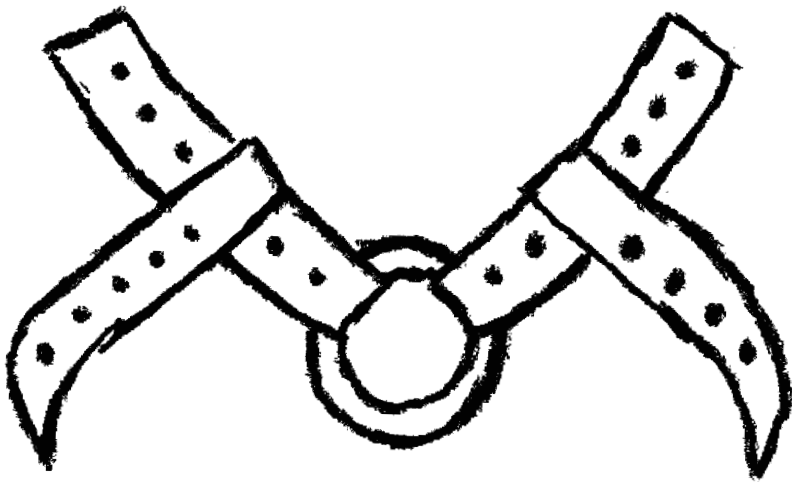


PINKIE PONKIE

A GAY SHOW



THOR

CONTACT

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PINKIE PONKIE

Presentation



Thierry Smits **PINKIE PONKIE** A GAY SHOW

Creation 2024

'Pinkie Ponkie' is a quirky celebration of the gay aesthetics that has inspired Thierry Smits's creative output, and which over time have become references for everyone. It pits two men against each other on a highly camp playing field.

Set to the iconic pop music of the LGBTQIA+ movements, or simply hijacking the classical repertoire, their more or less stripped back choreographies reinvent the aesthetics of an entire pantheon of iconic figures, everybody from Jean Cocteau to Lil Nas X, with nods en passant to Jean Genet, Marlene Dietrich, Robert Mapplethorpe, Gilbert & Georges, Lady Gaga, to name but some.

The two protagonists make an assault on these references, without hesitating either to make fun of them or to over-sexualise them. As the acknowledged heirs of "Pink Narcissus" and a "gaytitude" which may well be on the verge of extinction, they fuse levity and humour in order to forge a series of psychedelic visions.

Content note: nudity

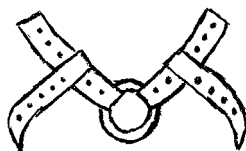
7 > 30.11.2024 | STUDIO THOR

49, rue Saint-Josse - 1210 Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode

A Thor Production

Co-production: La Coop asbl and Shelter Prod, Les Briggittines.

With the support of Taxshelter.be, ING, the Tax-Shelter of the Belgian Federal Government and the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Service de la Danse.



PINKIE PONKIE

Inspirations

In *Pinkie Ponkie*, Thierry Smits takes as his narrative skeleton *The Ten Commandments of Gilbert and George*, conceived by the similarly named renowned duo of British artists. Note, however, that the biblical Ten Commandments have been slightly modified: the order has been changed and feature an extra two commandments!

YOU SHALL NOT CONFORM : whereby gay sensibilities are asserted loud and clear from the cradle.

YOU SHALL PARTY ETERNALLY : a tribute to the singer Sylvester, to disco, as well as to the slogan "Gay is Good."

YOU SHALL REINVENT LIFE : a tribute to the painter Francis Bacon's mutilated bodies.

YOU SHALL WORSHIP PASSION : that love duel between Querelle and his brother from Fassbinder's last-ever film takes shape like a ritual.

YOU SHALL CREATE ARTIFICIAL ART : the battle of the roosters unfolds in a game of hand-held fans.

YOU SHALL GRAB THE SOUL : James Dean and Tom of Finland meet in *Brokeback Mountain*.

YOU SHALL NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU DO, BUT YOU SHALL DO IT : the fetishism of puppies flirts with the eroticism of bullfighting—as revisited by Almodóvar?

