

# ONE SONG

## HISTOIRE(S) DU THÉÂTRE IV

MIET WARLOP/ IRENE WOOL VZW & NTGENT  
BOOKING: FRANS BROOD PRODUCTIONS & NTGENT



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NTGent

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# THE PAST IS THE PRESENT IS THE FUTURE

As human beings, we are, willingly and unwillingly, a gladiator in conflict with time. Beauty and comfort cannot be grasped but happen to us; the need to connect makes us both vulnerable and tragic. Vulnerable in our physical limitations, despite the efforts we make to strengthen our bodies. And tragic in our existential loneliness, the result of an awareness that is peculiar to mankind. Consequently, a question that keeps recurring is: how can we find each other in a way that is not non-committal? Through the metaphor of a live competition/concert, including a commentator and a cheerleader, Miet Warlop invites us to form a community and lift each other up, as in a celebration. The temporary thus becomes the universal, and the personal becomes something of the collective. *ONE SONG*: how one song can give meaning to a whole society. Unity in diversity.

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# THE PERFORMANCE

In this new production a history resonates that has both artistic and personal significance for Miet Warlop. Her reflection on theatre as an art form leads to a physical concept in which we recognize elements from previous productions. Such as the **ritual concert** with a **choreographic pattern** that was the basis for both *GHOST WRITER AND THE BROKEN HAND BREAK* (2018) and *DE SPORTBAND / AFGETRAINDE KLANKEN* (2005). Or the invitation to breathe together, performers and audience, to exorcise our fears and demons, as we saw it in *FRUITS OF LABOR* (2016), using the performance as 'a painkiller for the world'. It typifies Warlop's artistic signature that such themes and motifs sometimes resurface years later: in her oeuvre, everything is connected, implicitly or explicitly. It is circular, like life itself, in many ways.



Another element is the physical effort as metaphor, artistic research that Warlop started in *DE SPORTBAND / AFGETRAINDE KLANKEN*, made at the time as a requiem and tribute to her deceased brother Jasper. That production was an idiosyncratic marriage between sport, as the epitome of human movement, and music, as the epitome of sounds and noise. The – real – efforts on stage were an illustration of life itself: a succession of energy waves, propelled by our individual and collective breathing, until exhaustion irrevocably follows. And what is still possible after that. That too is the approach of **ONE SONG**: the agreement to go all the way together, here and now.

The eight performers in the show go to extremes together: through sung text, images and objects, oxygen and sweat, they evoke our *condition humaine*. Again and again, someone stands up to push his or her boundaries. They defy time and give expression to a deep human need: the moment when we can transcend our thinking body

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# ABOUT HISTOIRE(S) DU THÉÂTRE

What is your history as a theatre maker? At the invitation of NTGent, Miet Warlop formulates an answer as only she can. In the series *Histoire(s) du Théâtre* she is the fourth director to accept the challenge of a creation in which present, past and future meet each other in an inspiring way – after Milo Rau, Faustin Linyekula and Angélica Liddell. ***Histoire(s) du Théâtre IV : ONE SONG*** is set in the unique universe of Warlop, where eight performers enter the arena for a mesmerizing ritual about farewell, life and death, hope and resurrection.



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# CAST

- 4 musicians / performers
- 1 singer
- 1 commentator /actor
- 1 cheerleader / dancer
- 1 bodybuilder
- 7 screaming crowd
- 1 trainer of the screaming crowd



Collaborations with: Wietse Tanghe, Karin Tanghe, Joppe Tanghe, Willem Lenaerts, Milan Schudel, Josse De Broeck, Josh Serafin

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# PRESS

"*Ghost Writer and the Broken Hand Break* is a dazzling, chillingly controlled performance" \*\*\*\* **De Volkskrant**

"*Fruits of Labor* jumps to the rhythm of Miet Warlop's heartbeat and is a poppy, sparkling gift to a world where any kind of sparkle is in danger of being curbed." \*\*\*\* **Focus Knack**

"With her love for the object, she creates a surrealistic universe in *Springville* that intrigues, charms and even regularly massages the laughing muscles. Or how something unusually captivating can grow out of the amazement for an ordinary cardboard box." **De Morgen**

"The performance shows the beauty and humour of total destruction. (...) *Mystery Magnet* is a gem. (...) *Mystery Magnet* shows the consequences of certain choices, but is never rigid and that is exactly Warlop's strength. Time and again she breaks through the existing image." \*\*\*\*\* **Theaterkrant**



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# ON MIET WARLOP

Miet Warlop (\*1978) is a Belgian visual artist born in Torhout. She lives and works between Ghent and Brussels. Miet Warlop holds a master degree in Visual Arts from KASK, Ghent. For her graduation project *Huilend Hert, Aangeschoten Wild*, an 'inhabited installation consisting of six tableaux vivants and a crawling subject', she won the Franciscus Pycke Jury Award and the residence prize for Young Theatre Work 2004.

Many other performances, actions and projects followed and in 2005 she premiered *SPORTBAND / Afgetrainde Klanken* a forty-minute performance, in which twenty people race against time through music and sports. In the context of *Lovepangs* (Vooruit, 2005) she created the one-on-one performance *Cherish the Cherries*. From January 2006 until November 2007 Warlop was one of the six artists of DE BANK (Arts Centre CAMPO, Ghent), where she was working on her series of 'Propositions', named *Big Heap / Mountain*. In between, she was responsible for the set design for performances by Pieter Genard, Raven Ruëll, DitoDito-Jef Lambrecht, KVS (Brussels), Arts Centre Vooruit (Ghent) and Les Ballets C de la B (Ghent).

