

PATRIARCHY

The white man, the witch and the teenager



A documentary theatre performance

by **Winter Family**

Premiere September 2022 MC 93 Bobigny

PATRIARCHY
or
the white man, the witch and the teenager

conception, research, direction & music **Winter Family**

with

Ruth Rosenthal, Xavier Klaine, Saralei Klaine

scenery **in progress**

lights **Jérémy Cusenier**

technical direction **in progress**

sound **Sébastien Tondo, Anne Laurin**

dramaturgy **Camille Louis**

Production **Winter Family**

Coproduction **MC93-scène nationale de Bobigny, in progress...**

The question we asked ourselves for our 4th show, besides doing a new show or not, was: how to talk about patriarchy? The most present topic on all front page medias, news and all over the social networks in our privileged societies.

This subject disturbed us since the very first evening of our meeting 17 years ago, in Jaffa, an evening in which Xavier offered to Ruth a monologue with a professorial and paternalistic tone of a memorable length on the political situation in the Middle East. Ruth, who was born in Jerusalem, was stunned.

After long months of wandering, we made the decision to treat this subject as we had treated the Israeli occupation in Palestine: in a documentary way. Collect sound and visual materials on the field, select, edit and then restore this material in a more or less disembodied way on stage.

But this time the field of research was going to be not others, but ourselves, our own nuclear family: a father (white cisgender man in his early fifties), mother (slightly younger cisgender woman), a teenage girl. (only daughter woke & connected).

We decided to explore our own family for several months. We placed several recorders in our apartment to capture these intimate moments and capture the banality of patriarchal disease within our family unit.

Then Ruth seized this raw material to select the most remarkable episodes, in her eyes, of this domestic patriarchy, trusting the traumatic filter of her repressed anger. She then undertake a work of transcription-rewriting. The dialogues colonized by the man are then re-recorded in a more or less disembodied way by Ruth and Xavier.

The many discussion with those around us about the patriarchal logic that endures within our so-called "enlightened" families have shown us that beyond our family, the problem is very real everywhere around us. Many men and women have agreed to tell us about private conversations and anecdotes which tend to prove that things are not changing or too little, not fast enough in any case. We restore some of these testimonies in addition to the recordings or memories of our own family.

The many *lockdown live shows*, of great indecency, presented in front of a non-artists audience reduced to the roles of voyeurs during the spring of 2020, sweetening a reality in an embarrassing or even pornographic way, motivated us to make this decision: to show what really happens in so-called egalitarian couples. Starting with ours. An anti-lockdown-live.

A work therefore using the same sources as those used on Israeli education (Jerusalem Cast Lead), the over connected and hypocrite cultural bourgeoisie (No World / FPLL) or the Israeli occupation in Palestine (H2 Hebron): observe, collect, select subjectively, restore coldly on stage, taking the audience side, embarrassed voyeurs of the patriarchy within our family.

This decision was accompanied by research on the theme of witches and feminine power, a fascinating subject that has also received much media attention in recent years: the total erasure of female knowledge since the Renaissance in the West. The paid or servile labor in the fields, gardens or workshops, in, often, unbearable conditions shared by women and men, the medicinal knowledge, birth control and abortion, the educational and spiritual eminent role within the community have gradually disappeared from female's hands to become the unique privilege of men who have become experts. Men tools, men soldiers of capitalist industrialization leaning on the ultra-specialization of tasks thanks to new scientific knowledge from which women were sidelined, under the relentless control of the religious executioners of the Christian reform and counter-reform. The man is paid working outside his property to feed capitalist agricultural and then industrial projects, and dominates his wife, who is confine to domestic functions that have become subordinate because they are unpaid.

