

# THE FLOOD DRUMMERS

In the form of an ancient play for puppets  
performed by real actors

# SYDNEY FESTIVAL

SUMMER <sup>20</sup>02

  
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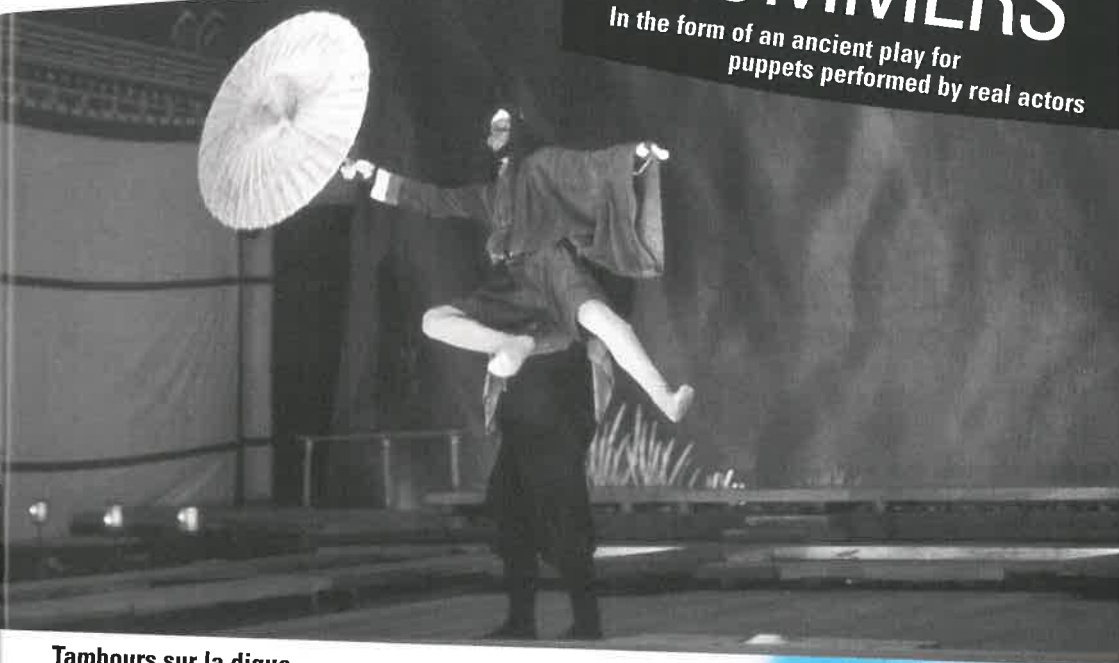
# SYDNEY FESTIVAL

in association with **FOX STUDIOS**  
and **SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY**  
presents

**THÉÂTRE DU SOLEIL**

## THE FLOOD DRUMMERS

In the form of an ancient play for  
puppets performed by real actors



**Tambours sur la digue**  
sous forme de pièce ancienne pour marionnettes jouée par des acteurs

**Royal Hall of Industries, Fox Studios**

**5 - 24 January 2002**

Sydney Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of the AT&T Foundation



# The Flood Drummers

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## TAMBOURS SUR LA DIGUE

Sous forme de pièce ancienne pour marionnettes jouée par des acteurs

Written by Héléna Cixous  
Music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre

### With, in order of appearance

**The Soothsayer's Daughter  
Her Manipulators** Renata Ramos-Maza  
Sergio Canto Sabido  
Vincent Mangado

**The Soothsayer  
His Manipulators** Nicolas Sotnikoff  
Jean-Charles Maricot  
Matthieu Rauchvarger

**Lord Khang  
His Manipulators** Juliana Carneiro da Cunha  
Jean-Charles Maricot  
Sergio Canto Sabido  
Alexandre Roccoli

**The Chancellor  
His Manipulators** Duccio Bellugi Vannuccini  
Vincent Mangado  
Franck Saurel

**Hun, Lordship's Nephew  
His Manipulators** Sava Lolov  
Franck Saurel  
Martial Jacques

**The Architect  
(successively)  
Their Manipulators** Martial Jacques  
Sava Lolov  
Alexandre Roccoli  
Serge Nicolai  
Sergio Canto Sabido

**The Royal Bailiff  
Her Manipulators** Myriam Azencot  
Sergio Canto Sabido  
Jean-Charles Maricot

**Tshumi, the Court Painter  
His Manipulators** Serge Nicolai  
Jean-Charles Maricot

**He Tao, Hun's Lieutenant  
His Manipulators** Nicolas Sotnikoff  
Matthieu Rauchvarger  
Vincent Mangado

**Wang Po, the  
Chancellor's Secretary  
His Manipulators** Sava Lolov  
Martial Jacques  
Alexandre Roccoli

**Madame Li,  
the noodle merchant  
Her Manipulators**

Juliana Carneiro da Cunha  
Sergio Canto Sabido  
Jean-Charles Maricot

**Kisa, her servant  
Her Manipulators**

Sandrine Raynal  
Matthieu Rauchvarger  
Judith Marvan Enriquez  
Francis Ressorit

**The Monk  
Her Manipulators**

Myriam Azencot  
Franck Saurel  
Alexandre Roccoli  
Francis Ressorit

**The First Fisherman  
His Manipulators**

Duccio Bellugi Vannuccini  
Vincent Mangado  
Sergio Canto Sabido

**The Fisherwoman  
Her Manipulator**

Delphine Cottu  
Francis Ressorit

**The Second Fisherman  
His Manipulator**

Jean-Charles Maricot  
Matthieu Rauchvarger

**Manipulator of  
Tiny Fisherman**

Pascal Guarise

**The River  
His Manipulator**

Nicolas Sotnikoff  
Martial Jacques





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**The Drummers**

Delphine Cottu  
 Dominique Jambert  
 Eve Doe Bruce  
 Fabianna de Mello e Souza  
 Jean-Charles Maricot  
 Judith Marvan Enriquez  
 Maitreyi  
 Maria Adelia  
 Martial Jacques  
 Matthieu Rauchvarger  
 Sergio Canto Sabido  
 Shaghayegh Beheshti  
 Vincent Mangado  
 Jacques Poirot  
 Adolfo Canto Sabido

