

LET THEM EAT CHAOS



images from first R&D Évreux January 2024

based on the poem by KAE TEMPEST
directed and designed by SYLVAIN LEVITTE
with KATHRYN HUNTER

produced by *cie les choses ont leurs secrets*

Creation Spring 2025 - On tour 2025-2026
Attiki Cultural Society / Brighton Festival

LET THEM EAT CHAOS

written by **Kae Tempest**
director and set designer **Sylvain Levitte**
associate and producer **Alex Lawther**
dramaturg **Clara Noël**
light designer **Juliette Besançon**
choreographer *coming soon*
video artist *coming soon*

cast **Kathryn Hunter**
and three dancers

Show performed in English or French / 1h20 without interval

This play is an international dance-theatre adaptation of Kae Tempest's
LET THEM EAT CHAOS, starring Kathryn Hunter.
It involves a handful of dancers and some videography.



image from first R&D Évreux January 2024

production cie les choses ont leurs secrets

coproduction Attiki Cultural Society, Athens ; le TANGRAM - Scène Nationale d'Évreux ; Brighton Festival

résidences / workshop le CENTQUATRE-PARIS ; le TANGRAM - Scène Nationale d'Évreux ; Riverside Studio, London.

It's 4.18am. We're on a suburban street in London. We meet seven different people. They are strangers to each other. They are in their flat, their bedroom, their kitchen. Personal crisis is keeping each of them awake, as they do what they can to fend off the isolation and fear that strikes in the middle of the night. The desperation – and jubilation – of these individuals coalesce into a much larger canvas, on which financial crash, migration, environmental catastrophe and police brutality rotate.

Sylvain Levitte, french theatre director-actor (long time company member of Declan Donnellan, and then Peter Brook) will direct. Kathryn Hunter will takes us in and out of these different lives (at times becoming these characters, at others their omniscient narrator-observer) with three dancers (who will act as an extension of the imagination of Kathryn). There will also be elements of videography – projecting faces and landscapes onto screens and bodies – to bring the outside world into the theatre space.



**« I'm out in the rain
it's a cold night in London**

**Screaming at my loved ones
to wake up and love more.**

**Pleading with my loved ones to
wake up
and love more. »**

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The word *theatre* comes from the Greek *theatron*: seeing place. We come to the theatre to see. In the theatre we come to understand what it is to be human by looking at other humans in front of us. This is also the essence of the poetry of Kae Tempest, non-binary British spoken-word artist. Their poetry asks us to look at the behaviour of strangers, and, seeing their individual humanity, to see the whole world. The poem LET THEM EAT CHAOS will be the thread our narrator-performer uses to pull us through the world as seen, with immense humanity, by Tempest.

Led by our narrator, played by Kathryn Hunter, we pass through the walls of seven different houses, and enter into seven different lives. Pete, Jemma, Esther, Zoe, Pious, Bradley, Alicia: feeling lonely, heads heavy, thoughts dancing. As in a documentary, behind each of their names is a story. A story that our narrator will reveal to us. Like Tiresias, though blind, she seems to see right to the heart of things. Our narrator is all genders, all ages. At times we wonder how she knows these seven strangers thoughts; is she is making these stories up? But then, *how could she?*

Dance, movement, will be in the centre of our research for this piece. Movement that is slowed down, repeated, as we try and discover the impulse behind them. I am led by the words of Pina Bausch « I'm not interested in how people move, but *what moves them*. » That is to say, what I find powerful and poetic in dance is its possibility to make our inner life visible. That inner life — inner need, desire, surrender — will lead all movement on stage. What I am looking to capture is the human body's inherent energy, its passion, or simply its humanity and humour; the seven bodies in CHAOS that are habitually held, tight, constrained and yet long to go out on a Saturday night and unleash themselves, to let go through dance. I will take the characters as written by Tempest and through dance reveal the inner life of each. Dance will be used an extension of our narrator's imagination; as the way of seeing the "interior body" of our seven strangers; as though, after passing through these strangers walls, with Tempest, we go further and we find ourselves passing through their skin, and feeling the vibration underneath.

Inspired by the work of the composer, singer and visual artist Anohni, I will be using video to put faces to the characters that Tempest describes and to bring the outside world into the theatre space. Video will be projected large on a screen but also on our performers bodies. Therefore the creative process will include going out to meet strangers, filming them, capturing something of their humanity, for this purpose. In this way I will populate the stage with projections of people of all ages and from all continents, with a particular bent toward representing queer people, people of the global majority or people otherwise excluded by their age. It will also be an opportunity to film landscapes - urban, natural - spaces that transform our bodies, make us move and breathe differently. Disused factories, forests, fields, urban architecture, inhabited and abandoned buildings; these landscapes projected on stage will rub up against each other, providing a sense of the world outside the theatre in which our humanity sits, the world to which we otherwise tend to pay little attention. Using theatre as a seeing place, as a magnifying glass, we will show the intimate side of the immense.

In their book *On Connexion*, Tempest thanks James Joyce and his words « *In the particular is contained the universal* ». CHAOS takes the particular — seven almost painfully intimate stories —

and through these stories helps us to see the universal, the world. Through CHAOS we will see how intrinsically we are related to others — and perhaps this will make us feel a little less lonely.

