

PARADES

HYACINTHE HENNAË



**IN-SITU PARTICIPATORY
PERFORMANCE
ON DIVERSITY AND HARASSMENT
IN PUBLIC SPACES**

**CREATION
JUNE 27, 2026
CEC WOLUBILIS**

presentation

Parades is a unifying in situ social experience and a performance that explicitly and metaphorically stages and documents experiences of harassment in public spaces. It stems from a collective desire to raise awareness of this violence and its impact as widely as possible without reducing it to mere discourse, as well as from a deep belief in the power of rites of passage and their transformative force.

This multidisciplinary project combines a live action role play structure for amateur protagonists and willing members of the audience, individual and collective choreographies, oral transmission based on experiences, an evolving scenographic device, and an immersive sound creation.

All over the world, large numbers of people leave their homes, in certain places and at certain times—or everywhere and all the time—with fear in their hearts. Depending on their appearance, gender identity, physical features, skin color, religious symbols, or disability, they know that when they step outside, they may be subjected to stares, insults, mockery, or even physical assault.

Parades invites local non-professional protagonists to make their voices heard in the very place where these tensions arise.

The performance opens with an immersion in a live action role play game reminiscent of a waking dream. The participants metaphorically reenact their daily epics. Some spectators can play active roles (allies) or passive roles (observers, immobile threats), according to clearly stated and always reversible rules. The soundtrack is a musical creation that accompanies and punctuates the actions of the protagonists and the crowd, interspersed with multilingual testimonials of experiences: stories of experiences, protection strategies, consequences on life trajectories.

Initially concealed under lightweight, waterproof outer layers reminiscent of contemporary armor, the protagonists trace their paths in an elliptical space where benches are arranged for members of the audience who wish to offer their presence at the heart of the installation. Others can occupy other benches arranged around the perimeter or circulate freely; nothing is imposed. At the center of the performance area stands a scenographic island, a platform containing fragments of material, meaningful objects brought by participants, and scenographic elements. Throughout the piece, the materials unfold, assemble, and rise. A spectacular canopy gradually emerges above the arena. Under this porous shelter, voices appear: first whispered into the ears of spectators, then shared more widely in a collective crescendo.

The play concludes with a circular dance that emerges from the assembled crowd. The initial rules are relaxed. The structure gradually folds back into the shape of a cairn, a visible sedimentation of a shared passage, heralding a retreat for future deployment in other societies. Around it, the dancing and conversations continue.

Parades seeks neither to accuse nor to moralize. The piece offers an experience: joyful togetherness through diversity, another use of shared space.

the team

Hyacinthe Hennaë (they/she/he)	Concept, direction, choreography
Astrid de Toffol (she)	Oral transmission, dramaturgy, care
Tom Boyaval (they/he)	Assistant director, workshops
Carolin Herzberg (she)	Costumes and set design
Antoine Leroy (she)	Sound design and stage management
Chris Iradukunda (he)	Artistic advisor, dramaturgy

the partners

With the support of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation,
General Department of Artistic Creation –
Service des Arts Forains, du Cirque et de la Rue.



Co-produced by IN SITU PLATFORM, co-financed by the
European Union's Creative Europe program.



Residency and creative support: Atelier 231, National Center
des Arts de la Rue et de l'Espace Public in Sotteville-lès-Rouen



intent

As a queer person with multiple possible appearances, I often ask myself this question before going out on the street: am I mentally strong enough today to assume an appearance that would betray certain aspects of my non-conforming identities?

I then weigh the risks and benefits—in terms of mental health—of being able to be authentic in public while enduring inquisitive or disapproving looks, displays of disgust, or, conversely, embarrassing over-interest. Adjusting one's appearance, quickening one's pace, avoiding certain places: these strategies are part of everyday life for many people.

Whether you are a woman, a person of color, elderly, plus-sized, veiled, or visibly queer, systemic discrimination manifests itself relentlessly on the streets, so that in certain places and at certain times—or everywhere and all the time—many people leave their homes with fear in their hearts. *Parades* aims to give space, dignity, and a voice back to these ordinary heroes and heroines, in the very places where their voices are often silenced. The installation is designed to encourage listening and empathy.

The piece is based on a dramaturgy of displacement and construction. What was once individual protection becomes collective material. The initial urban armor is transformed into floating shelters, which in turn become a protective but porous canopy. Voices and attention circulate beneath this structure.

