

THE CASTAWAYS

a collective performance of
SAM LECOEUR



Teaser



Video

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The most beautiful
stories always begin
with shipwrecks.

Jack London



CONCEPT

AN INITIATORY JOURNEY TO MEET THE CHARACTERS WHO INHABIT US.

Les Naufragé-es is a 1-hour collective performance for between 10 and 100 participants who set out in search of the characters that inhabit them. It uses an immersive audio device that gives different movement instructions to each participant in order to create a spontaneous choreography.

Les Naufragé-es invites participants to explore a fantasy land whose theater stages are said to be the secret entrance. In this country, known only to actors, live the spirits that sleep under the stage, waiting to inhabit the body of the actor/medium to speak. Les Naufragé-es thus offers a fictional journey to another world freely inspired by the myths that support Japanese theater. The journey to this country under the stage allows participants to experience the actor's obviousness: a body can contain several lives.

Les Naufragé-es allows this discovery through a one-hour self-performance: without an actor or dancer present in the space, the participants are guided by an inner voice thanks to a spatialized audio headset. This voice tells a different journey to each participant, and each one discovers how the actions of others complement their own. So many small gestures that their group will invent to tell each other, together, that ghosts exist.

This immersive experience is an international co-production between Tamanoir Immersive Studio (France) and Art & Essai (Canada), it was supported by the CNC and SODEC, as well as structures such as CentQuatre-Paris, Stéréolux and Anis Gras for residencies. We are looking for broadcasters to consider a broadcast in Canada and France by 2024, 2025 and 2026.



AUTHOR'S NOTE

A story to move. This is the challenge of the Castaways.

Physical theatre actors use narration in a fascinating way. They create a story for themselves on stage, to move. They are its sole custodians. This story gives body and soul to their gestures. It inhabits them. Some modern theatre techniques, such as Butoh, are based on the development of a sensual relationship with the images and words of this internal story.

This is what makes me burn with hope: here fiction is used to become other, as literally and concretely as possible. Someone. Something. That we welcome within ourselves. A deeply empathetic relationship with the world.

In times of polarization and division, in times of filter bubbles, I would like to share this unique experience through Les Naufragé-es. To ask the world the question; and you, when have you been anything other than yourself?

One simple thing is important to me: always being ready to change. That is to say, always being more alive. It is coupled with a deep anxiety, that of forgetting this vital goal. I am fascinated by the ease with which a life can lose intensity without us noticing. Les Naufragé-es seeks to offer participants the experience of total presence. A point of reference to hold on to in order to be able to measure the intensity of one's life. Measure what one sacrifices when one only has one life.

Sam Lecoœur

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The stage experience should not remain the property of the actors and dancers, but, under the right conditions, be shared with everyone.



