

armour

creation 2024



***Armour* is a performance that explores masculinity with the desire to redefine it and welcome a change that opens its arms to plural love. In a language of dance and acrobatic lifts revisited, the trio of performers confront the toxic aspects of virility, in particular its violent side, to transform it and open up a space of necessary fragility. The strong physical commitment is at the service of a relationship with the other based on trust and respect for intimacy. The bodies here are timeless figures who pose sometimes troubling acts and questions, without provocation or inhibition, where gentleness and self-mockery find their place.**

armour arno ferrera & gilles polet

artistic direction
technical direction
development
authors / performers
dramaturgical support
outside eye
light design
sound creation
costumes
acrobatic support
photographer
construction
video
vocals arrangement
technical manager
booking
production
& administration
graphic design

Arno Ferrera & Gilles Polet
Pierre-Jean Pitou Faggiani
Anaïs Longiéras
Arno Ferrera, Gilles Polet & Charlie Hession
Renée Copraij, Bauke Lievens
Gaïa Saitta, Matthieu Goeury
Anthony Merlaud
Raphaëlle Latini
Kasia Mielczarek
Frédéric Arsenault
Florian Hetz
Ferronnerie The Jof Company
Nicky Lapierre
Justine Bourgeus
Pierre-Jean Pitou Faggiani
Anaïs Longiéras
Agathe Cornez / Les Halles de Schaerbeek

ekta

duration
from

1h
15 years old

A delegated production by Les Halles de Schaerbeek





“To know love, men must be able to let go the will to dominate. They must be able to choose life over death. They must be willing to change.”

bell hooks — *the Will to Change: Men, Masculinity and Love*

note of intent

Armour explores issues of masculinity and virility, with the desire to offer a different perspective.

The spectators surround the hexagonal stage, and witness scenes of great bodily intimacy in an interplay of glances, but in a tender and natural relationship that makes them accessible. The tactile dimension is essential here. It's about love, and its multiple forms, challenging the normative paradigms of our society with regard to relationships.

Starting from the notion of (over)protection that leads to violence, the trio of performers confront the toxic aspects of virility to open up a space of intimacy and fragility that they consider essential. By (over)protection, they mean the mechanisms that create relational obstacles and the impossibility of entering the realm of intimacy.

Revisited acrobatic lifts are the starting point for a stage language that emphasises trust and listening to others. The performers use armour made from sports protective gear, questioning the way in which armour can be hijacked so that it no longer keeps the other person at a distance, but becomes a surface that makes us more available to enter into a relationship with each other. They give space to virtuosity without celebrating it, by proposing risk-taking.

The physical commitment is intense, while leaving plenty of room for gentleness and self-mockery. It serves a relationship with the other based on listening, trust and welcoming intimacy. The trio is constantly evolving, like the fluid, timeless mythical figures that are the Graces. By letting themselves slip into relationships of seduction and redefined masculinity, *Armour* offers a representation of a love that is free and generous, universal and plural, in a joyful complicity with the audience that surrounds the stage.

artistic approach

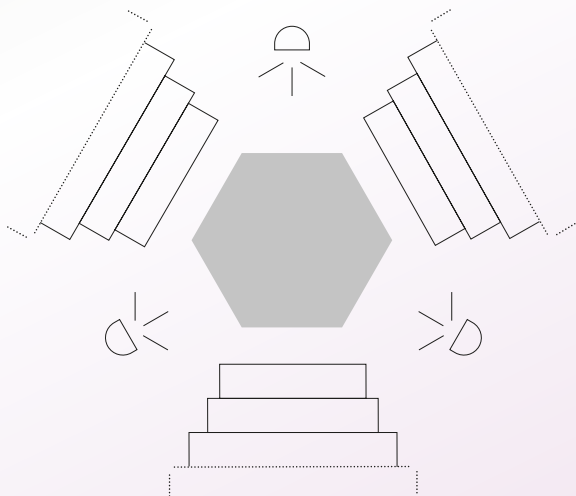
Arno Ferrera, Gilles Polet, Anaïs Longi eras and Pitou Faggiani form a team whose projects are produced by Les Halles de Schaerbeek in Brussels.