The final sedimentation into a kind of cairn is not an enclosure but a landmark: the trace of a moment when bodies chose to hold together and coexist, while everyone, protagonists and audience alike, continues to share words and steps with each others.



dramaturgy & creation

Act 1 - EPICS

25 to 30 minutes

In an elliptical or circular space enveloped by quadraphonic sound, featuring a central island resembling a podium, the protagonists appear, already mingling with the audience or arriving gradually. Concealing their appearances under similar outfits, they move forward as if caught up in a LARP game, a metaphorical and choreographic reconstruction of their usual movements in the public spaces of their distinct imaginations. The soundtrack modulates intensities and breaths, punctuated here and there by voices that succinctly recount what it means to be oneself on the street, or just to be. The spiral geometry of the interconnected paths can be observed from the benches placed in and around the performance space. One by one, they eventually allow themselves to undress and reveal their true appearances in moving scenes of singular revelations, some of them even daring to expose themselves by perching on the central island. Their trajectories are imbued with this boldness, making their epics more thoughtful and giving rise to doubts and fears. In a second transformation, the initial outer skins are then transformed into volumes. Nests-shelters emerge, carried by some, used as refuges by others. Their steps finally become faster and shorter, as if drawn into a slow vortex around the island. In a strange whirlwind, hopefully joined by allies from the audience, the protagonists dare to offer peaceful resistance and invite everyone to join them.

Act 2 - CANOPY

5 minutes

This second act consists of participatory cooperation (participants and a few volunteers from the audience, invited to take turns) to methodically construct and erect, to a choreography of actions punctuated by the soundtrack, a spectacular roof raised high above the arena, like a canopy. Scenographic elements are found in the island, from which a sort of trunk or mast soon rises, and the elements of the raised shelters are recycled once again to become part of this new structure. Imperfect, porous, and fragile, it symbolizes the so-called "safe spaces" that appeared in the United States in the 1960s and have since spread far beyond, to certain parts of the world that tolerate them. Here, it takes the form of a rickety temple open to the four winds, designed to prevent rain from falling on the parade.

Act 3 - ACQUAINTANCE

10 to 15 minutes

Under this shelter, or on its edge, the voices of the protagonists are heard for the first time: they first whisper moments of their real experiences, their strategies, their daily struggles into the ear of a spectator, quickly joined by another, then another... Groups form and are invited to take shelter under the canopy. The voices circulate and amplify. An organic crescendo sets in. Thanks to very specific questions, the most intrepid, attentive, and confident among them can also invite members of the audience to share some of their own experiences, thus engaging in brief conversations. The effect produced is that of a gathering where voices eventually intermingle, becoming ever more numerous and louder, as at a market or a village festival. The soundtrack can potentially reinforce and/or add color to this effect.

Act 4 - CONCILIATION

10 to 15 minutes

The fourth and final act is a new, general and festive invitation to change perspectives and reverse stigmas: not to respond to exclusion with exclusion, or to isolation, violence, and discrimination with passive victimization. The audience is invited to a co-constructed rite of passage, a simple circular ceremony resembling a playful ode to freedom, difference, and respect. It is a dance emerging from the previous shares, resembling a modern version of a collective folk performance. The ceremony opens a breach in reality to slip in alternative imaginaries where plurality unites. The canopy is finally slowly folded back around the central island, the mast lowered, forming a kind of cairn, the sedimentation of a utopian social experience, around which those who wish to do so can continue to chat and dance.



sound design

The sound design supports and structures the dramaturgy.

It modulates the intensity, accompanies the crescendos, becomes more sparse to allow the voices to emerge, then supports the final dance.

It also takes on a documentary dimension: multilingual testimonies, fragments of stories, survival strategies, intimate consequences.

The sound does not illustrate: it opens up imaginations.

costumes and set design

Costumes and set design form an evolving whole.

The waterproof outer layers, in cloudy tones, initially conceal the bodies. They then become material to be assembled: volumes, structures, nests-shelters.

The central island-hearth contains the latent mast and fragments of objects.

Technically:

- pieces of light, waterproof fabric
- flexible rods and hoops
- assembly systems
- telescopic poles
- lightweight, fireproof structure

The structure must meet criteria for spectacularity, durability, transportability, and safety.

creative workshops with amateurs

With the help of the mediation team at the venue or in the host city, we will bring together a diverse group of at least 10 people of different ages, genders, cultures, professions, body types, beliefs, and origins who are interested in the theme, motivated, and committed.

Preparation time: 5 three-hour workshops + a dress rehearsal with invited audience.

This time allows for:

- learning the dynamics of the LARP game
- communicating the rules of the game
- exploration of vocal techniques and creation of personal testimonials
- choreographic individual and collective movements
- experimentation with interactions with the audience

presentation conditions

Duration: approximately 1 hour

Performers: 9 to 14 amateurs + 2 artists (1 supporting protagonist + 1 angel/game master)

Audience size: adaptable, moving audience

Space: any type of floor, around 150 square meters (flexible performing area in shape and size)

Sound system: quadraphonic (4 speakers + subs) + 1 powerful bluetooth speaker brought by the team

Structure: lightweight, fireproof fabric

contact

Hyacinthe Hennaë

contact@parades-asbl.com

+32 456 39 66 03 / +33 6 28 07 87 08

parades-asbl.com