**Their Manipulators**

**Palanquin Bearers**

Nicolas Sotnikoff  
 Serge Nicolai

**Their Manipulators**

Sergio Canto Sabido  
 Matthieu Rauchvarger  
 Alexandre Roccoli  
 Sandrine Raynal  
 Francis Ressor

**O'mi the Lantern Seller  
 Her Manipulator**

Renata Ramos-Maza  
 Franck Saurel

**Her Apprentice  
 His Manipulator**

Nicolas Sotnikoff  
 Edson Rodrigues

**Liou Po,  
 Messenger Bearing  
 Bad News  
 His Manipulators**

Duccio Bellugi Vannuccini  
 Sergio Canto Sabido  
 Edson Rodrigues

**The Architect's Wife  
 Her Manipulator**

Renata Ramos-Maza  
 Vincent Mangado

**The First Guard  
 His Manipulator**

Nicolas Sotnikoff  
 Jean-Charles Maricot

**The Second Guard  
 His Manipulator**

Vincent Mangado  
 Matthieu Rauchvarger

**Child, Wang Po's Brother  
 Her Manipulator**

Sandrine Raynal  
 Francis Ressor

**Wang Po's Elderly Father  
 His Manipulator**

Duccio Bellugi Vannuccini  
 Franck Saurel

**Bai Ju, the Puppeteer  
 His Manipulators**

Sergio Canto Sabido  
 Franck Saurel  
 Vincent Mangado

**His Wife  
 Her Manipulator**

Maria Adelia  
 Alexandre Roccoli

**His Daughter  
 Her Manipulator**

Judith Marvan Enriquez  
 Matthieu Rauchvarger

**His Mother  
 Her Manipulator**

Eve Doe Bruce  
 David Santonja



**The Palace Servants**

Delphine Cottu  
 Eve Doe Bruce  
 Judith Marvan Enriquez  
 Maitreyi

**Their Manipulators**

Shaghayegh Beheshti  
 Sergio Canto Sabido  
 Shaghayegh Beheshti  
 Matthieu Rauchvarger  
 Maitreyi  
 Eve Doe Bruce  
 Francis Ressor  
 Alexandre Roccoli  
 David Santonja  
 Franck Saurel

**The Chancellor's  
 Standard Bearer  
 His Manipulators**

Pascal Guarise  
 Eve Doe Bruce  
 Francis Ressor  
 Maitreyi

**The Royal Bailiff's  
 Henchmen**

Matthieu Rauchvarger  
 Nicolas Sotnikoff  
 Serge Nicolai  
 Alexandre Roccoli

**Their Manipulators**

**Hun's Servants**

Fabianna de Mello e Souza  
 Shaghayegh Beheshti  
 Francis Ressor  
 David Santonja

**Their Manipulators**



**Directed by** Ariane Mnouchkine

**Set Design** Guy-Claude François  
Ysabel de Maisonneuve  
Didier Martin

**Costume Design** Marie-Hélène Bouvet  
Nathalie Thomas  
Ysabel de Maisonneuve  
Annie Tran

**Masks** The actors and Maria Adalia

**Musicians** Jean-Jacques Lemêtre and  
Carlos Bernardo Carvalho  
Dominique Jambert  
I Jing Hsieh

**Apprentice**

**Lighting** Cécile Allegoedt  
Carlos Obregon  
Jacques Poirot

**Assistant Director** Charles-Henri Bradier

**Production Advisor** Erhard Stiefel

**Carpenters** Antonio Ferreira  
Alain Brunswick  
Maël Lefrançois  
Amos Nguimbous

**Technical Apprentices** Karim Gougam  
Adolfo Canto Sabido  
Sébastien Marinetti

**Set Construction**

**Decoder of Maps  
and Mysteries** Étienne Lemasson

**Master Chefs** Christian Dupont  
Ly That You

**Caretaker** Marc Pujo

**House Manager** Pedro Guimaraes

**Office Staff** Pierre Salesne  
Liliana Andreone  
Christophe Floderer  
Marie Adroher  
Naruna Andrade  
Sylvie Papandréou

**For Sydney Festival  
Production Management** Annette Alderson  
and Richard Montgomery

**Technical Translator** Chris Axelson  
**Head Electrician** Sydney Bouhaniche  
**Wardrobe** Jacqueline Rutland  
and Helen Thatcher



