM) at the Ecole Jacques Lecoq in Paris in 2003. She teaches movement and stage design at the Kleine Academie in Brussels as well as developing her own artistic projects.

This is her first collaboration with Alan Fairbairn, and she finds herself making a surprise appearance on stage during the show.



## THE PRESS

- **Alan Fairbairn**

“ a highly talented clown and mime ... goes way beyond what you normally see on cabaret stages ... here rules the naked terror of the “thing world” and the absurd. And that is where the world of art begins” (review of The Elasticated Man, Kölner Stadt Anzeiger, [3/12/91])

“an absolutely riveting portrayal ... it’s Hitchcock’s “Birds” seen in quite another way” (review of No Joseph, der Standard, Vienna, [16/10/94])

“With his expressive eyebrows, his look that could kill, and his malicious smile, Harry Stork dresses in a sober suit as if he has stepped out of a silent film. Alan Fairbairn has created a very original clown, with a pathetic as well as a piercingly intelligent dimension ... very well constructed visual numbers” (review of th Festival des Clowns, Samovar Theatre, Paris, in l’Express, [16/05/2002])

“ Gags, visual associations and humour keep the dark subject matter moving even as the magician’s disturbed personality emerges” ... Paris Free Voice, 1994

- **Previous Théâtre Décalé shows**

“absolutely top class comics” ...OVZ, Germany

“Mime, gesture and wordplay of a rarely seen precision” ... Suddeutsche Zeitung, Germany



Théâtre Décalé

“Their mime and visual theatre belongs to the very best that was ever seen here in Bonn” ... Bonner Rundschau, Germany

“treasures of ingenuity” ... La Liberté de l'Est, France

“ What precision in their attitudes, what fine use of space and position, what capacity to introduce disquietude”... Est Républicain, France

“From the moment I first show them, they were strongly reminiscent of those street theatre geniuses Cliffhanger ... But Théâtre Décalé are more spontaneous, more improvisational and take more risks”... The Herald, Glasgow

- **With Out of Synch**

“a darkly comic mix of precise physical performance... the show contains one the most perfect couple of minutes in performance history – Alan Fairbairn’s ‘Dog Poem’” - *Total Theatre*

“Three truly bizarre cabaret performers acted out a series of absurd cabaret spots...Slick, bizarre, entertaining and off-the-wall with hidden depths – writing about this piece neither does it justice nor really makes sense. But if laughter extends your life I can tell you that now I’m going to live longer than any out there who missed Out of Synch” - *Dorchester Guardian*

“three miraculous cabarettists...the panacea for all those who think too much... unique, minimalist, surreal collage...Décalages relaxes everyone searching for meaning in life. In nonsense is redemption” - *Der Standard, Vienna*



## TECHNICAL DATA

### Stage

Minimum : 5 m width x 4 m depth

4 m height

Bare floor (ideally black) or dance mat

### Décor

We will install a self-standing backdrop of 2,20m x 2,20m  
Please foresee bars or hooks which will enable us to rig a rudimentary pulley system.

A screen or other set-up is needed which will allow a technician to be hidden from view.

*Please contact the company for further explanations.*

### Dressing room:

A table with a mirror and good lighting

A clothes-rail and hangers. Washbasin.

*Get-in : the stage and dressing rooms should be available 4 hours before the show.*

### Lighting:

Uncomplicated. Lighting plan available.

### Sound:

CD player with speakers

### Staff:

A technician to be provided by the theatre to set up the lighting. We provide our own technician for during the show.

### Price of the show:

please contact the company.