TECHNICAL DEVICE

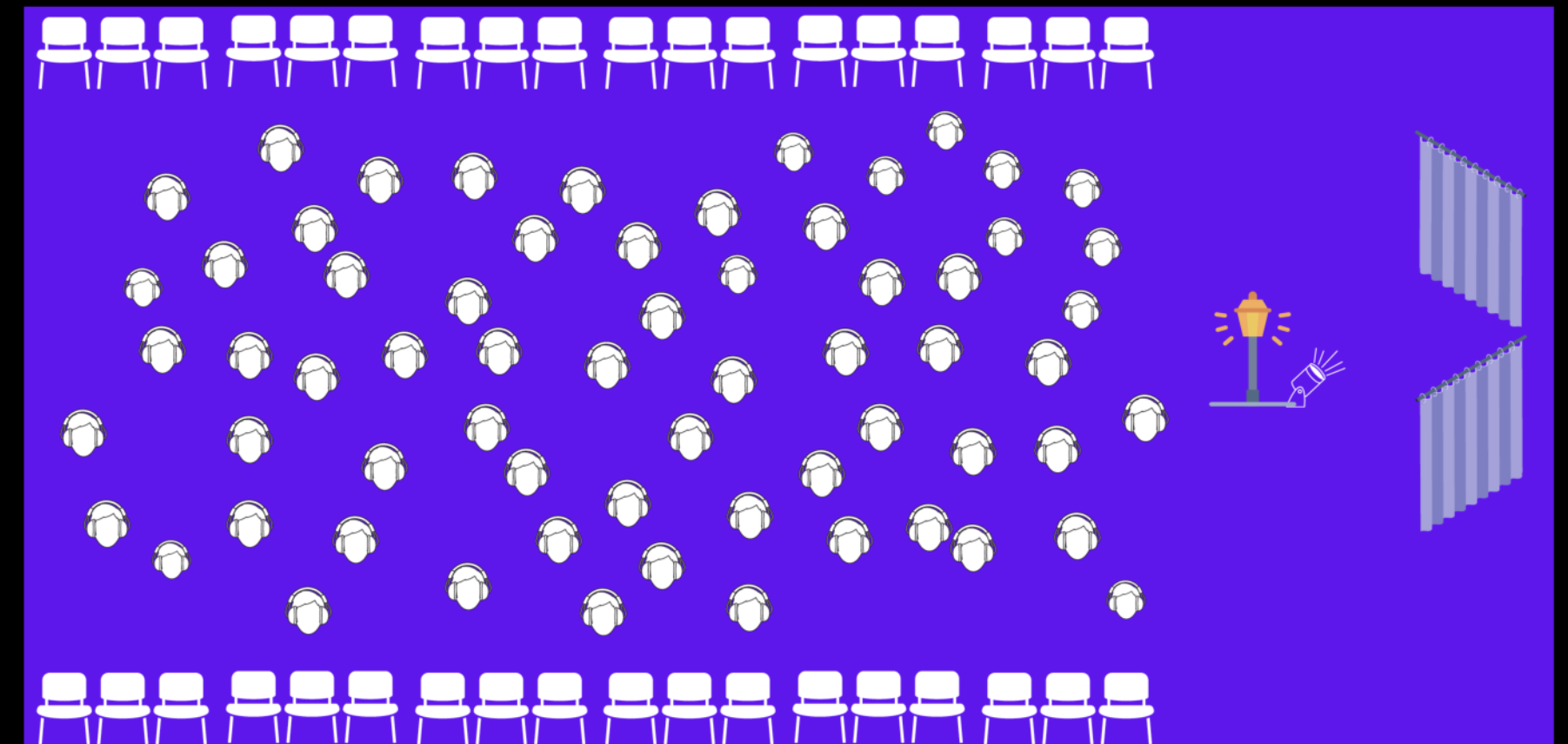
Space size: 40 to 400 m² People on stage: 10 to 100 participants
Scenography: 10 to 100 chairs and 1 light stand
Audio equipment: 10 to 100 audio headsets and audio guides
Video equipment (optional): 1 video projector and fabrics

For the audio part, we use the RSF OP6 audio guides to which we have coupled a Beyerdynamics audio headset. We use an infrared remote control to launch all the audio files at the same time.

For the scenography and lighting part, we have two rows of chairs facing each other on both sides of the stage and a light source on a stand (a maid), positioned on one of the sides of the stage where there is no chair. For the lighting scenography, a light guide is written and will be adapted according to the locations, and the show also works with the maid only.

For the video part, it is optional and the experience can be done without it. A video projector projects images behind the maid onto projection fabrics (tulle).

For the technical part, a stage manager from our team takes care of bringing the audio equipment as well as the maid. The rest of the equipment is the responsibility of the venue. He carries out the assembly and disassembly of the show, as well as training the receptionists to enable them to launch the show without his presence.



 Participant  Servant  video projector  Projection support fabric



ARTISTIC INTENTIONS

A magnificent enemy

The experiment takes as its adversary this strange modesty that prevents us from feeling the caress of the spotlight: shyness. A writing work with numerous tests makes it possible to ensure that all the participants feel comfortable with the degree of participation that is expected of them. From the start, they are told that they can decline to go on stage. The beginning of the experiment begins in the dark and in a group. All the participants are hidden by the others. Gradually, greater risk-taking is encouraged and each person gradually reveals themselves.