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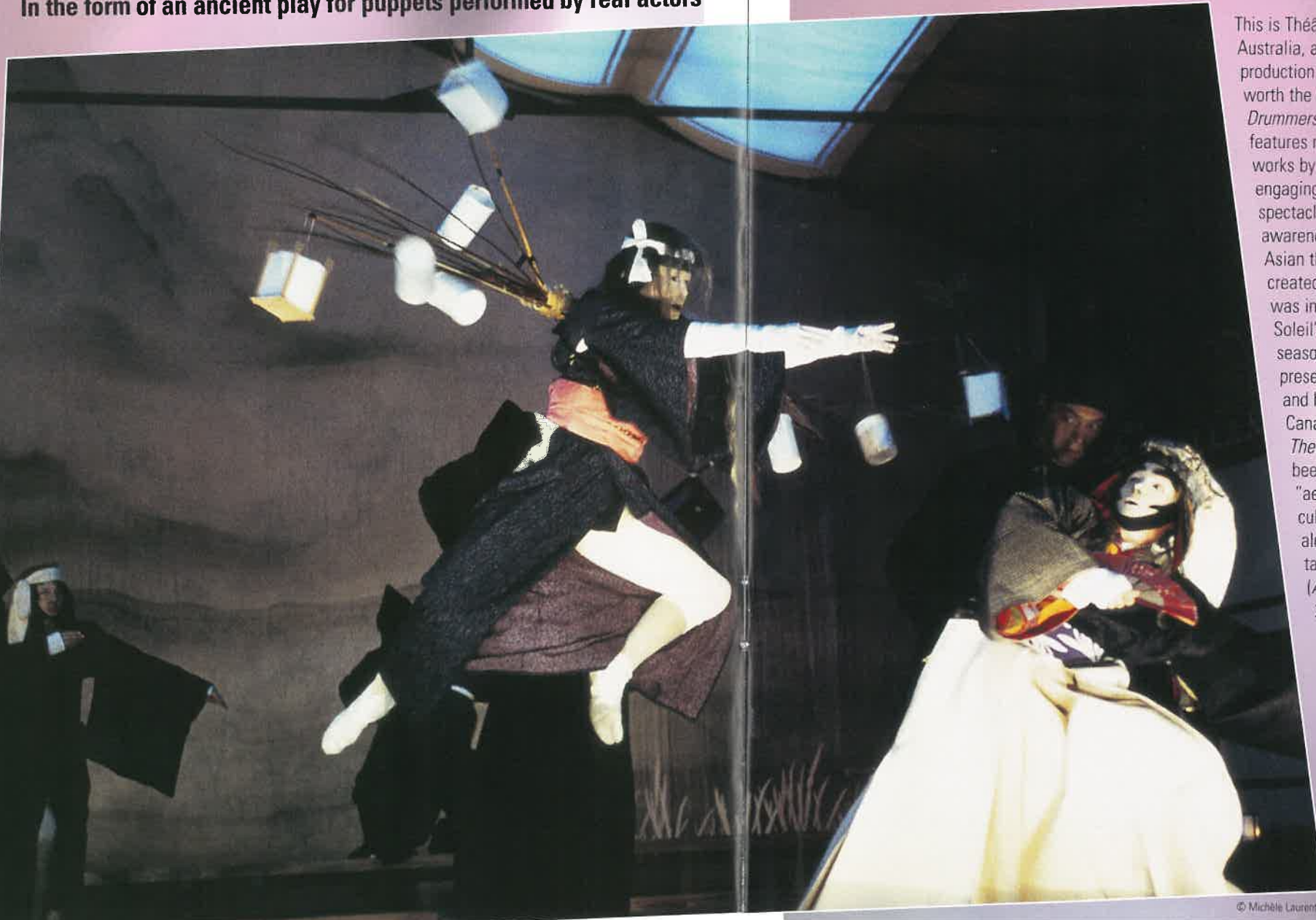
# The Flood

TAMBOURS SUR LA DIGUE

In the form of an ancient play for puppets performed by real actors

# Drummers

This is Théâtre du Soleil's first visit to Australia, and it's about time. The production they bring makes it almost worth the wait. *The Flood Drummers (Tambours sur la digue)* features many of the trademarks of works by Théâtre du Soleil: engaging, enchanting visual spectacle, an underlying political awareness, and innovative use of Asian theatrical traditions. It was created in 1999, and its premiere was in Paris at the Théâtre du Soleil's thirty-fifth anniversary season. It is the twenty-fifth presentation by the company, and has toured Europe, Canada, Japan and Korea. *The Flood Drummers* has been described as the "aesthetic and intellectual culmination of a quest of an alchemistic nature that has taken nearly 40 years" (Armelle Héliot, 22 September 1999).



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# Théâtre Du Soleil



## Soleil

Productions by the Théâtre du Soleil engage all the senses in a unique and totally absorbing theatrical experience. The company has created a contemporary theatrical language which draws on ancient traditions. It reminds the audience that the theatre is a place for reflection and also a place where the status quo can be challenged.

It is characteristic of the company's work that a multitude of theatrical traditions is explored in a single production. As well as their original compositions, the Théâtre du Soleil has presented works by Aeschylus, Euripides, Shakespeare and Molière, and all have drawn on many major theatrical traditions including commedia dell'arte, German cabaret, French fairground and circus, Indian Kathakali, Chinese opera, Japanese kabuki and Balinese topeng. Director Ariane Mnouchkine uses different theatrical styles explicitly and consciously. The company's aim is not realism but theatricality; its productions do not replicate the world, but interpret it through metaphor.

The theatre consists of metaphor, metaphor of gesture, metaphor of words. And what is wonderful in theatre is when an actor transforms an emotion, a memory, a state, or a passion. Passion in its pure state is not visible if the actor doesn't transform it into a performance, that is, into a sign, into a gesture... In our work what we refer to as the 'state' is the primary passion which takes over the actor. When he is angry, he has to depict the anger... It's not just a question of feeling, it's a question of showing... An actor is a person who finds a metaphor for an emotion.

**(Ariane Mnouchkine)**

Since 1969 - and in the tradition of Jacques Copeau and Antonin Artaud, Meyerhold and Edward Gordon Craig - Théâtre du Soleil has made a deliberate break from using realism in their productions. Instead, they have evolved an approach to theatre which treats every new production differently, but which always finds ways of presenting spectacular events simply and beautifully. Their productions speak powerfully to the audience about emotions and urges such as love, lust for power, death, self-interest and cunning.