This industrial change, and therefore economic and social upheaval logically coincides with the great massacres of women that took place during the Renaissance in the West in a burning context of religious wars and the search for profitability. Widows, celibates, homosexuals, independent women, intellectuals, artists, midwives, originals, scientists, mystics, adulterers, left-handed, Jews and redheads were referred to as 'Witches' and were destroyed all over Europe. In 1486, the European best seller was published: *Malleus-Maleficarum*, an exhaustive fundamental manual, a real bestseller of the witch hunt on which men will rely directly in order to burn women disturbing the nascent capitalist patriarchal system everywhere in Europe, a system that deeply structures societies and individuals until today, whether we are aware of it or not.

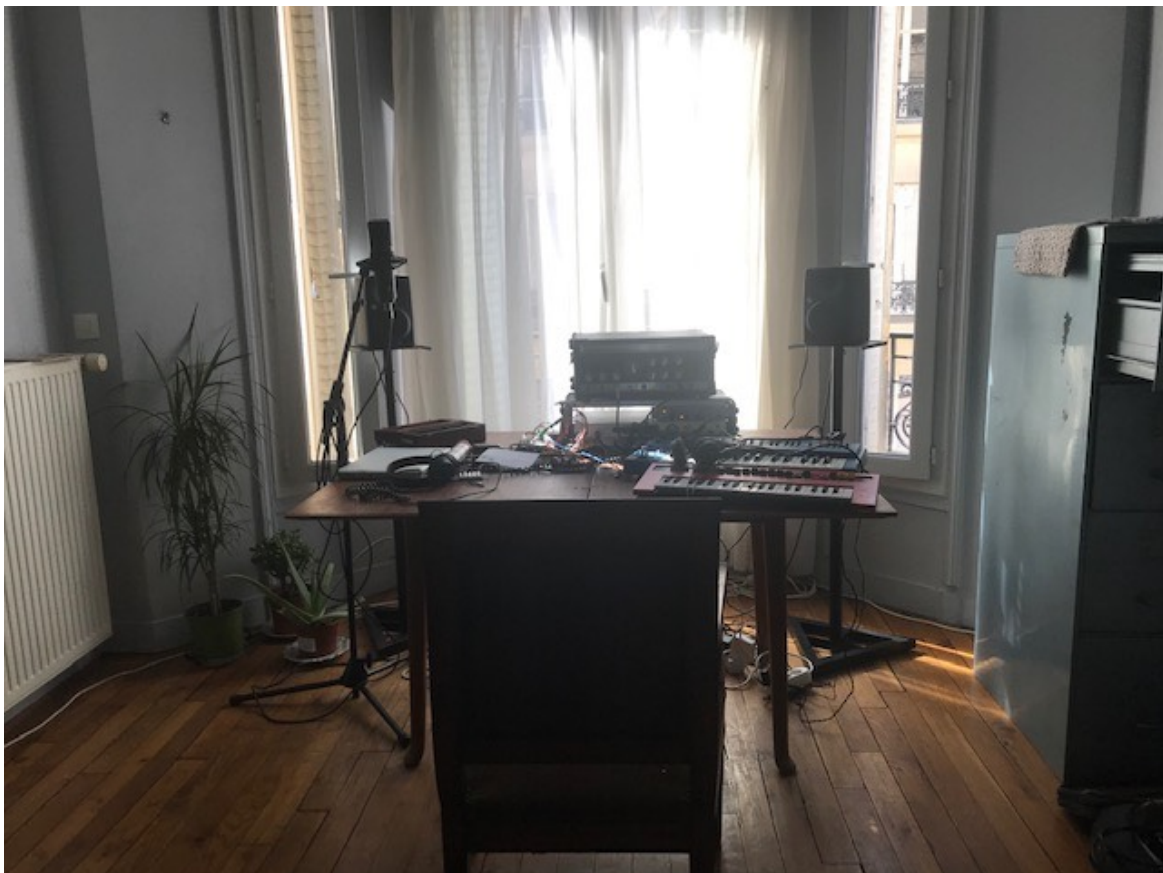
Since the 1920s, the image of the witch has been rehabilitated by feminist movements. Along with the demand for equal rights, voices are being heard to highlight the possible return of "female" power. From the 1960s and especially since 2000, the re-appropriation of the witch's character has become significant and very popular in the Anglo-Saxon feminist movements, borrowing and playing with the codes of popular fantasy and childish imagery of the witch, created by men.

