

Le Monde

Extracts from **Le Monde**
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The « Mettre en scène » Festival of the city of Rennes could not have had a better opening. François Tanguy and his Theatre du Radeau (Theatre of the Raft) presented their latest creation, mysteriously entitled “Eleventh”.

It is a stunning beauty, which should be enough to convince those still intimidated by thought-based and sensitive theatre, theatre not intended to represent the world, to give it a try.

One must give oneself as entirely as possible to this beauty that is first of all a calm countryside that could have been filmed near Le Mans, where the Radeau was created over thirty years ago. There is nothing extraordinary about it, and yet, this countryside is projected on moveable panels that, as always with Françoise Tanguy, compose and recompose the space. Clearly what matters is how it is seen and perceived.

And then there is that which it confronts. History, and specifically that of the 20th century's great tragedies, are always profoundly handled in François Tanguy's theatre, but in “Eleventh”, we sense it more than in other of Tanguy's recent creations.

Let yourself be swept away by ghosts and shadows...

The initiated, not to mention the aficionados, will recognize the inimitable universe that François Tanguy masters on stage, with his perspectives and vanishing points, his cast shadows, in this theatre of echos and of figures where light plays as great a role as space, movement, script or music.

Indeed, as in François Tanguy's “Cantatas”, “Coda” and “Ricercar”, it is music which named this production, a reference to the eleventh of sixteen of Beethoven's string quartets, entitled « serio ».

The sound of the world that François Tanguy's theatre amplifies is that of boots, that of political violence. In the puzzle composed by this director, painter and choreographer, Richard II's meditation on destiny and power, at the end of Shakespeare's eponymous play, dialogues with the young helmeted soldiers who try, grotesquely, to salute in fascist style, while we hear an excerpt from a speech by Mussolini.

But we need not always understand and identify everything on this raft that takes us away, where the spectator has no narrative or fictional oar on which to cling.

There is a touch of the archeologist in the captain of the Radeau and his actors perform as we have seen nowhere else, or rather do not perform but summon fragments, traces of human experience. Together, they create this theatre that Jean-Paul Manganaro praises for its «depth of the necessary beauty before History's eternal scowl ».