Théâtre du Soleil's customary use of the theme of 'theatre within theatre' further emphasises their theatrical style. They maximise opportunities to share the theatrical experience between performers and audience. As you enter, you see an area to side of stage where the actors don their costumes and makeup. In this communal dressing-room, you are privy to the metamorphosis of the actors into puppet-like characters. Before the performance commences, the company staff mingle with the audience, and there is the option to taste a meal in keeping with the nature of the production - in this case, at Cartoucherie, Chinese peasant fare of noodles, here in Sydney Indian and French dishes. You are invited to witness the 'behind the scenes' theatrical process throughout the course of the production.

By 1974 the company had refined a commitment to combining highly theatrical forms with a social and political awareness: "It must always be remembered that our instrument for talking about the world is not the world, it's the theatre" (Ariane Mnouchkine). Mnouchkine and Cixous extrapolated from the accounts of the recent floods in China an allegorical tale that, while essentially timeless and universal, resonates with contemporary political themes such as environmental degradation and state corruption. On a larger scale, too, *The Flood Drummers* has relevance today. It depicts a harsh world where masses of poor, uneducated people are to be sacrificed to promote the well-being of the wealthier few.



## THE ASIAN INFLUENCE

"In a way we've always been a slightly oriental company and also, I believe that the theatre is oriental" (Ariane Mnouchkine)

In the 1970s the Théâtre du Soleil began focused investigations of Asian theatrical styles. Discernible in Mnouchkine's productions are the influences of traditional Asian performing arts referred to above as well as Kathakali from India, Kabuki and Kyogen from Japan, puppetry from China (Taiwan where it is still alive), or 'wild' dances from Sri Lanka.

The Asian performing arts fit beautifully with the metaphorical style of presentation developed by the Théâtre du Soleil:

"The mission of the actor in Asia is to find a true signal that can express things that cannot be seen. It is like performing an autopsy. You have to dig down and find the symptoms of the illness of the soul, and find a way to express that illness through a signal, a hieroglyph. That is what Asian actors are trained to do. But in spite of great masters like Stanislavsky, Meyerhold and Dullin who tell us the same thing, Western actors rarely achieve this goal of signaling through the flames."

(Ariane Mnouchkine)

In *The Flood Drummers* French and European theatrical styles are fused with the traditions of Asia. The way the company uses stylised signals, symbols and movement in *The Flood Drummers* could be reminiscent of the way Japanese Noh theatre uses a group of codes governed in strict ritual. In Japanese Bunraku, delicate puppets are set in motion by their Manipulators. The marionette-actors of this production are life-size versions of these 18th-century puppets. The make-up (actually the masks) of the 'marionettes' brings to mind Kabuki. The visual elements of this production are reminiscent of Chinese paintings or the woodblock prints of Japan's Ukiyo-e tradition.

## THE PROCESS

Mnouchkine founded the Théâtre du Soleil in 1964, and the company was structured as a cooperative. From the outset it has encouraged a spirit of shared communal enterprise. Mnouchkine had studied with Jacques Lecoq. In fact she dedicated *The Flood Drummers* to two great influences who died in 1999: Jacques Lecoq and Paul Puaux. Clearly, Mnouchkine exerts her strong personal influence on the company, and she is one of the few Western theatre directors to elicit such a sense of physical urgency from her actors. However her directing style is



intuitive rather than analytical and she does not impose interpretations on her cast, favouring a more indirect approach. From the outset she feeds her actors with images: "With our projects there is no pre-established vision, just some fragments, some desires..." Typically, in the five to six month rehearsal period, texts are freely improvised and the actors given the opportunity to experiment with all the roles. They are encouraged to demand a lot of – and stretch – themselves.

The Théâtre du Soleil almost never rehearses and performs during the same period, so each production takes an atypically long time to prepare. *The Flood Drummers* was nine months in rehearsal – researching, setting the pace, choreographing, experimenting. Before rehearsals commenced, the members of the company were given travel grants to observe theatre in Eastern Asia. Mnouchkine wanted the members of her company to have direct contact with the cultures that nurtured the performance traditions she was considering using. She furnished them with the basic theme of the production and indications of the performance styles they were likely to explore in rehearsals, for example 17th-18th-century Japanese Bunraku, Chinese opera, various Korean shamanic art forms, Japanese Kyogen and Chinese puppetry. In groups of two or three, comprising actors, musicians, set and costume designers, the members of the Théâtre du Soleil travelled to several countries including Vietnam, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia, and Korea.



## THE TEXT

This is the fifth production on which director Ariane Mnouchkine and writer Héliane Cixous have collaborated. From the start, the evolution of the text of *The Flood Drummers* has involved a playful hoax concocted between the two artists. In Spring 1999 the company announced a great find: a manuscript, supposedly penned by 'the great Chinese sage and poet, Hsi-Xhou', which had purportedly been discovered in the ancient Muscovy region. Ensuing study of this manuscript allegedly revealed that it was intended to be an account of a great flood in which everyone perished. When Cixous began giving interviews about the production, the obvious similarity between the authors' names was quickly noticed, and the hoax, which was never intended to be taken seriously, was revealed.