YOU SHALL MAKE USE OF SEX : penetration finds its way through the voice.

YOU SHALL GIVE YOUR LOVE : we accept a slightly starry-eyed romanticism which is so much a part of us.

YOU SHALL HAVE A SENSE OF PURPOSE : we salute the patrons of Stonewall Inn, les Gazolines, and ACT UP.

YOU SHALL BE THE MESSENGER OF FREEDOM : gaytitude is advocated, with clowning and gaiety (and to the soundtrack of a waltz).

YOU SHALL GIVE SOMETHING BACK : the years may catch up with us, but that's not why we're going to settle down.

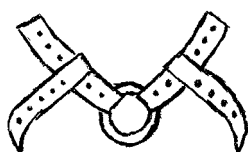
In typical style, Thierry Smits yet again paves the way for his artistic crew to express their creativity, in this instance a journey through the more subversive aspects of gay aesthetics down through the centuries. Here, it is not a question of recreating these historic references as such, but rather of using them as a basis for a fresh approach, treating them as a source of inspiration which is reinterpreted at every level, whether in terms of images, texts, bodywork, acting, music and costumes.

QUOTES

The Ten Commandments for Gilbert and George (1995, Serpentine Gallery).

Querelle, film by Rainer Werner Fassbinder (1982) based on the eponymous novel by Jean Genet.

Falling in Love Again, composed by Friedrich Hollaender and Sammy Lerner, and interpreted by Marlene Dietrich in *L'Ange Bleu*.



PINKIE PONKIE

Team

Concept and choreography
THIERRY SMITS

Assistant choreographer
LUCIUS ROMEO-FRÖMM

Dramaturgy, songs, scenic links
ANTOINE PICKELS

Performers
**IÚRI DA SILVA COSTA &
ALESSANDRØ SÖLLIMA**

Composition and sound design
NIKOLAS KLAU

Lighting designer
RALF NONN

Costume designer
STEF ASSANDRI

Lighting manager
RALF NONN (Brigittines, March 2024)
BRUNO GILBERT (Studio Thor, November 2024)

Sound manager
JEAN-FRANÇOIS LEJEUNE (Brigittines, March 2024)
MAXENCE OBEIN (Studio Thor, November 2024)

Vocal coaches
JEAN FÜRST & SYLVIE MERCK

Assistant costume designer
CARLY HEATHCOTE

Costume maintenance
CHARLYNE MISPLON

Studio management
BRAHIM SAHLI

Communication
ROMANE CARMON

Production
EMILIE WACKER (Brigittines, March 2024)
ELENA FRAU (Studio Thor, November 2024)

Administration
ZAKARIA ZOHRAT (Studio Thor, November 2024)

Human Ressources
RÉGIS RÉMIGY

Box office
JULIETTE BAN (Studio Thor, November 2024)

Graphic design
KIDNAP YOUR DESIGNER

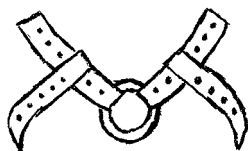
Media
BE CULTURE

Photos
HICHEM DAHES

Teaser
LES MEUTES

Performances

21 > 23.04.2024 | Brigittines, Brussels | In Movement Festival
7 > 09.11.2024 | Studio Thor, Brussels
14 > 16.11.2024 | Studio Thor, Brussels
20 > 23.11.2024 | Studio Thor, Brussels
26 > 30.11.2024 | Studio Thor, Brussels



PINKIE PONKIE

Artistic crew



THIERRY SMITS

Concept and choreography

Jointly with his dance company Thor, Thierry Smits features among the leading lights in Belgium's contemporary dance scene. For more than three decades, the choreographer has pursued an artistic approach which in multiple respects is way out-of-the-ordinary, frequently polemical in tone, often unashamedly bucking prevailing trends.

Alternating between pure dance performances and more performative pieces, his productions invariably explore our relationship with the human body: whether as an object of desire, a source of pleasure and finitude, a body which he now regards more than ever as a political space, or as Smits himself proclaims: "the sole bastion of freedom left to us."

