



Astragales (Belgium)

## COLD BLOOD

Created by Michèle Anne de Mey & Jaco Van Dormael

Written by Thomas Gunzig

15 & 16 May 2020, Fri, 8pm, Sat, 3pm

Drama Centre Theatre

Rating: Rating to be advised. Admission for audience age 13 years and above.

### Synopsis

Belgium artists Michèle Anne De Mey and Jaco Van Dormael spin seven mini-stories around death – with dancing hands, nano-sets and sheer cinematic flair.

Following the international success of their work *Kiss & Cry*, Belgium filmmaker Jaco Van Dormael and choreographer Michèle Anne De Mey present this intriguing “feature-length film shot on a kitchen table”, about different people who go through a series of deaths and resurrections.

Meet three dancers who turn their hands and fingers into unlikely stars. These ‘hands’ cavort through a series of miniature sets – forests, a strip club, skyscrapers – placed on rolling tables.

Overhead cameras float around these sets, filming these dancing hands as they perform seven mini-stories around death. Scriptwriter Thomas Gunzig

crafts surreal vignettes about “mechanical deaths”, “organic deaths”, “silent deaths”, even “erotic deaths” – all with a dash of offbeat humour.

Brimming with inspiration from film noir, old Hollywood, and blockbuster war movies, these atmospheric scenes then erupt via a live feed onto a giant screen – in a performance that dazzles the mind and eye.

Wonderfully inventive, don't miss *Cold Blood* as it takes you through the absurd, sometimes funny and unexpected moments in the final journey of life.

### Journey with SIFA

Artists Jaco Van Dormael and Michèle Anne de Mey shares: “This will be the first time for *Cold Blood* in Singapore and performing in front of a new audience is always really exciting and challenging for the team. Every audience has its cultural differences and extracts different things in the story we tell every night, and from stage we can feel these differences of perception, a laugh for example at a moment we didn't expect. That's what makes the live show so interesting: every night we shoot an ephemeral film, a film that exists only in the audience's memory. The camera reveals something that is too small to be seen by the naked eye and the eye sees what the camera could not see. The audience reconstructs”.

Festival Director Gaurav Kripalani adds: “It is very difficult to categorise shows into the silos of music, theatre, and dance because artists work across different platforms, and *Cold Blood* epitomises that. It is a stunningly beautiful piece where performers use their fingers on small diorama sets which are projected onto a large screen. *Cold Blood* brings together an exquisite choreography of fingers with very clever cinematography and mesmerising music, and it will be a sublime to watch”.

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### Interviews:

Film Director Jaco Van Dormael and Choreographer Michèle Anne de Mey will be available for an email interview to share more on the following topics (proposed topics):

- The inspiration behind *Cold Blood* and the nano-dance experience
- The challenges when staging an intricate live multi-disciplinary performance of theatre, film and dance
- Their collaborative relationship and how it has influenced their work in *Cold Blood*

### About Jaco Van Dormael

Jaco Van Dormael is known for his award-winning films which are famous throughout the French-speaking world: *Toto ce héros*, *Le huitième jour*, *Mr. Nobody* and *Le Nouveau Testament*.

Having recently returned to the stage and live theatre for the pleasure of collaborating on an artistic project with his long-standing partner, Michèle Anne De Mey, a dancer and choreographer, he also, more recently, joined forces with the writer and storyteller Thomas Gunzig.

### About Michele Anne De Mey

Belgian choreographer Michèle Anne De Mey (Brussels, 1959) attended Mudra, the Brussels-based school founded by Maurice Béjart from 1976 to 1979. She choreographed her first show, *Passé Simple*, in 1981, giving contemporary dance a new direction, she subsequently followed with the two-handers *Ballatum* (1984) and *Face à Face* (1986).

Her work as a choreographer has led to several films being made, including *Love Sonnets* and *21 Études à Danser* by Thierry De Mey, and *Face à Face* by Eric Pauwels. Devising her choreography from powerful music by reputable composers, she

has also worked with Robert Wyatt, Jonathan Harvey, and many more.

*Kiss & Cry* was a great success, playing 300 performances in nine different languages in 20 or so countries, and was seen by over 180,000 audience members. After this, Michèle Anne De Mey and her team of talented designers devised *Cold Blood* within the context of Mons as European Capital of Culture in 2015, and this show has enjoyed the same worldwide success as *Kiss & Cry*.

Subsequently, Michèle Anne De Mey stepped down as director of Charleroi Danses and restarted her company, Astragales. In October 2016, at the Théâtre National, she devised *Amor*, a poetical, powerful show in which, alone on the stage, Michèle Anne conveyed her own, intimate near-death experiences.

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