In fact, the production was inspired by recent accounts of the catastrophic floods in contemporary China. Mnouchkine and Cixous wanted the action of the play and its atmosphere to be Asian, but without specifying a country or era. Cixous used her travel grant to go to America, rather than Asia. She combed its libraries for all available information on Japanese Noh theatre, which, she explained, was only brought to the attention of Europe by American scholars in the early twentieth century. What she found has directly informed the style of text and characterisation in *The Flood Drummers*:

"When I started to look for Noh texts, in American libraries, I found out that they were only ten or fifteen pages long. Every word is polysemic. The references are not to gods and heroes but to simple people, farmers, fishermen. The major influence on Noh's vision is Zen Buddhism. A typical Noh play will have ghosts, demons. The short texts are not unlike Haikus, those tiny poems which seem so small but possess an extraordinary power. So, in translation a major part is lost. It is an elliptical art, like the Japanese flower arrangement."

(Héliane Cixous)

As with previous productions on which Cixous and Mnouchkine have collaborated, they spent several days in conversation, concocting the basis of a tale which would encompass the skills and ethos of the Théâtre du Soleil. It was important to them that the subject have a contemporary as well as a metaphorical dimension. Cixous did not ignore other references – Biblical, mythical, historical – but in balancing these she was careful to keep away from constructing a text requiring realism in presentation.

## THE PRODUCTION

Théâtre du Soleil is famous for presenting productions which are total theatrical experiences, and *The Flood Drummers* is no exception. The direction, text, costumes, set and music are seamlessly woven together with great effect. Simple items become metaphors for much more, and magic is created. A small flag of diaphanous tulle becomes the rising mist; a torn umbrella suggests a breath of wind or the lapping of water; red fabric, which flows, is blood; a central rectangular area framed by stones and intersecting boards, with ramps and steps on different levels, serves as plains, rivers, mountains. "Everything is basic and everything builds up the image, the emotion and the poetry" (Annie Chenleux).

The athletic prowess of the Théâtre du Soleil performers is renowned. In *The Flood Drummers*, a cast of



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twenty-eight play multiple roles including an old prince, a contemptible architect, henchmen, a fortune-teller and, one of the most engaging, a 'canteen woman' noodle-seller Madame Li. She is the Asian incarnation of Brecht's Mother Courage, and "trudges through the story with her noodle stand strapped to her back, trying to make a living and survive" (*New York Times*, 27 May 2001).

The Théâtre du Soleil features a striking form of illusion in this production. The characters are presented as large human marionettes, manipulated before the audience's eyes by actors clothed in black. Using precise, gestural codes the characters adorn themselves in masks in full view of the audience:

"They are at the same time puppets and people, people who have become puppets, and puppets who have acquired human presence and speech. The illusion must be complete. Soon you forget these distinctions. What remains is the triumphant art of the stage. What remains is the stage." (Héliane Cixous)

Each character is manipulated by one or two black-clad puppeteers whose faces are covered in tulle. The characters operate "in front of silky curtains where they stand out from imprecise hills, like mist in Chinese paintings, they tower or collapse in a series of superb pictures..." (Annie

Copperman). The marionette-performers are so disguised by their makeup and costumes that it is difficult for the audience to determine where the impulses for their movements originate.



The majority of the countries the cast travelled to on their stipends have theatrical traditions in which puppetry has been developed using highly sophisticated techniques. Puppetry is fundamental to much Asian theatre. Western theatre theorists such as Craig, Maeterlinck, and Kleist have written about the ideal of the actor as puppet, with animation superior to that of a human dancer, or 'uber-marionette' (a super-puppet without ego, capable of carrying out all demands). The concept dates back at least 100 years. Théâtre du Soleil claims that while these theorists may have talked about it, they never did it.

Initially Mnouchkine used puppet exercises as a rehearsal device – a formal tool to enable the actors to escape realism from the outset. The company intended discarding this tool before the play reached performance. Duccio Bellugi Vannuccini, one of the cast, explains how the form of presentation came about:

"Myself and a couple other actors thought, if Ariane wants puppets, let's give her puppets... I put bamboo sticks around my arms, from wrist to elbow, a belt around my waist and a harness on my back. Instead of wearing Japanese pants, I just tied them in front of my legs so that the movement of the legs and the puppet were independent from my real steps. And in this position I entered the stage directed by two puppeteers, like the Bunraku puppets. To get to the centre of the stage I had to step over a gap, that signified a channel, so at one with the koken (the Manipulator), I inhaled, exhaled while bending my knees, and with the next inhalation I extended my legs while the puppeteers lifted me up and across the channel, as if in flight... From that moment on, puppet, puppeteer, music and text were sealed together, as one."

Over nine months of development (and one month of travelling over Asian countries), the company realised that the use of puppetry enabled them to avoid mundane gestures so effectively that they decided to build it into the form of the play. It has been observed that one of the most striking aspects of this production is the brutality of the puppets. Another cast member, Myriam Azencot, explained that the puppeteers are needed for presenting this violence. They lend a dark, background presence and magnify the narrow range of movement otherwise open to the marionette-performers, by enabling them to fly and fight more savagely.

The use of illusory puppets as a form of theatrical presentation echoes the Asian influences in the production, as well as the company's own desire to steer away from realism and to perform actions metaphorically:



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"Being a puppet offers a wider field of expression than is otherwise unavailable to human actors. It is more hidden, more subtle, more difficult in a way... making everything more poetic and more theatrical. With puppets, everything is taken to the extreme, whether it is violence or passion. Being a marionette gives you the opportunity to signal almost everything, and if you are able to do this, there are no limits." (Ariane Mnouchkine)

Mnouchkine believes each entrance and exit should have both meaning and interest. The actors playing marionettes move like a minutely choreographed ballet, never articulating their fingers, and bending stiffly from the waist. While their features and movements are consistently stiff, their background aides are ambidextrously graceful as they lift their puppets off the ground, metamorphosing them into weightless, dream creatures. The result is "a dazzling sight... where theatre and choreography are blended, where the costumes are of a timeless beauty..." (Jean-Louis Pinte).

