

regarder son moi

travailler en lenteur et

Chercher -à- le

Fixer dans les yeux

tout ce

qui se

produit

dans l'immobilité

Brûlé, et revient

Être pensez dégager regarder une humanité. en silence.

une vedette, c'est quelqu'un qui transforme une question en lumière.

j'étais les yeux, les bruits devenu vous autres.

un artiste, face à la

fureur

monde

THÉÂTRE DE L'E.V.N.I.  
Spectator Guide

# Guidelines

This document is intended for curious audiences, teachers and education staff, and provides elements to reflect on and analyse the show **Mike**, recommended for ages 14+.

How could the audience be guided in the questioning sparked by the performance? What food for thought can we offer to pique the audience's curiosity before or after the performance? This guide was elaborated to answer these interrogations. All images were captured during the creation period.

**Discover the Show and the Creative Process**..... p. 2  
gives an insight into the company's artistic approach and the specificities of the project **Mike**.

**Philosophy, What For?** ..... p. 5  
proposes to consider the show following the pathways of philosophy.

**One Step Further** ..... p. 8  
shares references, links, questions and activities resulting from the creative process. This part explores 4 key themes of **Mike**: the gaze of others, identity formation, the pursuit of freedom, the desire for recognition.

**Around the Show** .....p. 21  
gives a brief description of the workshops conducted by the artists before and after the performance.

## Contact

theatre@evni.be

Sophie Leso

+32(0)496 62 38 37

Colin Jolet

+32(0)484 97 01 06

# DISCOVER THE SHOW AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS

**In Mike, Colin Jolet performs a solo. Colin is a dancer. He often works with different choreographers, he experiments with theatre and love trying new things. He wanted to create a solo performance, something entirely new to him. In this artistic object, Colin plays with a theme that he has been exploring for years: the influence of the other's gaze.**

What are the effects of the other's gaze on me? What do I let the other see? What do I decide to show for it to be seen? On the contrary, what do I hide, what do I conceal from the other's gaze?

**These interrogations raise fundamental questions related to identity formation, freedom and the desire for recognition.**

Does the other's gaze lock us in a norm? Are we free to be different? Are we free to show this difference? Why do some people have the urge to go on stage? Why wanting to be seen?

**Another central premise of the project was the desire to create a show both for teenagers and adults.**

**Colin naturally invited Sophie Leso and Nicolas Arnould to be part of the adventure.** The three of them have known each other for a long time. They work with various companies and regularly meet to develop a common research within the E.V.N.I Theatre, which literally means Unidentified Flying Mind (*Esprit Volant Non Identifié*).

**What brings them together is the desire to share the pleasure they have in formulating questions rather than offering easy answers, no matter how relevant, tolerant and sensitive the latter are.**

Therefore, far from having a one-size-fits-all answer, they like to invent a specific process for each project. With each performance, they develop a **unique scenic language at the edge of dance and theatre**, where speech emerges from unexpected spaces.

For **Mike**, they were eager to share their initial considerations and make their theme grow and resonate in different directions, from different points of view; thus inviting ten artists with very different artistic visions to join them. Musician, dancer, scenographer, trapezist, actors gathered for a residency prior to the creation of the play. They spent time doing writing work and performance staging and alternated between moments of introspection, improvisation and composition.

Then, they met teenagers in schools and in the rehearsal studio for periods of exchange and work that really cemented their approach. As a matter of fact, **how could a performance be aimed at teenagers without experimenting a meaningful encounter with them?**

Like craftspeople, the artists transformed the materials resulting from these encounters to build the performance framework.

« *The spectator composes her own poem  
with the elements of the poem before her.* »

Jacques Rancière,  
*The Emancipated Spectator*

There are multiple ways to look at, understand or interpret **Mike**. It can be confusing since we are often assisted in our interpretation of stories: many of them have a beginning, middle and end as well as a message to deliver, which can be reassuring.

This is not the case here: the performance is presented as an invitation to the voyage and the questioning of the self. The spectator is then invited to contribute and create.

**This guide is here to lead you on a path both promising but steep, sometimes puzzling, sometimes comforting.**

**Because beyond the performance, the company is deeply committed to make enriching encounters and find joy in playing and experimenting.**

**Let's start!**

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## Activity

### Around the notion of spectator/creator and the question of gaze.

- Take a piece of paper and a marker.
  - Take a timer and set it to one minute.
  - Start the timer. Without any thinking, draw randomly across the paper.
  - Go where your hand goes, without wanting anything.
  - When the time is up, put down the marker.
  - Pass the paper to your neighbour: what does he or she see?
  - Pass the same paper to another neighbour: what does he or she see?
  - Now, take a look at the lines or curves on the paper: what do you see with your eyes?
- Some interpretations of the lines and curves may converge while some others may diverge. With that in mind, you may start to see that **the gaze of others broadens our own.** "Oh! I hadn't seen that, but now that you say it, I see it too"
- A person looking at these randomly drawn lines will make a sense out of them, have their own interpretation of the drawing. Therefore, does it imply that the **meaning of a work is not only intrinsic to the work itself, but also resides in the observer's eyes?**
-