We note that the ever present and trivialized, in spite of ourselves, patriarchal ingredients that persist in our family structures are still and always based on the same colonization of ideas, gestures and words by men within our contemporary society, ultimately participating in the same logic of domination and unbearable effacement that generated the witch hunts and the pyres of the Renaissance. We no longer burn women in our Western societies, but we still castrate them, we interrupt them, we reduce them, we 'mansplain' them, we 'manspread', we raise our voices, we use physical force, we swell out our chests, we explain things, we advise, we paternalize them, we show 'who's the boss' by trusting again and always the positions of power. Of all the powers.

To do this, it's enough to look at our own professions (Music, Theater) the still ultra masculine postures of men towards women: paternalistic and inappropriate advice from male to female technicians, feudal leadership by powerful men relying on female assistants, saucy jokes during set-ups, voices with artificially low pitch (the range of domination) by actors and intellectuals and many other macho behaviors that we observe every day in our work.

And in our families, in ours to begin with.

The popular imagery of the witch will be for us an aesthetic, political and moral gateway in order to show this obvious link and to try to glimpse the possibility of a return of a female power and a genuine liberation of women in our societies.



The show revolves around two different dynamic and aesthetic devices:

A. A documentary dive into our daily life: a white heterosexual couple over 40, whose main activity is musical and theatrical creation under the name of Winter Family, who try to educate a 13-year-old teenager. We see them living and working in a raw abstraction of their music studio apartment. They rehearse, compose, record, mix, write professional emails to find a better music label or co-producers. The dialogue is recorded and broadcasted in an intimate manner. The man talks a lot, judges, criticizes, grumbles, destroys, works, mumbles, suffers and does the dishes while pointing it out. The woman hears the man in spite of herself. She records, writes, looks at her phone, cooks a little and occasionally asks the man to help her open a stubborn jar. The teenager glued to her smartphone watches vaguely her parents while judging them. All in a totally voyeuristic process, or TMI (Too Much Information), absolutely embarrassing for the audience and the performers themselves: the anti-lockdown-live. Winter Family's music is omnipresent, in the form of work in progress, mixing, rehearsals.

B. The show swings abruptly towards another world, in another setting, the mental landscape of the woman-witch. A switch from a self-centered documentary raw theater to a visual theater taking up the codes of childhood, fantasy, storytelling and metal happening in a very sudden and abrupt manner. A hanging and marvelous garden, a haunted witch's hut, a rage room'(release room where the woman can finally blow everything up), a magic cauldron, lots of smoke, a fantastic shadow theater elaborated in the back of the stage, deafening metal music of questionable taste played live by Winter Family in an ultra-violent way, a set plunged in darkness, informative videos on the witch hunt, readings from the book *Malleus-Maleficarum*, flashes, overturned crosses and candles lit by the Sabbat witch. The audiences put to the test in sound and vision after the hushed embarrassment of Part 1. Playing on stage with this image - cliché of the witch in order to send it back to the women in the room, we offer them the freedom to decide what to think and what to do with this powerful and enjoyable image. Aware of the need for intersectional decolonial academisms, we nevertheless propose the advent of the power of the feminine, tribal and community, anti-progressive, anti-capitalist, fundamentally pan-humanist, the world of witchcraft, the time of the feminine revolt and settling of accounts.