The sumptuous costumes of the actor-marionettes could be straight out of a Japanese print by Kunisada: gold and ivory, red and black, grey - shimmering silks which are magical and fascinating. The marionette's faces are concealed with an inventive form of mask: nylon stocking is stretched across the features from eye to upper lip and fastened so as to flatten

the nose and tilt the eyes. The stocking is padded underneath to exaggerate cheeks or chin, sliced through with openings for mouth and eyes, then coloured make-up is applied on top. The effect recesses the eyes and gives them the same stylised faces that are created with Kabuki's heavy white makeup, yet it leaves the actors' mouths completely mobile for the delivery of lines. In Kabuki tradition, their aides are clothed in simple black.

Guy-Claude Francois' set is intricate and strongly linear. The largest of the wooden platforms floats in a pool of water – as unstable and precarious as is the kingdom. Bordering the wooden stage are the many and varied musical instruments of musician and sound-designer Jean-Jacques Lemêtre and his companions. Music is an integral part of *The Flood Drummers*. Lemêtre's score is precisely linked to the action on stage throughout the entire performance. Continual musical accompaniment is characteristic of Théâtre du Soleil productions. Over the years the company has amassed a significant collection of authentic instruments from all over world as well as others they have specially built themselves. More than 100 instruments – traditional, Asian and invented - are played throughout *The Flood Drummers*, creating strange and delicate music of both fast and slow rhythms using tones and sounds from the low to the high pitched.

At the conclusion of the production, the actor-marionette characters with which the audience has become familiar are transformed to real puppets with clearly recognisable faces. In the end only the puppet master is on stage, retrieving the 'bodies' of these small puppets, and propping them at the edge of the stage to dry. In this moving and highly theatrical scene, the master Manipulator is saving what little there is to be saved. The 'people' are dead – but there is still the possibility of saving the elements required to continue to tell their story: "It's not a resurrection of their characters. It is a resurrection of their memories" (Ariane Mnouchkine).

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# synopsis

## One thousand years ago, on the land's end of China

The story takes place in an ancient Asian Kingdom lost on the land's end of China. In Lord Khang's kingdom the waters mount unceasingly, bringing about the danger of massive floods.

The Oracle predicts a disaster of immense proportions.

During the council to prevent the impending deluge, the Chancellor holds accountable Hun, the Lord Khang's nephew who holds the forest concession for the present state of affairs, as it was he who had razed down the trees that supported the dam.

The waters mount and the Lord faces a dilemma: should he destroy the dam on the North face or that on the South?

Should he sacrifice the port and the market-place, the commercial quarter of the town or the museums and the schools which made up the artistic quarter?

The Lord Khang, old and feeble, hesitates. Meanwhile Hun takes over his place and makes an attempt to open the dam of the Cherry Mountain, the third one that protects the countryside up-river and the thousands of peasants who inhabit it.

The Royal Bailiff, acting to protect his own interests, opposes this, while the Architect, who knows the constructional defects of the dam, discovers a dangerous breach in town. The masses make a move to organise a rebellion against the mighty with the help of the Watchers who, high up in the hills, launch the alarm with the beats of their drums.



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# landmarks

- 1964** Birth of the company created by Ariane Mnouchkine and a group of actors and technicians coming from university theater.
- 1964-65** LES PETITS BOURGEOIS by Maxime Gorki, adapted by Arthur Adamov, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Roberto Moscoso. Performed at the M.J.C. de la Porte de Montreuil (Paris) and later at the Théâtre Mouffetard (Paris). 2 900 spectators.
- 1965-66** CAPITAINE FRACASSE by Philippe Léotard, based on a novel by Théophile Gautier, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Roberto Moscoso, costumes by Françoise Tournafond. Performed at the Théâtre Récamier (Paris). 4 000 spectators.
- 1967** THE KITCHEN by Arnold Wesker, adapted by Philippe Léotard, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Roberto Moscoso. Performed at the Cirque de Montmartre (Paris). 63 400 spectators.
- 1968** A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM by William Shakespeare, adapted by Philippe Léotard, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jacques Lasry, choreography by Ursula Kubler, scenography by Roberto Moscoso, costumes by Françoise Tournafond. Performed at the Cirque de Montmartre (Paris).  
L'ARBRE SORCIER, JÉRÔME ET LA TORTUE by Catherine Dasté, based on a story written by school-children from Sartrouville (suburb of Paris) directed by Catherine Dasté, music by Jacques Lasry, scenography by Jean-Baptiste Manessier, costumes by Marie-Hélène Dasté. Performed at the Cirque de Montmartre (Paris). 47 000 spectators.
- 1969** LES CLOWNS, collective creation of the Théâtre du Soleil, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Teddy Lasry, scenography by Roberto Moscoso, costumes by Christiane Candries. Performed at the Théâtre de la Commune d'Aubervilliers (suburb of Paris), the Avignon Festival and the Elysée Montmartre (Paris). 40 000 spectators.
- 1970** End of August: the company settles at the CARTOUCHERIE de Vincennes.
- 1970-71** 1789, collective creation of the Théâtre du Soleil, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Roberto Moscoso, costumes by Françoise Tournafond. Performed at the Piccolo Teatro in Milano (Italy) and at the Cartoucherie. Toured in 1971: France, Martinique, Lausanne, Berlin, London, Belgrade. 281 370 spectators (Paris and tours).
- 1972-73** 1793, collective creation of the Théâtre du Soleil, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Roberto Moscoso, costumes by Françoise Tournafond. Performed at the Cartoucherie. 102 100 spectators.
- 1974** 1789, film based on the play by the Théâtre du Soleil, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine with the Théâtre du Soleil.
- 1975** L'AGE D'OR, collective creation of the Théâtre du Soleil, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Françoise Tournafond, Jean-Claude Barriera and Nathalie Ferreira, masks by Erhard Stiefel. Performed at the Cartoucherie. 96 080 spectators. Toured in 1975-76: France, Warsaw, Venice, Belgium and Milan: 40 000 spectators.