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« You have to understand the word ‘achieve’. I believe you achieve just one thing: your dreams. You have one dream, you try to build up and structure your dream. Thus, it is correct that I have worked towards achieving my dream. All things considered, you try to recount the things you fail. »

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**Brel**

<https://bit.ly/3rWkqwj>

# PHILOSOPHY, WHAT FOR?

*« To refuse easy answers, reject dogma, foster group dynamics where conversations and question-solving process are more important than a result or an answer, to see others as partners not rivals, or to discover the world around us. This the horizon of the society we choose when practising philosophy with children and teenagers. »*

**Gilles Abel**

## **Finding joy in the questioning**

Anyone can build a philosophical thought or lead a philosophical discussion as long as they pay attention to several elements that will be further discussed.

Apart from going beyond our beliefs, doing philosophy essentially means finding pleasure in the questioning of the world, something that we have all experienced.

## **Beyond “I don’t like it”**

The practice of philosophy implies to nuance our opinions, to go beyond them and beyond “I like”, “I don’t like”, “I don’t understand!” or “Everyone has their opinion” .

Before and after a performance, the practice of philosophy is an opportunity for everyone to realise that it is possible for a group of persons to collectively think around art, emotions or freedom.

As shown by the philosopher Matthew Lipman, when we engage in philosophical discussions, we develop aesthetic, interpersonal and critical thinking skills.

## **Lead a philosophical discussion**

If you want to engage in a philosophical dialogue that can benefit all, you will find below a – non-exhaustive – list of recommendations to start a conversation around the show.



## ... guiding a philosophical discussion? Recommendations

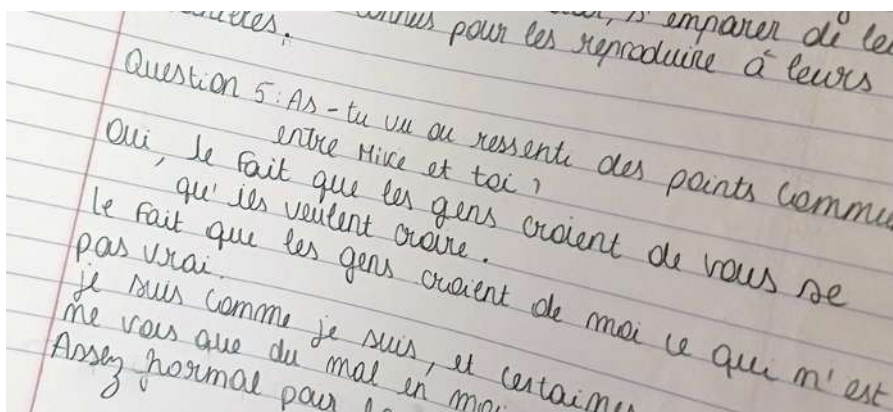
- The goal is not to convince others but to **UNDERSTAND** them.
- A philosophical discussion is not a juxtaposition of opinions. It is both **SAYING WHAT YOU THINK** and **THINKING WHAT YOU SAY**.
- The best way to get everyone in the process of reasoning is to make sure that the participants **DEFINE** the words they use, give **EXAMPLES** and **COUNTER-EXAMPLES** and try to **MAKE CONNECTIONS** between their answers to build a collective thought.
- Whether it is about dance, art, beauty or any philosophical question, it is important to try to **UNDERSTAND WHERE PREJUDICES ORIGINATE FROM**.
- Such an exercise leads us to discover that it is impossible to all give the same answers, its purpose is to see answers as a **HORIZON** to reach rather than a result to get to.

### Questions to explore

*Does explaining a show implies to understand it?*

*Can we like a show without understanding it?*

*After attending a show, can I better understand myself?*





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« I love people who doubt, who care too much about their little swinging heart. Those who speak for themselves and contradict themselves and without backing out. I love people who fear, that we may think out here they're judging or they're snide. I love the ones that cruise midway inside their shoes and midway by their side. »

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Anne Sylvestre  
<https://bit.ly/3lxyo6G>



# ONE STEP FURTHER

Here are some reading samples, links, references. Sociological, psychological or anthropological points of view dialogue with poetic gazes, philosophical reflections and autobiographical experiments. All along the project, our documentary research was based on this voluntarily heterogeneous approach.