From the first part of the show, once the codes of family patriarchy are installed on stage, the steeped in Generation Z culture (gender fluid, insta-tik tok), arbitrarily invites-orders all the men in the audience, one after the other, to follow her to the bewitching sound of her flute in a room outside the performance hall where an aperitif will be provided for their comfort (chips, beers, screens showing sports). Slowly and inexorably, the non-diversity will impose itself on the spectators. Ruth cooks fortune cookies and distributes them to the women delivering them secret messages that we cannot tell you because there is no proof that you are not a man. The music becomes more and more deafening, black smoke invades the whole space, the teenager screams the names of thousands of women burnt by men, video outlets are disseminated. The witch woman Ruth finally executes the white man Xavier in front of their teenage daughter and a female audience witnessing the wrongs and injustices to be repaired. A female catharsis. The Liberation.



Arnaud Martin

Winter Family is a music duo composed of Ruth Rosenthal and Xavier Klaine.

Ruth Rosenthal is an Israeli artist graduated from the Visual Theater School of Jerusalem. She has been a performer, puppeteer, and light designer in countless shows within Israel's vibrant independent scene. She then worked at the National Opera in Tel Aviv (lights) for several years. She cooked in many well-known restaurants in the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv nightlife.

Xavier Klaine is a musician born in Maxéville, a suburb of Nancy Bassist in legendary underground groups in Lorraine: Blockheads (Grindcore) and Alive the Roupettes (Rock Indé), he holds a gold medal in piano and chamber music at the CNR in Nancy. He completed a 3rd cycle in political and cultural geography at the University of Paris IV-Sorbonne, taught piano in the beautiful districts of Paris, and has accumulated many odd jobs in the restaurant business (pizza delivery man, flammekuche cook, barman by night).

Ruth Rosenthal and Xavier Klaine met in Jaffa in Israel in 2004. They play a minimal, obsessive and saturate music sometimes described as Weird Wave or Funeral Pop. Ruth psalmodies and chants her texts in Hebrew and English (spokenword), plays drums and machines, Xavier plays harmoniums, piano and pipe organ. Their daughter Saralei sometimes joins them on stage playing machines and flute. Winter Family has released several critically acclaimed albums on the labels Sub Rosa, Alt.vinyl and Ici d'Ailleurs and have done more than 380 concerts in churches, art galleries, museums, clubs, rock halls and squats across the world: China, Japan, Usa, Canada, Israel, Europe.

They have worked with directors (Arthur Nauzyciel, etc.), choreographers (Paco Dècina, Damien Jallet, etc.), filmmakers (Sebastien Betbeder, Blaise Harrisson, Ami Livne, Philippe Petit, etc.) plastic artists (Yochai Matos, Maïder Fortuné, Yael Perlman, Olivier Mirguet, etc) and signed the music for some commercials (Perfume Chanel, EU).

In 2011, extending a radio piece recorded in Jerusalem for Radio France Culture, they created the documentary theater performance 'Jerusalem Cast Lead - hallucinated trip in an emotional dictatorship', winner of the 'Impatience' festival at the Centquatre in Paris, invited to Avignon Festival then toured internationally for 3 years (Germany, Belgium, Japan, Canada, Italy, Israel, Switzerland, France, Poland). From 2010 to 2012, thanks to Villa Medicis - Hors les Murs scholarships' program, they resided in the Caribbean neighborhoods of South Brooklyn, New York, and decided to extend their stay in order to write 'No World / FPLL' their second documentary theater performance. 'No World / FPLL' was created in March 2015 at the 'Programme Commun' festival of the Vidy Theater in Lausanne. it was co-produced also by the Centquatre de Paris where Winter Family were associate artists and the Avignon Festival and toured until 2016.

