

## ABOUT BEBEL

As a teenager in 1982, at his table, cards in hand, he practiced alone, outside, in the Halles or Saint-Germain districts. His prodigious dexterity dazzled passers-by, and his close-up acts quickly became part of the history of magic. Belkheir Djenane, alias Bébel, magnifies the art of card magic, an ancestral craft elevated to the rank of great art. Co-opted by the cinema, TV and theatre, winner of the Colombe d'Or and first prize in card magic, he advised Yann Frish, creator of *Cassandra's Syndrome* and *Georges' Paradox* at the Rond-Point theatre. Here he leads the spectator into a maze of improbabilities, miracles with cards that pass through mirrors. He is no longer a demonstrator, he lives by the rhythm of the cards, leading the audience elsewhere, to a place where reality no longer holds sway, where dreams replace performance, where the cards lead the dance, take control of his hands, and reveal the mysterious reasons for their existence.

Bébel has long dreamed of going beyond technical performance, of placing himself in the background and allowing the cards to be the stars of the show. Since 2012 and his meeting with the director Anne Artigau, he has been inventing a new approach to his art. Anne Artigau has worked here with Howard Buten and Michèle Guigon. At Bébel's request, she has entrusted the main role to the cards, and together they have organised a unique, outstanding and unpredictable journey.

## PROJECT INFORMATION

Bébel and the director Anne Artigau join forces to shatter the systems, perhaps even the laws that govern tricks, and thus build the foundations of a practice where the magic effect is language. Like entomologists, they question magic about its conditions of existence: they make unexpected discoveries.

The simple turning over of a card can express drama, impressiveness, humour, emotion, and the depths of one's soul without the help of words.

For this new show, Bébel and Anne have created a dramatic performance made up from the sensations that the cards evoke. The inspiration is the mysterious and physical relationship that Bébel has with the cards!

Bébel, in the role of Djénane, interprets a prodigious dream, or a forgotten reality: with him, we will experience the life that the cards lead, with only the air, the water and the invisible as background!

## INTERVIEW WITH ANNE ARTIGAU

**On stage, is Bébel an actor or a manipulator? A narrator or a storyteller?**

Called Djenane by the cards, Bébel appears as a facilitator, a character... He will act like one of his cards. He will be the interpretation of his dream.

**What are you talking about? A story, a demonstration, a set of prepared acts.**

A composition of sensations, dreams, obsessions, impressions, visions. Are we talking about a prodigious dream or a forgotten reality? "One day the cards and man were one!"

**How do you work with Bébel? How do you ensure a dramatic element to the show?**

We work on a composition of sensations conveyed by the cards. We draw an action; we write a dramatic presentation inspired by the mysterious and physical relationship that Bébel has with the cards...

**What form will the show take? What will we see on stage, will he be sitting at his table?**

Djenane sits down with all the cards he meets, from unlucky hands in card games to fortune telling, where the cards are summoned to confess some uncertain future. With him, we will experience the life of the cards. The only scenery: air, water and the invisible...

**What are you and Bébel going to do here at the Rond-Point theatre that you haven't done before?**

With the cards, we will question magic about its conditions of existence!

INTERVIEW BY PIERRE NOTTE

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## ANNE ARTIGAU

### WRITING AND DIRECTING

At the request of Jérôme Deschamps, Anne Artigau wrote and directed *Strapontin* with Michèle Guigon and Simon McBurney. Alain Crombecque, director of the Avignon Festival, having seen their short show, invited them to do a long show. This was *Marguerite Paradis ou l'histoire de tout le monde* in 1985 at the Avignon Festival and then at the Autumn Festival.

This was followed by some twenty shows in which Anne was both author and director. Her writing and productions contain a universe of vertigo and transformations, where the stage plays the fascinating role of the limits between highs and lows. She received a prize for directing, awarded by Pierre Etaix for *L'Espèce*. And in 1995, the Ministry of Culture commissioned her to write the play *Il y a*, directed by Michèle Guigon.

In order to give flesh to the world of dreams, to seek out the other side of the coin, the tipping point of situations, objects and people, she founded the company Les Fantômes. She created it with the actor-script writers Yves Robin, Christian Termis and Marc François-Pascaud, with whom she wrote and directed in about ten productions. She collaborated with Howard Buten in the direction of the show *Buffo nouvelle version* at the Théâtre du Rond-Point in 2008. The same year, she reunited with Michèle Guigon to direct *La vie va où?...* and *Pieds nus, traverser mon coeur* co-written with Susy Firth.

In 2012, Anne directed, for the first time, Bébel's cards in the fantastic adventure *Belkheir ou une carte ne vous sauve la vie pas pour rien* written by Nathalie Papin. From this creation, Anne and Bébel joined forces to build the foundations of a practice where the magical effect was no longer the goal, but became a means, an expression, a language.