Sylvain Levitte



Kathryn Hunter in *The Valley of Astonishment* by Peter Brook

Anohni
Hoplessness Tour





Kae Tempest

Kae Tempest is an English spoken word performer, poet, recording artist, novelist and playwright. In 2013, they won the *Ted Hughes Award* for their work *Brand New Ancients*. They were named a Next Generation Poet by the *Poetry Book Society*, a once-a-decade accolade. Tempest's albums *Everybody Down* and *Let Them Eat Chaos* have been nominated for the Mercury Music Prize. The latter's accompanying poetry book (also titled *Let Them Eat Chaos*) was nominated for the Costa Book of the Year in the Poetry Category. Tempest came out as non-binary in 2020, using pronouns they/them.

<https://www.kaetempest.co.uk/>



Sylvain Levitte

Sylvain Levitte is a French theatre director and actor. After doing circus and music at the Maîtrise des Hauts de Seine, he trained theatre at the Conservatoire National d'Art Dramatique de Paris. As an actor, he works with Declan Donnellan and the late Peter Brook with whom he shares a sensitive artistic approach centered on the observation of the world and the humanities that inhabit it. In 2013, he created the company *les choses ont leurs secrets* and staged three plays by Shakespeare: *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Winter's Tale* starring Alex Lawther.

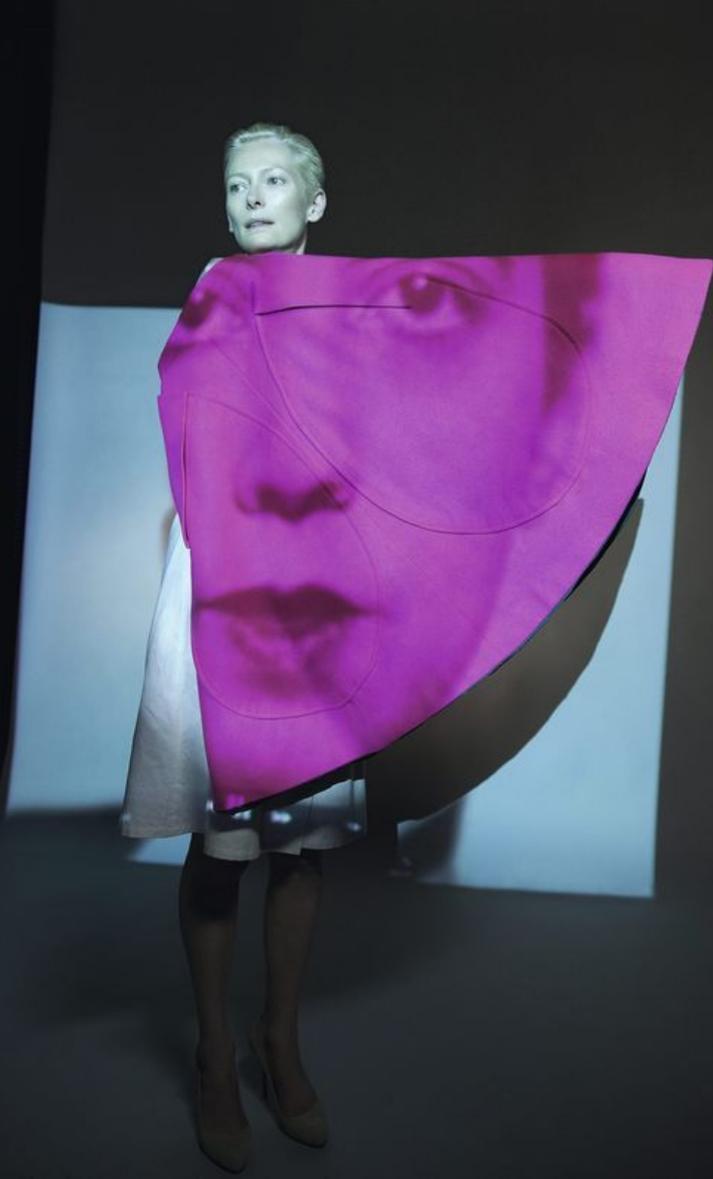
<https://www.leschoses.net/sylvain-levitte>



Kathryn Hunter

Internationally renowned award-winning actress and director Kathryn Hunter was born in New York, grew up in England, read French and Drama at Bristol University and then trained at RADA in London. Awards include an Olivier (Best Actress) and the New York Film Critics Circle Award (Best Supporting Actress). Her theatre work worldwide includes long time associations with Complicité, the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre and Peter Brook's CICT Centre International in Paris, together with leading directorial credits. On screen, she has collaborated with noted auteur filmmakers including Joel Coen, Mike Leigh, Yorgos Lanthimos, Sally Potter and Francis Ford Coppola, together with regular high profile television appearances.

VISUAL INSPIRATION



WORKSHOP 2023-2024

July 3 to 13, 2023 : Le Centquatre - Paris

January 8 to 12, 2024 : Le Tangram, Scène Nationale d'Evreux

March 25 to 29, 2024 : Riverside Studios - London

July 1 to 14, 2024 : Le Centquatre - Paris (to be confirmed)

TOUR 2025-2026

Spring, 2025 : Creation of the show in French in France

Automne, 2025 : Tour of the show

May, 2026 : Brighton Festival (in English)

CONTACTS

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