Ever since launching Thor in 1990, Smits has created over thirty dance productions, notably *Eros Délétère* (1991), *Red Rubber Balls* (1999), *D'ORIENT* (2005), *V.-Nightmares* (2007), *To the Ones I Love* (2010), *Anima Ardens* (2017) and *Summertime* (2021), and more recently *Toumai* (2022) and *Vanishing Act* (2023). Ever characterised by a keen sense of imagery, Smits' productions are imbued with an aesthetic at once pop and queer, wilfully in your face, refined and contemporary in tone. Whatever form they assume, his works consistently bear witness to the highest technical standards and gestural creativity.



LUCIUS ROMEO-FROMM

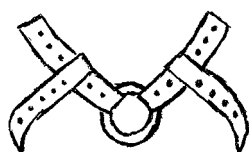
Assistant choreographer

With a career spanning more than thirty-four years in the performing arts, Lucius Romeo-Fromm has constantly pursued a trajectory deeply rooted in dance.

As a regular collaborator with Thierry Smits, for many years he periodically featured as a performer with Compagnie Thor, notably in *Eros Délétère* (1991), *Cyberchrist* (1995), and *V-Nightmares* (2007).

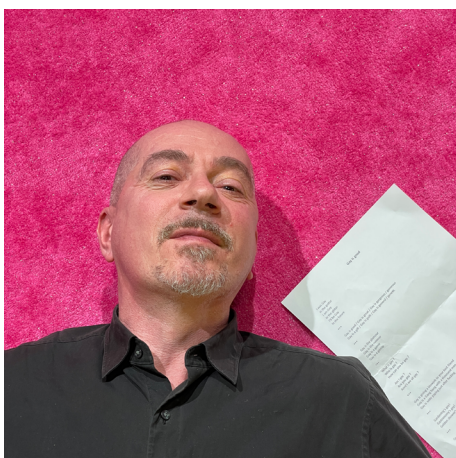
Currently based in Belgium, Lucius Romeo-Fromm routinely collaborates with a host of other European theatre directors, choreographers and film directors.

Passionate about nature and wandering through its marvels, Lucius Romeo-Fromm is equally keen on cooking. He teaches Pilates at a community centre in Brussels.



PINKIE PONKIE

Artistic crew



ANTOINE PICKELS

Dramaturgy, songs, scenic links

In addition to being a visual artist and performer, Antoine Pickels is an experimental filmmaker, set designer, theatre director, playwright, essayist, curator, publisher, curator and editor. He has also forayed into a wide variety of milieu: rock, literature, academic circles, theatre, dance, film, fashion and the visual arts. Pickels is also a regular contributor to magazines, collective works, art catalogues, as well as participating on the conference circuit throughout Europe. He teaches the history and the current state of play of the performing arts at la Cambre in Brussels.

In addition to serving as coordinator for the programming at Les Halles de Schaerbeek between 2004 and 2006, Pickels was also, inter alia, director of La Bellone from 2007 to 2011, artistic director of the Trouble Festival at Les Halles de Schaerbeek from 2005 to 2013, and artistic advisor to Cifas from 2009 to 2018, in which role he edited the magazine Klaxon and was in charge of programming, between 2014 to 2018, for the SIGNAL, an event devoted to performance art in public space. Since 2019, Pickels has once again taken control of curating the biennial Trouble Festival, currently produced by Studio Thor, which alternates with the springboard platform (Pas si) Fragile! As an author, Pickels garnered acclaim for *Un goût exquis. Essai de pédesthétique* (Ed. Cercle d'art, 2006).



NIKOLAS KLAU

Composition and sound design

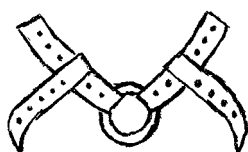
Born in Hamburg in 1964, Nikolas Klau launched his artistic career in Brussels, where he discovered its dynamic cultural scene, and into which he easily mingled.

He collaborated primarily with the American musician Steven Brown as well as with, more occasionally, the avant-garde group Tuxedomoon. In 1992, Klau relocated to Mexico jointly with Brown with the view to start their group Nine Rain.