- 1976-77** MOLIÈRE, film written and directed by Ariane Mnouchkine with the Théâtre du Soleil. Sets by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Daniel Ogier, photography by Bernard Zitzemann, original music by René Clémencic. 2,000,000 viewers.
- 1977-78** DOM JUAN by Molière, directed by Philippe Caubère, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Françoise Tournafond. Performed at the Cartoucherie. 30 439 spectators.
- 1979-80** MÉPHISTO, THE NOVEL OF A CAREER, based on a novel by Klaus Mann. Adapted and directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Nani Noël and Daniel Ogier, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, masks by Erhard Stiefel. Produced in collaboration with the Theater Workshop of Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium). Performed at the Cartoucherie, Avignon Festival, Theater Workshop of Louvain-la-Neuve. Toured in 1980 through Lyon, Rome, Berlin, Munich, Lons-le-Saulnier. Total attendance (Paris and tour) : approximately 160 000 spectators.
- 1981-84** "THE SHAKESPEARE CYCLE". Translated and directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Jean-Claude Barriera and Nathalie Thomas, masks by Erhard Stiefel, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre.
- December 10 1981: Opening of RICHARD II at the Cartoucherie.
- July 10 1982: Opening of TWELTH NIGHT at the Avignon Festival.
- January 18 1984: Opening of HENRY IV, part I, at the Cartoucherie.
- Richard II, Twelfth Night and Henry IV, performed at the Cartoucherie.
- Tours: Avignon Festival, Munich Festival, Olympic Arts Festival at Los Angeles, Berlin Festival.
- Total number of spectators (in Paris and tours) for "The Shakespeare Cycle" : 253 000 spectators.
- 1985-86** September 11 1985: Opening, at the Cartoucherie, of L'HISTOIRE TERRIBLE MAIS INACHEVÉE DE NORODOM SIHANOUK, ROI DU CAMBODGE, written by Hélène Cixous, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Jean-Claude Barriera and Nathalie Thomas, statues and masks by Erhard Stiefel. Cartoucherie. Toured in 1986: Amsterdam, Brussels, Madrid, Barcelona. 108 445 spectators (Paris and tours).
- 1987-88** September 30 1987: Opening, at the Cartoucherie, of L'INDIADE OU L'INDE DE LEURS RÊVES, ("The Indiad or The India of Their Dreams") written by Hélène Cixous, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Jean-Claude Barriera and Nathalie Thomas, mask by Erhard Stiefel. Cartoucherie.
- Toured in May 1988: Jerusalem Festival in Israel. 89 000 spectators.
- Video of the play, directed by Bernard Sobel.
- 1989** LA NUIT MIRACULEUSE ("The Miraculous Night"), film directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, screenplay by Ariane Mnouchkine and Hélène Cixous, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, statues by Erhard Stiefel, costumes by Nathalie Thomas. Filmed from August 1 to September 4 at the Cartoucherie and the Assemblée Nationale.
- 1990-93** "LES ATRIDES" CYCLE. directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François with sculptures by Erhard Stiefel, costumes by Nathalie Thomas and Marie-Hélène Bouvet.
- November 16 1990: Opening, at the Cartoucherie, of IPHIGÉNIE À AULIS ("Iphigenia at Aulis") by Euripides. Translated by Jean Bollack.
- November 24 1990: Opening, at the Cartoucherie, of AGAMEMNON by Aeschylus. Translated by Ariane Mnouchkine.

February 23 1991: Opening, at the Cartoucherie of LES CHOÉPHORES ("The Libation Bearers") by Aeschylus. Translated by Ariane Mnouchkine.

May 26 1992: Opening, at the Cartoucherie of LES EUMÉNIDES ("The Eumenides") by Aeschylus. Translated by Hélène Cixous.

Tours of "Les Atrides": Amsterdam (Holland Festival), Essen (Theater der Welt), Sicily (Orestyadi di Gibellina), Berlin (Berliner Festpiel), Lyon (TNP), Toulouse (Le Sorano), Montpellier (Le Printemps des Comédiens), Bradford (European Art Festival), Montreal (Festival des Amériques), New York (Brooklyn Academy of Arts), Vienne (Wiener FestWochen).

Total attendance for THE ATRIDES (Paris and tours) : 286 700 spectators.

**1993** From May 15 to June 16: L'INDE, DE PÈRE EN FILS, DE MÈRE EN FILLE..., directed by Rajeev Sethi, based on an idea of Ariane Mnouchkine, played by 32 Indian artists (musicians, dancers, acrobats, magicians, story-tellers) at the Cartoucherie. 8 414 spectators.

**1994** May 18 to October 30: LA VILLE PARJURE OU LE RÉVEIL DES ERINYES written by Hélène Cixous, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Nathalie Thomas and Marie-Hélène Bouvet. Produced in collaboration with the Wiener Festwochen (Austria) and the Ruhr Festspiele (Recklinghausen - Germany). Cartoucherie.

Tours 1995: Liège (Théâtre de la Place), Recklinghausen (Ruhr Festspiele), Vienne (Wiener Festwochen), Avignon Festival. 51 200 spectators.

**1995-96** June 10 1995: LE TARTUFFE by Molière, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Nathalie Thomas and Marie-Hélène Bouvet. Vienna (Austria - Wiener Festwochen). Tours 1995: Avignon Festival, Saint-Jean d'Angely (France), Liège (Belgium).