This work of self-centered research on the ultra-connected and indignant cultural bourgeoisie gave an occasion to the publication of 'No World', a book-cd published by Dis/Voir (Paris). In 2016, together with the video artist Yael Perlman, they created 'Back to Sodom', a sound and visual show in the courtyard of the Museum of Jewish Art and History as part of the 'Nuit Blanche' in Paris. They then returned to Tel Aviv and recorded their third album 'South from Here', released in February 2017, followed by a series of concerts in Europe, Israel and Japan. They realized 'Celebration', a massive, savage, illegal and repeated act of installation of Palestinian and Israeli flags together in the streets and on monuments of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in an attempt to banalize the idea of peace in the eyes of ultra militarized Israelis. In 2018, they created "H2 Hebron" their 3rd documentary theater show based on 500 pages of testimonies collected by Winter Family in occupied Palestine. H2 Hebron was co-produced by Vooruit Gent, Vidy-Lausanne, Nanterre-Ameniers, TNB, MC93, CDN Orleans, ABC-La Chaux de Fonds. This show is still on tour. Winter Family is releasing in December 2020 the vinyl 'Chevaliers-music for a dance piece by Paco Dècina' (pipe organ, vocals) on the label Sub Rosa and currently recording 'On Beautiful Days ', their fourth album, between Paris and Maxéville.



Noa Ben-Shalom

Press extract *H2-Hebron*

H2 Hebron stick the fingers in the socket. Winter Family lead a guided tour of a staggering quality. They mingle the testimonies till vertigo. From this mess of words emerges the ghost image of a paralyzed landscape.

Joelle Gayot - Le Monde

What makes us switch from documentary to artwork is the choice of the transmission channel of the testimonials. Not only is there only one actress - very charismatic Ruth Rosenthal - to embody antagonistic points of view, but above all this actress takes good care to confuse the tracks by playing all the voices in the same way. Same commitment, same sincerity, without ever letting any judgment emerge. The metaphor is simple and beautiful: these words that coexist without being able to dialogue are perhaps irreconcilable, they nevertheless belong to the same body.

Eve Beauvallet - Libération

These are all their voices that Ruth Rosenthal utters as the terrifying echo of deadly mimetic violence. The stubborn bias of a state of affairs where the unison only agrees with the conflict.

Fabienne Arvers - The Inrockuptibles

Winter Family is a singular duo, a French-Israeli couple who dares to face History. Their latest creation, H2-Hebron, attests to this. There is, in the way Winter Family conceives the theater, a call to the intelligence of the spectator to go beyond the clichés, to try to unravel the threads of a so entangled history, so much "storytold" that each of us ends up giving up. Renounce to understand, and consequently renounce any possibility of political solution. Winter Family do not pretend to hold the solution. And if they admit their impotence, it is to better ward it off. It is a necessary theater, useful, "to believe and to dream", even if one would feel disarmed.

Marie-Jose Sirach - L'Humanité

If the whole show pleads for peace, he does not pretend to appease, nor spare the susceptibilities. The troublemakers to whom Ruth Rosenthal lends her voice have violent positions that nothing comes to sweeten.

Guionaud - kulte-info.fr

This is not a show about the conflict, it is the very conflict itself that enters the heart of the narrative. It rules everything, shows chaos in its voices, hurts with its violence, its irrepressible speed.

Bertille Bourdon - toutelaculture.com

Press extract *Jerusalem Cast Lead*

It is an eminently political theater, a performance like an uppercut, an introspective journey that stirs the knife in the wound. It is a piece that shows and understands Israeli society from within, a much more complex society than one would like to believe. Is not Israel a democracy? This theatrical gesture is a bet on the spectator's intelligence, a gesture of great freedom that dares to defy the weight of immobile and accommodating truths. [...] Here is a piece that does not fall into the crude trap of provocation but comes to light our lantern from a point of view. Ruth Rosenthal and Xavier Klaine who, in addition, do in experimental music, sign there a sacred performance.

Marie-José Sirach - L'Humanité

On stage, almost nothing. Some dark blocks choreographing the space. At the back, a giant screen. Completed by dozens of Israeli flags that eventually seal off all space, these few elements constitute "Jerusalem Cast Lead". A grating and desperate denunciation of the political situation in Israel, its emotional manipulations and its propaganda. [...] A magnificent imagery, in sounds and words of the discomfort that seizes us facing Israel, its history and its choices. A country where commemoration most often rhymes with occupation and where each step towards existence seems to rely on the defeat of the other.