They experienced the fruits of their work in *Magic and Music* with the percussionist Jean Christophe Feldendler, and then again in 2016 in *Voyage à mains nues* at the Théâtre aux Mains nues.

Thierry Collet, interested in their research, invited them to do a residency at the Magic WIP workshops in 2017/2018.

It was thanks to the invitation of Raphaël Navarro and his company 14/20 to the *Talents magie nouvelle 2018* festival that Jean-Michel Ribes discovered the first outline of their new show *Djénane*, which he is showcasing in Spring 2020.

At the same time, she has a career as a photographer, where she works on shadows, which can be found in her productions. Some of her photos are on tour with the "*Ombre et Lumières*" exhibition at the Cité des Sciences.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

### THEATRE (DIRECTING)

2011 *Pieds nus, traverser mon coeur* by Michèle Guigon co-written by Susy Firth

2008 *La vie va où?...* by Michèle Guigon co-written with Susy Firth *Buffo new version*

2007 *Je suis folle et je le resterai* by Anne Deborde Munoz

2004 *Les Habitants de la lune* with the Fantômes Company

### CREATIONS WITH BÉBEL

2017 *Nous sommes assis ensemble les cartes et moi*

Monsieur Bébel

2016 *Voyage à main*

Magie et Musique

2012 *Belkheïr ou une carte ne vous sauve pas la vie pour rien* by Nathalie Papin

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## DJENANE BELKHEÏR KNOWN AS BÉBEL THE MAGICIAN

### WRITING, CREATION AND PERFORMANCE

Djenane Belkheïr, known as Bébel, fell in love with magic at the age of 9.

It is an old friend that he will never tire of seeing.

The cards crossed his path in the 80's, secret, fascinating with an infinity of combinations. Thanks to this astonishing friendship with his pack of cards, the magic community awarded him the first prize for card magic at the AFAP congress in 1988. In 1995, he won the first prize of the *Colombe d'or* in Juan-les-Pins.

His cards also took him to the Comédie-Française where, in one of the masked ball scenes, Bébel was an actor alongside Abdul Alafrez, under the Achille Tonic big top with Shirley and Dino, and then to television, from *Nulle part ailleurs* (Canal plus) to *Vivement dimanche*

(France 2). He also lent his magic skills to Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*. In the cinema, he was Denis Lavant's advisor for *Les Amants du Pont Neuf*.

Bébel's card tricks can be seen from cabaret tables to conference rooms all over the world. But performance alone is no longer enough for him, thanks to the effect that the power of magic can have, the looks in the eyes of the spectators showed him that there was the possibility for a great journey. From then on, Bébel recorded his daily search for a new way to approach magic.

And in 1999, thanks to the pen of Jacques Jouet (straight out of the Oulipo writers group), he performed his first play with cards, *Le Théâtre simple*, during an exceptional evening at the FRAC Normandie.

Bébel continued his exploration in 2012, bringing his cards along in the fantastic adventure, *Belkheir ou une carte ne sauve vous la vie ne pour rien*, a creation that Nathalie Papin wrote especially for him, produced by Roger Leroux with the Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf in collaboration with René Gonzales of the Théâtre Vidy Lausanne, where the show was directed by Anne Artigau in January 2012.

From this creation, Bébel and the director Anne Artigau joined forces to build the foundations of a practice where the magic effect is no longer the goal, but becomes a means, an expression, a language. They experienced the fruits of their work in *Magie et Musique* with the percussionist Jean Christophe Feldendler, at the *Centre d'art et de création* at Marigny, and again in 2016 in *Voyage à mains nues* at the Théâtre aux Mains nues.

Thierry Collet, interested in their research, invited them for a residency at the Magic WIP series of workshops in 2017/2018. And it was thanks to the invitation of Raphael Navarro and his company 14/20 to the *Talents magie nouvelle 2018* festival that Jean-Michel Ribes discovered the first outline of their new show *Djénane*, that he is showcasing for spring 2020.

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

### **THEATER**

2018 *Laborigins le hasard*

2005 *Plus loin que loin* (magic creation and coaching)

### **CREATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR**

#### **ANNE ARTIGAU**

2017 *Nous sommes assis ensemble les cartes et moi Monsieur Bébel*

2016 *Voyage à main Magie et Musique*

2012 *Belkheir ou une carte ne sauve la vie ne vous pour rien* by Nathalie Papin

## **MAGIC SHOW, CREATION AND INTERPRETATION**

2015 *Carte blanche* at Thierry Collet Théâtre Firmin Gémier, La Piscine

Second *Festival cours jardin* The Jean Merlin Magic History day 2015

2014 Costa Croisière European Championship

2012 Espace culturel de Corbière with the 14/20 company

2011 L'archipel Scène national de Guadeloupe

## **TELEVISION**

2010 *Magie, rêve, illusion* (France 5)

2007 *Magie à Paris* presented by Patrice Carmouze (Paris Cap)