Create moving images

Curiosity is the driving force on which the experience relies to set the participants in motion. Once they realize that the visuals react to their gestures, the desire to explore this interactive texture imbues their movements with intentions and energies. Each type of interaction with the projection establishes a particular quality of movement in the participants. As long as they do not move, the video stream seems identical, but at the slightest movement, it reacts differently to each act.

Aesthetics of fragility

Dance is still dominated by an athletic conception of performance. Few shows feature elderly people or people whose bodies are simply not capable of physical feats. The "ordinary people" in cinema are fallible and endearing characters who create empathy. The same can be true on stage. By introducing members of the audience on stage, the project tries to move away from the aesthetics of the beautiful gesture to promote the emotion of seeing someone on stage who could be oneself.

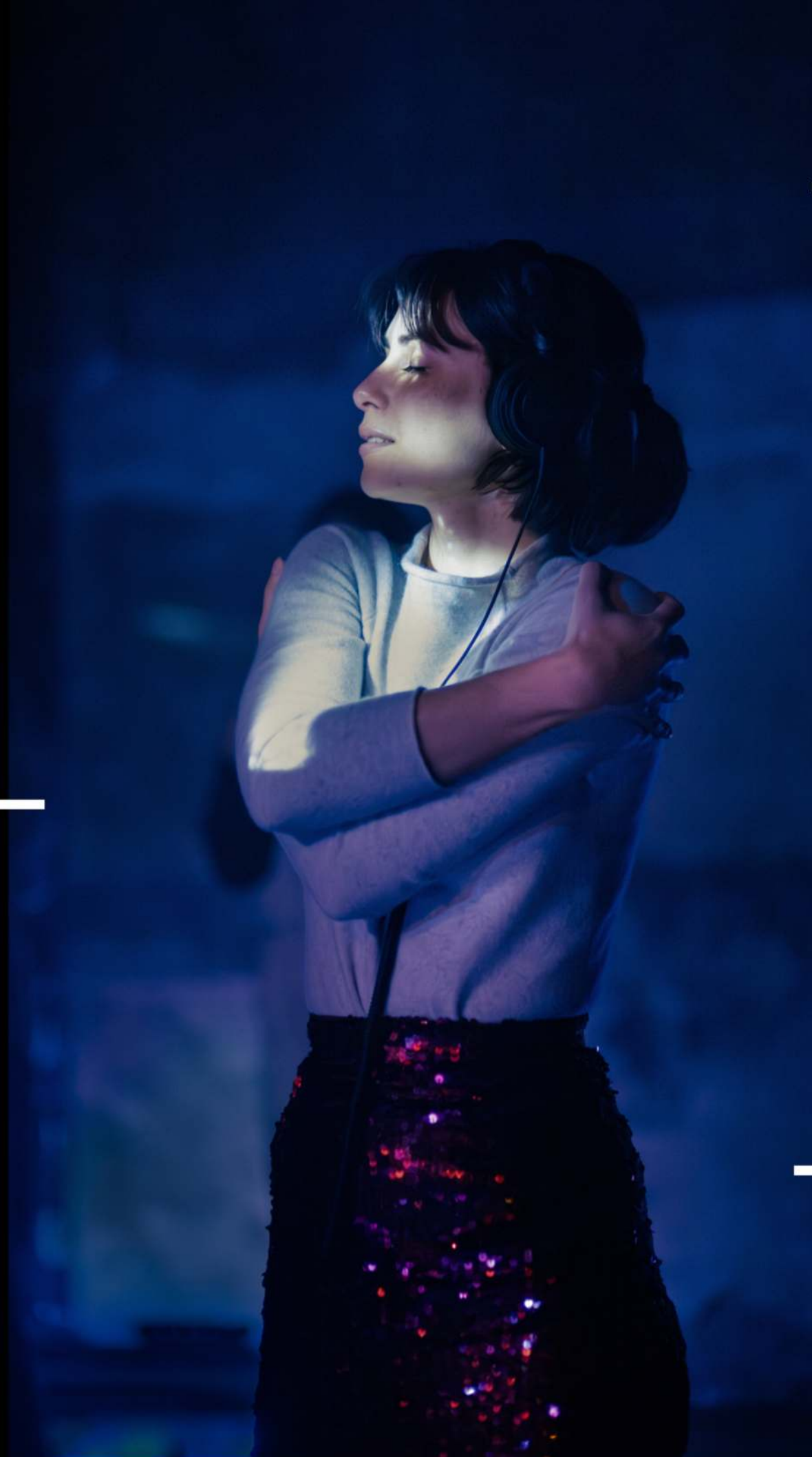




SOUND INTENTION

Create a mental image through sound

The simplicity of the device opens the door wide to the imagination. The absence of images allows participants to invest the experience with their own imagination. The sound design evolves between sounds with a strong evocative power and unheard synthetic sounds. This hybrid composition gives participants the opportunity to awaken their sensitive memory while encouraging the creation of new personal and unique images. The liminal atmosphere of the video projection allows us to make these sounds resonate far away and thus enlarge the space felt by the participants by pushing the sound horizon line of the imaginary space that we offer them.



Animate the crowd

Part of the beauty of Les Naufragés lies in the spontaneous synchronization of the participants who have just taken their first steps on stage. The music comes to install deep colors and rhythms in the subtext to which the participants synchronize without even thinking about it. Thanks to it, they move together with the same intention. The surprise of feeling a group opens them from the first steps to an emotional experience carried by the music.

The energy of the choir

To make this spontaneous synchronization emotionally experience for the participants, the music of the Castaways is carried by a choir of voices with raw and rough textures. They offer the participants a source of energy from which they can draw. The work on the spatialization of the voices will allow you to feel among the singers, to resonate with them. A choir makes each singer resonate within the multitude, creating a galvanizing force within the group and those around them. The same goes for each participant immersed in the sound experience.