After several years on the road, he eventually returned to his roots: Berlin, with its rich cultural heritage was to become the setting for the next chapter in his career.

Firmly believing that there is no such thing as "bad" music in this world, Klau has been promoting this universal language with all its unlimited potential. His works are marked by the diversity of his tastes and his persistent willingness to explore.

In addition to theatre, dance and experimental performances, his sound projects have also embraced film.



PINKIE PONKIE

Artistic crew



ALESSANDRO SOLLIMA

Performer

Based in Brussels, Alessandro Sollima has been performing as a dancer throughout Europe for more than a decade, collaborating with dance companies in his native Italy, Slovenia and Austria, and on a more regular basis with Thor - Thierry Smits (Belgium) and Stephan Herwig (Germany).

As well as working over recent years as a choreographer, Alessandro has also been a guest teacher at a variety of workshops such as Fontys ACaPA (Holland), SOZO Visions in Motion (Germany), SEAD (Austria), Compagnia Zappala' Danza (Italy). His work has been championed by ImpulsTanz (Austria), Cullberg Ballet (Sweden), Network Anticorpi XL (Italy), Scenario Pubblico (Italy) and Akropoditi Dance Center (Greece).

His career has been constantly marked by his longing to integrate different artistic forms. Invariably following his instincts, Alessandro relishes seeking out fresh challenges.

In parallel to his stage work, Alessandro has been developing his own entrepreneurial project: an online platform for the performing arts in Belgium, whose official launch is scheduled for the end of 2024.



IÙRI DA SILVA COSTA

Performer

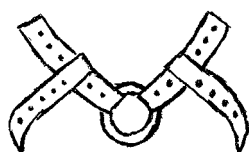
Based in Brussels, Iùri da Silva Costa is active in multiple domains: in addition to being a dancer, author, and painter, he's also a massage therapist and Pilates Reformer trainer.

His artistic career began at the Balletteatro in Porto, followed by a BA in modern dance theatre from Amsterdam's University of the Arts. Inspired by the interrelationship between a variety of disciplines - video games, mathematics, anatomy and psychology - Iùri has been weaving all these links into a coherent artistic narrative. He has devoted himself to exploring the nuances of the human psyche, around themes such as narcissism, selfishness, anger, animality, sexuality, sadness, and the ego.

Iùri has collaborated with a host of acclaimed dance companies such as Thor - Thierry Smits, Ward/ward, Poetic Disasters Club and DYPTYK. He has featured in works such as *Beat-win* (2016) and *Humanopédia* (2019). The diary cum notebook he authored, *The Mistakes of a Bipolar*, was selected for the 2023 edition of *Nightwatch* at the Antwerp Fotomuseum (FOMU).

In 2018, the Young Talent Programme grant enabled him to explore innovative choreographic systems such as *Material Dance System* and *Unplayable Song System*.

Combining gentle physicality with thoughtful artistry, Iùri has constantly created projects which have set out to probe the depths of human emotions.



PINKIE PONKIE

Artistic crew



RALF NONN

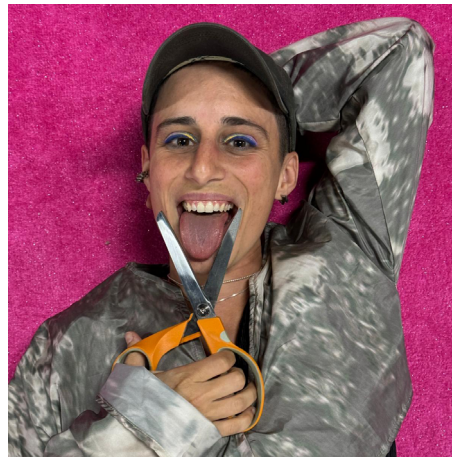
Lighting designer

After graduating as a mining engineer from the University of Bochum in 1985, Ralf Nonn worked for a year in the mining sector in Germany. Between 1987 and 1989, he studied dance in Essen and Belgium, before eventually relocating to Belgium in 1989 with the view to join Plan K, the future Charleroi danse, as a dancer, and has since never ceased working in that sphere.