While she was touring the 'Propositions' all over Europe, she realised *Springville*, a fifty minutes game of chaos, expectations and surprises, in which scenography, costumes, props and characters are closely interwoven and merged together. *Springville* premiered in May 2009 at Arts Centre BUDA (Kortrijk).

Miet Warlop moved to Berlin for three years to concentrate on her visual work and prepare a new piece called *Mystery Magnet*, which premiered at KunstenFestivalDesArts (Brussels) in May 2012. *Mystery Magnet* won the Stuckemarkt Theatertreffen Prize at the Berliner Festspiele for its innovative form of theatre. *Mystery Magnet* has played more than a hundred times all over the world and was nominated for Theatertreffen Berlin for finding a new way of making stage-arts. *Mystery Magnet* is still touring all over Europe and beyond.

In the course of 2012-2013 Miet Warlop explored different possibilities with her *Nervous Pictures* and performances/interventions, through projects and commissions, both in a visual arts as in theatre context in/with Baltic Triennial (Vulnius), Hebbel am Ufer (Berlin), Lisson Gallery (London), Southard Reid Gallery (London). In November 2012, as part of her four-year associated artist residency at Beursschouwburg (Brussels), she created the opening event of the season with the *Alligator Project*: a weekend of combined media and performances by different artists and musicians like Reggie Watts and Michael Portnoy, a project curated by Miet Warlop.

In 2014 Miet Warlop started her own legal structure Miet Warlop / Irene Wool. In October 2014 the first production *Dragging the Bone* premiered at Beursschouwburg (Brussels). *Dragging the Bone* is a solo performance on a sculptured world.

In 2015 Miet Warlop opened the festivities that celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of Beursschouwburg (Brussels) with *Rocket*. Also, Art Gallery Barbican (London) commissioned a performance as a part of the project *Station to Station*, hosted by Doug Aitken.

While touring her solo *Dragging the Bone* and celebrating the hundredth show of *Mystery Magnet* in Ghent, Porto and Bordeaux, she finishes the year by opening her first solo exhibition project in KIOSK Gallery (Ghent) titled *Crumbling Down the Circle of my Iconoclasm*.

In 2016 a new large scale stage work premiered – ***Fruits of Labor***, a deep night choreographical concert performance, functioning as a painkiller for the world. *Fruits of Labor* premiered at KunstenFestivalDesArts (Brussels) in May 2016 and is still touring around the world.

In addition to her performance work for theatre venues, Miet Warlop has created and presented an ever-growing cycle of visual art performances, interventions and live installations.

*Nervous Pictures* has been presented in 2017 in KW Institute for Contemporary Art (Berlin), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Performatik (Brussels), among others.

In 2017 she opens Arts Institute Vooruit (Ghent) with the monumental performance ***Amusement Park***, and she was invited by BOZAR (Brussels) within the context of the Yves Klein retrospective exhibition to re-envision and re-stage her seminal work, *Mystery Magnet*, as well as to create the opening performance of the exhibition, ***HORSE, a man, a woman, a desire for adventure*** and *Mystery Magnet*. During the closing ceremony of the Paul Bury exhibition the visual art intervention, ***The Board*** is presented.



Festival Actoral. 17 (Marseille) invites Miet Warlop for *L'Objet des Mots*, which results in a new project ***Ghost Writer and the Broken Hand Break*** – a production that premiered in September 2018 at NTGent (Ghent). Warlop cooperates with author and curator Raimundas Malasauskas and musician Pieter De Meester.

Beginning of 2018 Miet Warlop created ***Big Bears Cry Too***, a solo performance with Wietse Tanghe. This performance for all ages premiered at hetpaleis (Antwerp) in April 2018.

Both performances are successfully touring since then. Together with *Fruits of Labor* and *Mystery Magnet*, no fewer than eighty-five performances were played in 2019 between Belgium and abroad: Switzerland, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Great Britain, Spain, Singapore and Canada.

In 2020 Miet Warlop / Irene Wool starts a collaboration with Frans Brood Productions and this results in the programming of many performances, nationally and internationally. However, since the outbreak of Covid-19, only a few of the planned shows could be performed; the remaining dates have been moved to 2021 and 2022.

During the Covid lockdown, Miet Warlop started a series of online episodes titled **Slamming Doors**: a sitcom format that will function as a pleasure platform for the artist practice, collaborations, sources, and open talks . . . A series of episodes has been produced to go against the age-old niche thinking about art and experiencing art, gradually gaining popularity, and transcend the live performance's momentum.

Moreover, Miet Warlop / Irene Wool has developed the idea to create an online platform to share a live database with archive material with a glimpse into the daily artist practice.

In autumn 2021, Miet Warlop is revisiting the twelve-year-old piece *Springville* under the new title **After All Springville**. Warlop commemorates her much-loved piece in a new era and repositions the work within her oeuvre. The revival mixes an existing show (*Springville*) and an installation (*Amusement Park*) into a new whole and premiered in August 2021 at the Internationales Sommerfestival Kampnagel (Hamburg).

Miet Warlop / Irene Wool is at this moment working on **Histoire(s) du Théâtre IV : One Song**, as the fourth director to accept the NTGent commission.

The artist is also researching on her new production, **Delirium**, in collaboration with Kunstenfestivaldesarts and Kaaitheater. Delirium will premiere in Spring 2024.