October 1995 - April 1996: performed at the Cartoucherie.

Tours 1996: La Rochelle (France), Vienne en France, Kopenhague (Copenhagen 96), Berlin (Berliner Festspiele). 122 000 spectators.

**1996-97** AU SOLEIL MÊME LA NUIT, film made by Eric Darmon, Catherine Vilpoux and Ariane Mnouchkine. Co-produced by La Sept ARTE, Agat Film & Cie, and the Théâtre du Soleil. Filmed at the Cartoucherie during the six-months rehearsals and the first performances of Le Tartuffe by Molière.

**1997-98** December 26 1997: ET SOUDAIN, DES NUITS D'ÉVEIL, collective creation of the Théâtre du Soleil in harmony with Hélène Cixous, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Nathalie Thomas and Marie-Hélène Bouvet. Cartoucherie.

Tour 1998: 55 000 spectators.

**July 24 1998:** TOUT EST BIEN QUI FINIT BIEN, by William Shakespeare, directed by Irina Brook, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Nathalie Thomas and Marie-Hélène Bouvet. Cloître des Carmes, Avignon.

**1999-2001** D'APRÈS LA VILLE PARJURE OU LE RÉVEIL DES ERINYES, written by Hélène Cixous, a film by Catherine Vilpoux, frames by Eric Darmon.

September 11 1999: TAMBOURS SUR LA DIGUE (THE FLOOD DRUMMERS) written by Hélène Cixous, directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, scenography by Guy-Claude François, costumes by Nathalie Thomas and Marie-Hélène Bouvet.

Tour 2000; 2001: Basel, Switzerland (Kaserne Basel), Antwerpen, Belgium (DeSingel), Lyon, France (Les Célestins Théâtre de Lyon), Montreal (Festival de Théâtre des Amériques), Tokyo (National Theatre, Tokyo), Séoul (National Theatre of Korea). 142,000 spectators.



# Hélène

# Cixous

Hélène Cixous has been "house playwright" at the Théâtre du Soleil for nearly twenty years. The first major play she wrote for the company, *The Terrible but Unfinished Story of Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia*, opened in 1984, and has been followed by a series of other highly acclaimed productions. She is also a prolific writer of poetic fiction with over thirty-five full-length books to her name, and has published a series of important theoretical essays, such as "The Laugh of the Medusa".

Hélène Cixous was born in Algeria in 1937 to an atypical Jewish family: her mother, later a midwife, came from Germany while her father, a doctor, was from Algeria. She grew up in Oran and Algiers before moving to France in 1955. One of France's leading intellectuals since the 1960s, Hélène Cixous was instrumental in founding the experimental *Université de Paris VIII* in 1968, and several years later she created the first and still the only French doctoral program in Women's Studies. Since 1987 she has been associated with the *Collège International de Philosophie*, where she teaches a renowned seminar in comparative literature. Since 1995 she has also served as Distinguished Visiting Professor at Northwestern University, Illinois. Her publications in English translation include *The Exile of James Joyce*, *Inside*, *The Newly Born Woman*, "Coming to Writing" and *Other Essays*, *The Book of Promethea*, *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing*, *Manna*, *The Hélène Cixous Reader*, *Rootprints*, *Stigmata*, *FirstDays of the Year*, *The Third Body with Reveries of the Wild Woman* and *The Day I Was Not There* forthcoming from Northwestern U. P. *The Plays of Hélène Cixous*, a collection of her major plays in translation will be published later this year by Routledge.

# Jean-Jacques Lemêtre

For more than twenty years, Jean-Jacques Lemêtre has been the Théâtre du Soleil's in-house composer and the polyvalent instrumentalist performing his music for the company's productions.

Born in Saint-Malo in 1952, his father was a Breton and his mother a Gypsy. He won a Gregorian chant singing prize when he was six years old, and later graduated from the *Conservatoire* with several first prizes including those for clarinet and bassoon. By the age of twelve he was performing at balls and dances, singing rhythm and blues, playing the saxophone, the flute and the clarinet.

In 1979, with the production of *Méphisto*, he became the Théâtre du Soleil's musical companion. His workshop at the theatre includes an "instrumentarium" with more than 800 instruments (out of the 2500 he has collected). He invented and built some 400 of them and the rest come from all over the world.

In parallel with his work at the Théâtre du Soleil he has numerous other activities, particularly in the domains of teaching, music therapy and instrument construction. He composes for the cinema and the television as well as for a range of circus, dance and theatre productions. For example he composed the music of the opening ceremony for the Olympic Games of Albertville. He often gives solo concerts, invited to French or foreign music festivals. In 1991 he received the Grand Prix of the French Theatre Critics' Association for the Best Theatre Composer.

His compositions for the Théâtre du Soleil are available in a series of CDs produced by the Théâtre: *Les Atrides*(1991-1993), *Et soudain des nuits d'éveil*(1997), *Tambours sur la Digue* (1999), as well as two audio cassettes of: *L'histoire terrible mais inachevée de Norodom Sihanouk, roi du Cambodge*(1985) and *L'Indiade ou l'Inde de leurs rêves*(1987).

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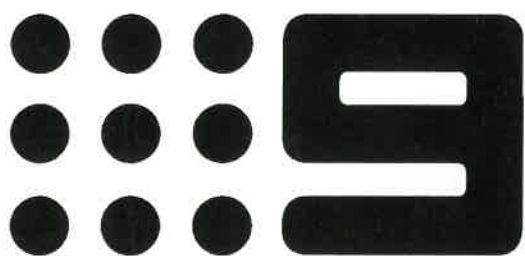
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