His career in lighting design began in 1996 as lighting director for the interdisciplinary studio *Un Oeuf is Un Oeuf*. The following year, he started working as a freelancer in the field, collaborating with the likes of Toneelgroep Amsterdam, Meg Stuart and the Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg (KVS), Ultima Vez, Peeping Tom, Ballet de Marseille, Ballet de Lyon, Deepblue, Transquiquennal, as well as with David Byrne, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Gregory Maqoma.

Nonn has taken part in numerous productions at events in Brussels, Paris, Vienna, New York, Cologne, Moscow, and elsewhere. He has also worked on television productions, films, video clips and a variety of events, notably *Blush*, *Hereafter*, *Fame*, *The Do*, *In Spite of Wishing and Wanting*, *Puur*, *Inasmuch*.

In addition to his lighting design work, he directs his own atelier for theatre and events, working together with the likes of Frédéric Flamand, Ultima Vez, Michèle-Anne De Mey, Thierry Smits, as well as on KVS productions such as *Dear Winnie*.



STEF ASSANDRI

Costume designer

Stef Assandri is a Uruguayan transdisciplinary artist who has been cross-pollinating the visual arts with artistic research.

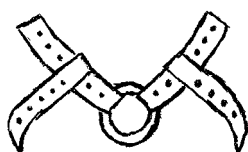
Stef has also been involved in costume design and creating collective works. They have a master's degree in visual arts, specialising in costume design at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp (2019), and a degree in textile and fashion design from the School of Design of the University of the Republic in Uruguay (2015).

They are a member of the BARRA Movement of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and at the Royal Conservatory in Antwerp (BE). Stef steered the research project *TACTICS for a COLLECTIVE BODY* in collaboration with Renata Lamenza (2020-2022).

Stef is also involved in the nomadic artistic platform *The Land of The Confused*, *Komplot* (Brussels) and *Off the grid* (Louvain).

Stef Assandri is a performer, co-creator and co-director of the collective project *Bailamos Siempre Las Mismas Canciones* (2017-2018).

They have recently designed costumes for Carolina Mendoça, Caterina Mora, Emma Gioia, Agostina D'Alessandro, Els Dietvorst from the Compagnie Thierry Smits, Carolina Guerra, as well as working with artists from Fundación de Arte Contemporáneo in Uruguay.



PINKIE PONKIE

Artistic crew



JEAN FÜRST

Vocal coach

Jean Fürst initially studied and later taught photography. After several years exploring the world of movement, he turned his focus to stage work as a performer for numerous theatre, dance-theatre, and performance companies.

At the same time, Fürst started taking classical singing lessons, developing in particular his contra-tenor's tessitura. Over time he met other vocalists with whom he explored other vocal techniques: David Moss, Meredith Monk, John Giorno, Phil Minton, Joan La Barbara, Alessandro Bosetti and Yannick Guédon, among others.

Fürst has been collaborating with video artists as a performer or singer, and has lent his voice to numerous radio dramas.

Jean Fürst currently offers vocal training for theatrical and dance productions, while at the same time revisiting his earlier passion for photography.



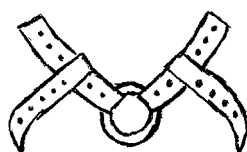
SYLVIE MERCK

Vocal coach

A singer who graduated from Mons Conservatoire, Sylvie Merck has taken part in numerous projects combining song and dance, with music-theatre and dance companies in Belgium and abroad, notably Mossoux-Bonté, Walpurgis, Félicette Chazerand, Bud Blumenthal, Nico and the Navigators, Silbersee.

More recently, Sylvie has also produced and staged her own projects. For several years, she has been conducting singing workshops for adults at ReMuA asbl in Brussels, while continuing with her teaching and singing career on a freelance basis.

In addition to being a practicing psychologist, trained in Ericksonian hypnosis and brief therapy (IMHEB, Prisme), Sylvie also trained in sound healing with Pat Moffit Cook (Open Ear Center, USA).



PINKIE PONKIE

Pictures



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