Mireille Descombes - Hebdo.ch

The play, overwhelming, dry and radical, is carried at the of weak arm's length by Ruth Rosenthal. Replaying these dances learned from an early age, waving the blue and white flags as a good little soldier, the artist reveals the permanent conditioning to which the population is subjected. [She] points the "National sadness" in which her country has locked up, weighted by the legacy of the Shoah and the fear of the external enemy.

Marie Lechner - Libération

This vision of the interior subtitled [...] 'hallucinated trip into an emotional dictatorship' is a shock. It reveals all the weight, from childhood, on the bodies of citizens struck by the painful legacy of the Shoah, and then hindered by the fear of the enemy outside. How to get out of this infernal spiral? Klaine and Rosenthal give no answer, but pose the question in a scenic precipitate - between dance, plastic installation and theatrical litany - of an overwhelming radicality.

Emmanuelle Bouchez - Télérama

You might expect polemic from the subtitle – “a hallucinatory journey in an emotional dictatorship” – but the work is more nuanced. Visually and acoustically, it pits a tiny, frail individual against gigantic representations of state machinery and symbols, removing the protective filter of family or community

Clare Shine - Financial Times

Press extract *No World/FPLL*

And what if the world was a product like any other, a system with ever more powerful applications, vaunted by teleshopping animators, advertisements on the internet or posters in garish colors? The stage of the Tinel de la Chartreuse, in Villeneuve-les- Avignon, is covered with a yellow platforms and saturated with screens that diffuse up to the nausea the images that make our daily ... (...) the duo Winter Family pursues an approach that they describe as situationist rather than nihilistic, despite a title reminiscent of the punk slogan No Future. No World is not provocative but it causes discomfort by taking parts of real crude. (...) Winter Family, with resolutely contemporary tools, turns away the language and codes of capitalism to invent a new kind of political theater that invites spectators to regain their critical faculties. Healthy and invigorating.

Sophie Joubert - L'Humanité

No World / FPLL is an apocalyptic fable about the state of the world built on certified sequences borrowed from the worlds perfused in loops by the new technologies. No World/FPLL It is to be tasted - like fried nuggets live on stage and distributed to the public - without reservation. Indeed, the indigestion brought about by the ceaseless transit of virtual (and yet real) images that jostle and saturate our many tablets, computers, smartphones, iPhones ... can cause in healthy individuals a healthy rejection gastric Opening onto other unpolluted horizons. How do you say "life is beautiful" in French? Asks the English performer. Number of spectators seem to have responded, and we with them: "Winter Family!"

Yves Kafka - Inferno Magazine

If No World / FPLL does not fall into the whistleblower denunciation of the ultra- connection, because the charge lies exclusively in the demonstration. On stage, it is our practices that are seen, hardly exacerbated: the zapping is perhaps a little faster than that of the daily, it remains exactly the same. In the distance created by this theatre, an ironic return to oneself takes place and the spectator remains master of it. This presentation of the non-world does not propose any instructions or ready-to-think. It simply puts us face to face with our impasses, our ability to be shocked, to think again when the stimulation are continuing and we absolutely no longer know where to head.

Aïnhua Jean-Palmettes - Mouvement.net

At Vidy, Winter Family returns reality as a wet glove. The French-Israeli duo Winter Family's punching shows leave the public shaken, but nourished. whether it is political, economic or cultural, the reality denounce is in fact never manichaeon and the remedies which they make us experience, the urgency still to invent. After Jerusalem Cast Lead presented last year in Lausanne, they glide masterfully in the codes of the TED Conferences and their "ideas worth spreading" to denounce the absurdity of beliefs and speeches that are imposed on us.

Mireille Descombes - Hebdo.ch