Ex Machina / Robert Lepage

887
887 is a journey into the realm of memory. The idea for this project originated from the childhood memories of Robert Lepage; years later, he plunges into the depths of his memory and questions the relevance of certain recollections. Why do we remember the phone number from our youth yet forget our current one? How does a childhood song withstand the test of time, permanently ingrained in our minds, while the name of a loved one escapes us? Why does meaningless information stick with us, but other more useful information falls away?

How does memory work? What are its underlying mechanisms? How does a personal memory resonate within the collective memory?

887 considers various commemorative markers—the names of parks, streets, stelae and monuments—and the historical heritage around us that we no longer notice. Consequently, the play also focuses on oblivion, the unconscious, and this memory that fades over time and whose limits are compensated for by digital storage, mountains of data and virtual memory. In this era, how is theatre, an art based on the act of remembering, still relevant today?

All of these questions are distilled into a story where Lepage, somewhere between a theatre performance and a conference, reveals the suffering of an actor who—by definition, or to survive—must remember not only his text, but also his past, as well as the historical and social reality that has shaped his identity.
Robert Lepage

Versatile in every form of theatre craft, Robert Lepage is equally talented as a director, playwright, actor and film director. His creative and original approach to theatre has won him international acclaim and shaken the dogma of classical stage direction to its foundations, especially through his use of new technologies.


From 1989 to 1993 he was Artistic Director of the Théâtre français at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Meanwhile pursuing his own creative projects, he directed Needles and Opium (1991), Coriolanus, Macbeth, and The Tempest (1992). With A Midsummer Night’s Dream in 1992 he became the first North American to direct a Shakespeare play at the Royal National Theatre in London.

In 1994, he founded Ex Machina, then wrote and directed his first feature film, Le Confessional. Followed Polygraph (1996), Nô (1997), Possible Worlds (2000), and The Far Side of the Moon (2003). In 2013, he codirects Triptych with Pedro Pires, an adaptation of the play Lipsynch.


Current productions include 887, a solo performance by Robert Lepage (2015) and Quills (2016), Doug Wright’s controversial work on censorship, Robert Lepage as the Marquis de Sade, co-directed with Jean-Pierre Cloutier).


As part of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec’s 10th anniversary, Robert Lepage and Ex Machina have created an exhibition inspired by Alberto Manguel’s The Library at Night. Multifaceted, The Library at Night (2015) embarks visitors on a journey through ten libraries across the world, real or imagined, by means of virtual reality.


Das Rheingold, Wagner’s Der Ring des Nibelungen prelude, premiered September 2010 at The Metropolitan Opera with the cycle being presented during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 seasons. His latest staging include The Tempest (2012), by Thomas Adès, libretto by Meredith Oakes, based on William Shakespeare’s eponymous play, and L’Amour de loin (2015), with music by Kaija Saariaho and a libretto by Amin Maalouf.

Robert Lepage’s work has been recognized by many awards. Among the most important: the Légion d’honneur (2002); the Denise Pelletier Prize (2003); the Hans Christian Andersen Prize (2004) for his outstanding artistic contribution to honouring Hans Christian Andersen worldwide; the Stanislavski Award (2005) for his contribution to international theatre; the Festival de l’Union des Théâtres de l’Europe honoured him with the distinguished Prix Europe (2007), previously awarded to Ariane Mnouchkine and Bob Wilson among others; the Médaille de la ville de Québec (2011); and the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT (2012). In 2013, he became the recipient of the Tenth Glenn Gould Prize awarded by the Glenn Gould Foundation and in 2015 he was awarded by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ) for his contribution, his commitment and his dedication in developing, promoting and extending the influence of the Quebec culture.
The Designers

Steve Blanchet  
Creative Director and Ideation

Creative director at Ex Machina, Steve Blanchet has worked in the artistic, cultural and advertising world for 20 years. Trained as a graphic designer, he completed his education at l’Ecole francophone des attachés de presse (ÉFAP) in France in 1994 and worked as a designer at the Carré Noir agency in Paris. From 1996 to 2013, he worked at Cossette, where several of his social campaigns received national and international awards. He began his collaboration with Ex Machina in 2005 with the creation of the architectural projection The Image Mill (2008). He would be co-creator and image co-designer until the final edition in 2013, about Norman McLaren's work. Followed by work on the creation of 887, Robert Lepage's most recent solo show, and The Library at Night, an immersive exhibition using virtual reality inspired by the Alberto Manguel’s work, for which Steve Blanchet directed the creation and co-signed the design with Robert Lepage. His career is punctuated with various collaborations in numerous short films, shows, plays and publications.

Peder Bjurman  
Dramaturg

Peder Bjurman (born 1966), director and scriptwriter, works in the field of visual theatre with his company The Missing Link based in Stockholm, Sweden. His first collaboration with Robert Lepage was in 1994 during A Dreamplay at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm. Bjurman also provided the original idea for The Far Side of the Moon, co-wrote The Andersen Project, and worked as dramaturg for the Playing Cards project.