Arno Ferrera and Gilles Polet are two performers and authors based in Brussels. Ana s Longi eras is production and distribution manager in the contemporary circus sector, and Pitou Faggiani is stage manager. They began working together in 2021 with the duo Cuir, created as part of the company Un loup pour l'homme. Our team explores issues around masculinity and creates artistic proposals that take an interest in touch and intimacy, borrowing from circus, dance and performance.

Arno and Gilles define an artistic language that develops and challenges skills around notions of support, transformation and care. By creating spaces for tactile encounters in their shows and workshops, they offer an invitation to surrender, to discover trust and thus to transform self-perception.

scenography

The show is performed in a tri-frontal arrangement. Three seating modules need to be installed on either side of a scenic and scenographic space with a minimum of 10m in width, 10m in depth, and 4.5m in height. Performances can take place in unequipped venues. No technical grid required. Technical sheet available on request. 5 people on tour. Arrival day: J-1, Departure day: J+1.



authors & performers

gilles polet

Gilles Polet first trained as an actor at the Lemmensinstituut in Leuven before moving to Leeds to study at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance. He graduated from P.A.R.T.S. in Brussels in 2008. His work ranges from opera with Deborah Warner at La Monnaie, Brussels, to choreography for music videos, to short films with directors Dimitri Karakatsanis, Andrew Ly and Kevin Calero. His first solo *Jack-in-the-Box* was performed in Hong Kong, Tehran, Berlin, among other places. Traveling through Iran, Gilles took a journey of initiation into the world of dance, which inspired him to create his next solo: *Simurgh*: the story of the Birds Conference, told by a GoGo Dancer. Gilles has collaborated with Troubleyn/Jan Fabre for 10 years. Among their collaborations were the two re-enactments *This is theatre like it was to be expected and foreseen* and *The Power of Theatrical Madness*. He also participated in the creation and performance of *Mount Olympus*, to glorify the cult of tragedy, a 24-hour performance by Troubleyn/Jan Fabre. In 2020, Gilles focused on his career as a yoga teacher. He joined Arno Ferrera in *Cuir* in June 2021. Today, he shares the artistic direction of the *Armour* project with Arno Ferrera.

arno ferrera

Arno Ferrera's work focuses on touch, and the connection between individuals in body-to-body movement. He graduated in Physical Theatre at the Accademia Dimitri (CH) after ten years of gymnastics and six years of studies in baroque music at the Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana.

He chose Brussels as his base, and in 2015 he joined the contemporary circus company *Un loup pour l'homme* - founded by Alexandre Fray and Frédéric Arsenault - and participated in the international tours of the shows *Face Nord* and *Rare Birds*, later becoming artistic director and performer of the duo *Cuir* within the company.

Today, he shares the artistic direction of the *Armour* project with Belgian performer Gilles Polet. This project is produced by Les Halles de Schaerbeek (BE), where Arno is an associate artist for the period '23-'27 and contributes to the development of the circus and dance programming.

In parallel to his performance work, Arno develops projects that aim to create spaces for tactile encounters and artistic objects inside closed environments (mainly in prisons and psychiatric hospitals).

What he proposes with his projects is an invitation to surrender, to discover trust in others, and thus also to transform one's self-perception.

charlie hession

Charlie grew up in Manchester (UK) and graduated from Codarts Circus Arts (NL) after having spent three years pursuing Circus and street theatre in the UK. Immediately after school he formed a collective to examine and question the idea of violence as a form of conflict resolution. This project leaned heavily on his background in martial arts and the idea of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) as a language. Charlie toured with the show *Camouflage* with Michi Zandl, and *ACO* by Tall Tales before joining *Corps Extrême* by Rachid Ouramdane in 2022. Charlie finds satisfaction in bringing movement into things that are typically static, be that his expression with acrobatics, or his love of Shibari (Japanese rope bondage), which he has been practicing since 2010. He joined the creation of *Armour* in Autumn 2022 quickly finding commonality through the team's appreciation for consensual kink, the work of partnering including an intimate touch, and self-expression.

delegated producer
associated producer
coproduction

Les Halles de Schaerbeek
l'Amicale
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technical sheet + HD photos + artistic dossier

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