

# Mondes de Papier

"Paper Worlds" : a cycle of creation around paper  
by the company la Bande Passante

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## The company la Bande Passante

Benoît Faivre, a Jack-of-all trades who has a passion for history, founded la Bande Passante in 2007. His first show, *Compléments d'Objets* (2007), took the form of an "installation" that staged objects which record our memory. In *Cockpit Cuisine* (2012), three actors narrate the life of a cinema enthusiast who condensed his memory in incredible image machines. For this show, Benoît Faivre teamed up with Tommy Laszlo to create scenes in paper theatre. Since then, the two artists have initiated the "Paper Worlds" cycle. Based in Moselle, the company performs its shows across France and Europe, in particular at the World Puppet Theatre Festival (Charleville-Mézières), the International Biennial of Puppetry Arts (Paris), the FIGUMA festival (Belgium), the Neuchatel Puppet Festival (Switzerland), in Luxembourg and in Germany.

## INTENTIONS

### Artists and "transmitters" of memory

Since its creation in 2007, the theatre company la Bande Passante has brought to the stage objects as testaments to highly poetical human history. As of 2014 the company turned its artistic research towards memory and the paper document. In their quest to explore the relationships between past and present, Benoît Faivre and Tommy Laszlo have invented an original approach by staging an authentic document, whatever its form. By immersing themselves in the real object, the artists try to "express" the story it holds. They work as transmitters of memory. Contrary to historians, they draw on poetry and the imaginary. The "Paper Worlds" cycle is currently being rolled out in shows, installations and workshops for the public.

### Which papers?

Hunting through archives for the raw material for their creation, Benoît Faivre and Tommy Laszlo use paper as a real source of inspiration. They are particularly interested in fragile, rare, old and exceptional documents. 19th-century postcards showing views of a city, family photos from the last sixty years, a botanical encyclopaedia from the 17th century, old medical prints and hand-drawn architectural plans are some of the documents which have caught their attention. La Bande Passante has already worked with the Fonds Erasme medical research foundation and the Museum of Medicine in Brussels, the Musée de la Cour d'Or de Metz Métropole, the archive departments of Brussels, Metz, and Oloron-Sainte-Marie and the departmental industrial archives of Saint-Avold, etc.

# PRINCIPLES OF CREATION



Ville de Papier / Paper City: Bruxelles (2015)

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## "Augmenting" the archival document

The artists "augment" the documents through visual art, lighting, sound and video. In their shows, they add acting, script and staging. The audience discovers rare documents through an original presentation. A precious book opens up in space and can reveal all its pages at once (*Jardin de Papier / Paper Garden*). Rolled-up plans become a lived-in landscape (*Cité de Papier / Paper Town*). Postcards reveal the former face of a district once crossed by canals (*Ville de Papier / Paper City: Brussels*).

## The steps of creation

### Encounter with archives

Benoît Faivre et Tommy Laszlo always begin by consulting the original documents themselves. The encounter with the real object is a source of emotions and sensations. Their doorway to a collection generally comes down to

a question they ask the archivists: "Which documents are you proud of?" The artists then choose the archive items which they find the most touching, for their appearance and because they are traces of human lives.

### The manipulation of the document

Making an actual-size copy of an original document allows them to transform it. Benoît Faivre and Tommy Laszlo cut and fold the document to give it volume. They juxtapose several elements and organise them to obtain a visual entity. Thus emerges a garden (*Jardin de Papier / Paper Garden*), or the model of a real or imaginary city, with its streets and perspectives (*Cité de Papier / Paper Town* and *Villes de Papier / Paper Cities*).

### The augmentation of a document

Benoît Faivre and Tommy Laszlo create customised lighting and sound to animate the paper sculpture. The play of shadows and light gives the illusion that the inert image is moving. The soundtrack creates

an atmosphere that brings life to the paper landscape: the sounds of wind and nature (*Jardin de Papier / Paper Garden*), the distant hum of a busy city (*Ville de Papier / Paper City: Brussels*), or the commentaries on urban transformations (*Ville de Papier / Paper City: Metz*).

In some cases, the artists also use video resources. They blow up a small image to project it on a large screen, for example a print from an encyclopaedia (*Nos Jardins / Our Gardens*). They use a mobile camera inside a model, to give the spectator the illusion of walking through the streets (*Villes de Papier / Paper Cities*). With video mapping, a technique which consists in projecting a film on a relief surface, they create the impression that a miniature life is going on before our eyes, such as the daily life of a family in its paper house (*Au Fond / Deep Down*). Set in three dimensions in space, with sound, transformed by lighting and video, the archives become supports for the spectator's imagination.



Jardin de Papier / Paper Garden (2015)

## THE « PAPER WORLDS » CYCLE

### The "augmented paper shows"

› *Ville de Papier / Paper City : Vevey* (2018)  
Coproduced by le Reflet, théâtre de Vevey (Suisse) en collaboration avec le festival Images Vevey.

› *Vies de Papier / Paper Lives* (2017)  
Coproduced by Théâtre Gérard-Philippe, publicly-funded theatre of Frouard; MarionNETtes, International Festival of Neuchatel (Switzerland); Centre culturel André-Malraux, Vandoeuvre-les-Nancy; La Méridienne, publicly-funded theatre of Lunéville; Espace Jéliote, publicly-funded puppet theatre of Oloron-Sainte-Marie; Le Carreau, National Theatre of Forbach and Est mosellan; Mil Tamm, cultural project of Pays de Pontivy; T-Werk Potsdam; Le Sablier, Normandy- Ifs/ Dives-sur-Mer Centre for Puppetry Arts; Moselle Arts Vivants; The City of Brussels / Nuit Blanche; the City of Metz (heritage department, archives and media libraries); Metz Métropole (Musée de la Cour d'Or); Drac Grand-Est / Agence culturelle d'Alsace; ARTCENA.

› *Au Fond / Deep Down* (2016)  
Coproduced with the Departmental Authority of Moselle, Departmental industrial archives of Saint-Avold, Moselle Art Vivant.

› *Nos Jardins / Our Gardens* (2016)  
Coproduced by the Fonds Érasme medical research foundation (Brussels/Belgium) and the Museum of Medicine (Brussels/Belgium).

› *Ville de Papier / Paper City : Pays de Pontivy* (2016)  
Coproduced by Mil Tamm, Pays de Pontivy cultural project (47 municipalities of Centre Morbihan and Pontivy Communautés).

› *Ville de Papier / Paper City : Oloron-Sainte-Marie* (2016)  
Co-produced by the municipal media library, the Heritage Department and Espace Jéliote, publicly-funded puppet theatre of Oloron-Sainte-Marie.

› *Ville de Papier / Paper City : Bruxelles* (création 2015)  
Co-produced by the archive department of the City of Brussels and Maison du Roi.

› *Ville de Papier / Paper City : Metz* (2014)  
Co-produced by Moselle Arts Vivants, le Musée de la Cour d'Or and Metz Métropole.

### The "augmented paper installations"

› *Cité de Papier / Paper Town* (2017)  
Co-produced by the departmental industrial archives of Saint-Avold.

› *Jardin de Papier / Paper Garden* (2015)  
Co-produced by the City of Metz: Cultural heritage department - Archive department -Library/media library department.

### "Paper Worlds" exhibition

Retracing the different steps of visual creations for shows, the exhibition presents the cut-outs and collages at the source of its research, creations and exhibitions.

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