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The invention of the self-performance format

I have a specific artistic project: to share the emotion of movement. I have gradually tamed the emotional quality of movement by creating immersive experiences that place gesture at their center, such as Birdie Long Gone (selected at the Atelier Grand Nord XR, the Venice Film Festival and Cannes XR) or Hétérotopia (New Images, FIVARS, Prix Numix). This study of gesture that my VR creations have allowed me, I must continue outside the headset, to achieve a degree of connection and intimacy between participants that virtual reality headsets do not allow. This is how I created the self-performance format: the performance of participants for each other, without actors or dancers to guide them.

From intimate experiences to performance-spectacle

Each experience I create is part of this larger project of exploring the language of felt movement. I first made participants move consciously and sensitively with Vegetal Tempo (Laval Virtual 2022), then I created an experience for two people with the Continent Intérieur. From this attempt, I learned to create intimacy between participants and give them the conditions to let themselves be moved. I then opened the self-performance format to 30 people with the Naufragé-es. I had the chance to create a sense of belonging and sharing among the audience through gestures. Today, I write with all these lessons learned from several years of research and creation behind me. I allow myself to reintroduce performers among the participants, because I know how to make them guides rather than thieves of light.

My research on presence

During my research into the sensation of movement, I had the chance to meet Delphine Eliet, who is still my mentor today. For a year, she introduced me to a concrete and physical vision of presence to oneself and to others. Through her teaching, I learned that being impressed by things, overwhelmed by emotions, was not something that should be held back, hidden, or desensitized. It was a gift. This theatrical teaching resonated with my training as an interactive designer at Gobelins. In the images, the stories, the way Delphine guided, I already saw signs, feedback, interactions that could be offered to the general public thanks to the expertise of a designer.

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