

KATJA DREYER & KAREN RØISE KIELLAND

Cry Me a River. The quest for the source

KAAI THEATER

5 & 6/02 20:30 | KAAISTUDIO'S
THEATRE | 70 MIN | IN ENGLISH



EXTRA Join us on Thu 6/02 for a post-performance talk with the artists, moderated by Agnes Quackels.

NL Via een expeditie naar de bron van de Styx belanden Karen Røise Kielland en Katja Dreyer in de Griekse mythologie. Deze beroemde rivier zou de grens vormen tussen onze bovenwereld en de onderwereld. Het water maakte Achilles onsterfelijk, liet Narcissus verliefd worden op zijn eigen spiegelbeeld, en gewone stervelingen verliezen hun geheugen door ervan te drinken. Aan de hand van beelden, objecten, beweging en verhalen reconstrueren ze hun bijzondere reis. Via talrijke ontmoetingen met lokale bewoners en hun verhalen over de rivier, blazen ze een oude mythe nieuw leven in. De voorstelling begint in veelheid en chaos – maar hoe dichterbij de bron, des te sterker orde en monochrome stilte naar boven komen.

- Theatermaakster Katja Dreyer woont en werkt in Brussel, en stond het afgelopen seizoen voor het eerst in de Kaaistudio's met *Ophelia comes to Brooklyn*. Karen Røise Kielland studeerde aan de Theaterschool in Amsterdam. Ze maakt voornamelijk locatiespecifiek werk, maar richt haar blik de laatste tijd ook op theaters. Een terugkerend thema is onze complexe relatie met de natuur.

FR Par le biais d'une expédition à la source du Styx, Karen Røise Kielland et Katja Dreyer atterrissent dans la mythologie grecque. Ce célèbre fleuve formait la frontière entre le monde terrestre et le monde souterrain des Enfers. Achille y a été plongé, Narcisse y est tombé amoureux de son reflet et les simples mortels qui buvaient ses eaux en perdaient la mémoire. À la faveur d'images, d'objets, de mouvements et de récits, elles reconstituent leur voyage particulier. À travers de multiples rencontres avec des habitants locaux et leurs histoires sur le fleuve, elles réinsufflent vie à un ancien mythe. Le spectacle commence dans la profusion et le

chaos multicolore, mais plus on se rapproche de la source, plus un ordre rigoureux et un silence monochrome prennent le dessus.

- La femme de théâtre Katja Dreyer vit et travaille à Bruxelles. La saison passée, elle était pour la première fois à l'affiche des Kaaistudio's avec *Ophelia comes to Brooklyn*. Karen Røise Kielland a étudié à l'école de théâtre d'Amsterdam. Elle réalise principalement des projets in situ, mais ces derniers temps, son regard se porte aussi sur les salles de théâtre. Un thème récurrent est notre relation complexe avec la nature.

EN An expedition to the source of the Styx has taken Karen Røise Kielland and Katja Dreyer to the heart of Greek mythology. This mythical river was thought to be the border between our upper world and the underworld. The water made Achilles immortal, made Narcissus fall in love with his own reflection, and mere mortals lose their memory if they drink from it. Through images, objects, movement and stories, they reconstruct their extraordinary journey. They breathe new life into an old myth through numerous encounters with local residents and their stories about the river. The performance begins with multiplicity and chaos, but the closer to the source, the more order and monochrome silence begin to surface.

- Theatre maker Katja Dreyer lives and works in Brussels, and came to the Kaaistudios for the first time last season with *Ophelia Comes to Brooklyn*. Karen Røise Kielland co-founded Blood for Roses in Amsterdam during her studies at the Theaterschool. She's mainly made site-specific performances, but lately also work for theatres and art spaces. A recurring theme is our strangely complex relationship to nature.