Adèle Saint-Amand  
Assistant Director

After finishing her training at the National Theatre School, Adèle joined the team of Théâtre Péril, where she worked with Christian Lapointe on numerous productions from 2005 to 2012. In 2008, she met Frédéric Dubois and worked with Théâtre des Fonds de tiroirs on all of their productions until 2014, in addition to serving as the company’s administrative assistant. She also has worked with other companies, including Théâtre Blanc, Nouveau Théâtre Expérimental, Théâtre L'Escaouette, Théâtre de la Vieille 17, and Théâtre du Trident. Adèle has had the opportunity to work with the Nous sommes ici collective and Alexandre Fecteau, as well as with Steve Gagnon and Théâtre Jésus, Shakespeare et Caroline. She has travelled across Canada with Les trois exils de Christian E (Théâtre Sortie de secours). Since 2012, she has worked with Ex Machina on several occasions.

Jean-Sébastien Côté  
Composer and Sound Designer

Musician and sound designer Jean-Sébastien Côté wrote musical scores for several Quebec City theatre and dance productions before joining Ex Machina on The Far Side of the Moon in 1999. Since then, he has worked regularly on the company’s projects, including The Andersen Project, La Celestina, The Dragons’ Trilogy, 1984, The Blue Dragon, Eonnagata, La Tempête, SPADES and HEARTS from the Playing Cards tetralogy, and the 2013 version of Needles and Opium. In between projects with Ex Machina, he has worked with various renowned Canadian directors such as Daniel Brooks, Wajdi Mouawad and François Girard.
Laurent Routhier
Lighting Designer

Laurent Routhier studied film and photography before specializing in lighting design for the stage. Over the years, he has designed the lighting for shows by artists such as Robert Lepage, Franco Dragone, as well as Michel Lemieux and Victor Pilon. He also was involved in the creation and tour of *Délirium*, Cirque du Soleil’s first arena show, which gave him the opportunity to travel across the United States and demonstrate his ability to work on large-scale productions.
In recent years, he has been focused on exploring different applications of video and lighting for creating scenic environments. This creative research is the reason he has been hired for lighting, video and set design for numerous shows for Quebec City’s New Year’s celebrations and Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day events. His academic training and experience with major shows have enabled him to design lighting and video for more than 20 shows broadcast on television. Over the last several years, he has also worked as director of photography for these television productions. More recently, he has been busy working in theatre on the lighting design of three productions of Quebec City’s Trident Theatre: *The Odyssey*, *The Laramie Project* and *Les Enrobantes*.

Félix Fradet-Faguy
Image Designer

Video designer, 2D/3D designer, motion designer and videographer, Félix Fradet-Faguy joined the Ex Machina team when he was involved with the creation of the architectural projection *The Image Mill* for the 2011, 2012 and 2013 editions. He has also worked on projections for the 2014 Montreal Festival des Lumières and the 100th anniversary of the Calgary Stampede. He has created video content for corporate events, television shows, music shows, museum exhibitions and theatre productions, including the play *Icare* by Michel Lemieux et Victor Pilon.

Sylvain Décarie
Associate Set Designer

Sylvain Décarie graduated with a degree in fine arts and founded the independent contemporary art gallery ROUJE in Quebec City in 1995. Passionate about this discipline, it was nevertheless through working as a scenic painter in different specialized studios that he developed an interest in sets. Between 2000 and 2008, Sylvain worked as a stage technician on several theatrical productions and films in Quebec and then became the technical director of Théâtre du Trident in 2009.
In 2011, he completed his first set design for Véronique Coté’s show *BANQUET*. After that came the design of a children’s show for the Festival d'été de Québec, *LE GRAND TROTINO*, conceived in collaboration with Lionel Arnould. This design unified the set and video projection.
For the last several years, Sylvain has been working primarily as an artistic director on film sets and as a designer for multifunctional sets for television.
887 marks a return to theatre and his first collaboration with Ex Machina.
Credits

Written, designed, directed and performed by Robert Lepage

English Translation Louisa Blair

Creative Direction and Design Steve Blanchet

Dramaturg Peder Bjurman

Assistant Director Adèle Saint-Amand

Composer and Sound Designer Jean-Sébastien Côté

Lighting Designer Laurent Routhier

Image Designer Félix Fradet-Faguy

Associate Set Designer Sylvain Décarie

Associate Properties Designer Ariane Sauvé

Associate Costumes Designer Jeanne Lapierre

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in co-production with
le lieu unique, Nantes
La Comète - Scène nationale de Châlons-en-Champagne
Edinburgh International Festival
Århus Festuge
Théâtre de la Ville-Paris
Festival d'Automne à Paris
Romaeuropa Festival 2015
Bonlieu Scène nationale Annecy
Ysarca Art Promotions - Pilar de Yzaguirre
Célestins, Théâtre de Lyon
SFU Woodward's Cultural Programs, on the occasion of Simon Fraser University's 50th Anniversary, Vancouver
Le Théâtre français du Centre national des Arts d'Ottawa
Le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Montréal
Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre
Canadian Stage, Toronto
Théâtre du Trident, Québec
La Coursive Scène nationale La Rochelle
Le Volcan, Scène nationale du Havre
The Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York
The Bergen International Festival
The Barbican, London
Holland Festival, Amsterdam
Chekhov International Theatre Festival, Moscow
Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg
La Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand, scène nationale
Onassis Cultural Centre, Athens
Théâtre de Liège
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
Cal Performances, Berkeley
Performas Produções, São Paulo
National Performing Arts Center, Kaohsiung

Producer for Ex Machina  Michel Bernatchez
Associate Production - Europe and Japan  Richard Castelli - Epidemic
Associate Production - The Americas, Asia (except Japan), Australia, NZ Menno Plukker Theatre Agent

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www.lacaserne.net  www.epidemic.net

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