CREDITS

IDEA, DIRECTION AND PERFORMANCE Karen Røise Kielland & Katja Dreyer | **DRAMATURGE** Marit Grimstad Eggen | **SCENOGRAPHY** Ole Martin Lund Bø | **COMPOSITION & MUSIC** Jessica Slighter | **LIGHTING DESIGN** Ingeborg Staxrud Olerud | **SPEECHCOACH** Isabelle Barth | **CO-PRODUCTION** Buda, Kunstenwerkplaats Pianofabriek, Black Box teater | **SUPPORT** Norsk Kulturråd, the Flemish Community, The Flemish Community Commission, Fond for Utøvende kunstnere, Norsk Fond for Lyd og Bilde, Performing Arts Hub Norway | **THANKS TO** Linda Theodorou, Danae Theodoridou, Dimitris Anagnostopoulos, Anastasia Efstathiou, Willem De Wolf, The Norwegian Institute, Athens Panayotis and his mother, kunstencentrum Nona, Kaaitheater, PACT Zollverein



A SOURCE IS A SOURCE, BUT WHAT IS BEYOND THE SOURCE?

Three questions for Katja Dreyer and Karen Roise Kieland, by Fabian (PACT Zollverein)

1. For your project *Cry Me a River. The quest for the source* you hiked in 2016 from the mouth to the source of the river Styx in Arkrata, Greece. Legend has it that Achilles was rendered (almost) invulnerable after bathing in the waters of the Styx. In what ways did visiting this mythologically legendary river have an effect on you?

That there was a legend attached to the river and its source made us extra curious to do this hike, it was actually the reason why we chose this river. The legend itself was maybe of secondary importance. We were very curious to understand if the people living close to the river and the source were influenced by its legends and how the story change the closer one comes to its source: does the sheperd on the mountain by the source tell another version than the schoolteacher in the town by the mouth of the river?

While we were actually doing the walk we were trying to understand what these myths and growing up with them, give as an extravalue to one's relationship to one native place. We had to realize that we knew very little about the stories and myths attached to the places we grew up in.

Once we reached the source, we tried to take a bath in it, filled our bottles and drank the water. In the first instance, to become immortal is a comforting thought. When we brought some water down to our friends at Akratha, we had a common cheer to life and immortality, a gesture that was strangely delicate, as one of our friends had just recently lost his wife, and after having taken a sip of Styx water, regretted his step towards possible immortality.

2. You are dealing with terms like credibility or truth and have asked many people on your journey about their knowledge of the river Styx. What were the most interesting or contradictory answers you received?

Talking about the Styx was often a starting point for a conversation to speak about other topics that interested us as well, like the situation in Greece today opposed to the situation in Greece before the crisis, or the situation in ancient times, the state of democracy in Greece today.

On our way up to the actual source of the Styx we were also looking for other 'sources' of information, for example the writings of the Greek traveler and

geographer Pausanias, who had travelled to the Styx himself and made a written report of it. When we came to the archeological museum in Athens, the guide told us through the closed bars of the entrance, that they had nothing of Pausanias, but the cup of Pericles, the founder of democracy. According to him, any remains of democracy were to be found inside the museum, and not outside anymore.

People close to the source told us their personal experiences, like making a love oath by the source. A common thing they reported coming closer to the actual source of the Styx was that they would experience a feeling of ALOE, which they described as a feeling of being high or lightheaded. One very old man simply told us to google Styx if we wanted to be sure.

An important discovery we made was that the closer we came to the source, the more standardized the story became, to the point that it was exactly like the story written down on the information table directly in the cave of the source. As if writing down one version of the myth reduced it to this one version. When we asked the schooldirector why they still perform the old myths and stories, she exclaimed that these stories are so deeply engraved in their indentity that they need to be told!

Again we were reminded of our feeble knowledge of the myths that are part of the northern European context. Fact is that the Northern mythologies, written down in the Eddas have been very little preserved. As if of the whole Greek mythology only the Hercules myth survived.

3. How does the 'source' as an abstract idea of origin differ from the physically tangible 'source' of a river?

A source is a source, but what is beyond the source? That is maybe the more interesting question. I think, the abstract and the concrete image of the source are quite similar. Sources can be trickling weakly or gushing with an enoumous force, depending on the source. Some are more difficult to reach than others, and the outcome always provokes a change!