**“Questions”** can help you initiate a philosophical group discussion or serve as a starting point for individual reasoning and writing.

Then, an **“activity”** provide you with the creative tools we used during the creative process.

Do not hesitate to make these propositions your own, to transform or adapt them.

**Have fun!**

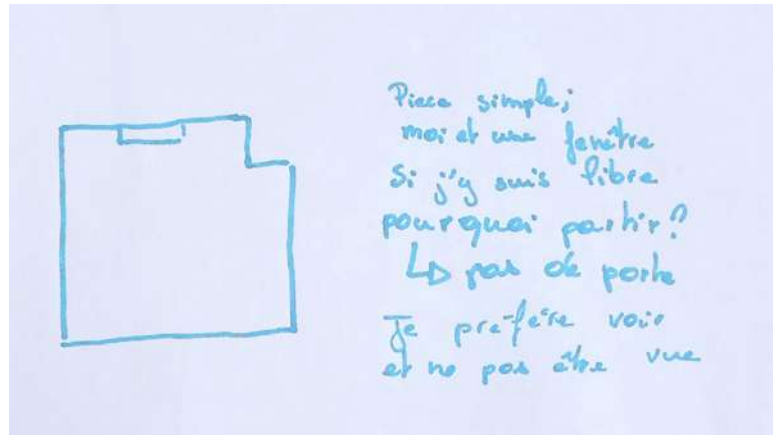


# The Gaze of Others

« Human beings have the strange ability to look at each other, not just to see each other, but to look each other in the eyes. This ability is so natural to us that we cannot always grasp how exceptional it is. »

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Daniel Marcelli,  
*Eye gazing*, Ed. Albin Michel



« Will I see myself in the other's eyes? Or will they look away from my eyes for fear of being seen? Am I really looking at the other or just at my own reflection, the image they have of me? Do I really want to see the other or only the idea of them? »

---

France Frascarolo and Noémie Lapalus  
<https://bit.ly/3invG1P>

« If you compare teaching to the world of show business, you see shared referents: a stage, a teacher in place of an actor and an audience that is expected to be calm and attentive. Spectacle and theatre have the same meaning: one comes from the Latin *spectare* and the other from the Greek *theaomai*, both of which mean "to look". Indeed, the classroom is a space where the exchange of glances takes place. One could think that these gazes only move in two directions: the teacher on the students and the students on the teacher. However, therein lies the difference with the spectacle, since the gazes in a classroom link also and above all the students between them. »

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Laure Farcy  
<https://bit.ly/3AbPyec>

## Questions

*Do you like being looked at? Why?  
What about you, do you like looking at others?  
Do you remember the last time you looked someone in the eyes?  
Emmanuel Levinas, in Totality and Infinity, says that no one exists alone  
and that we all exist in and for the eyes of the Other. Do you agree?*

---

## Activity

### Face to face!

#### Relational experiment, automatic writing and gesture language

Sit in pairs, not too close and not too far, and face each other.

Look at each other in the eyes for 3 minutes without talking. Go!

When the time is up, everyone takes 3 minutes to write anything about the experiment.  
What did you feel? What did you see?

Read again what you just wrote. What do you consider to be the 5 most important words?  
Now, turn each word into a gesture.

Memorise the gestures and repeat them several times in the same order:  
you invented a choreography!

N.B. The goal is not “for others to understand” what you wrote but it is, on one side, to initiate a mini-introspection and, on the other side, to experiment the expressiveness of the body through the transformation of words into gestures. Therefore, what you write can remain “secret”!

---

#### AUTOMATIC WRITING

**involves writing as fast as possible, in the absence of all control by reason, excluding any aesthetic or moral preoccupation, and even forgetting about grammatical coherence.**

# Identity Formation

« Teenagers are the persons who pin the most things to walls. Pictures and words. That is because adolescence is a time when one does not possess a clear face. The face of childhood has faded or at least we think it has, which is all the same. The new face, the face of the man or woman one will become is not yet available, and one is not sure to want it. So we look in magazines, in pictures of actors, singers, sportspersons, we try on faces like we try on clothes, nothing looks right, never mind, we start over, we tear, we cut. This quest is time consuming. But we may end up finding ourselves. »

---

Christian Bobin,  
*The Exhaustion*, Folio

« Although personal identity may appear to be a simple and obvious notion, it is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. Personal identity has an objective meaning: each individual is unique and possesses a set of genes that makes them different from all others. However, and above all, it has a subjective meaning: it refers to the feeling of individuality ("I am me"), of singularity ("I am different from others and I have this and that characteristic"), of continuity of space and time ("I am always the same person"). »

---

Edmond Marc,  
<https://bit.ly/3fyVBSl>



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« Life taught me one thing: sometimes, we search too far for answers that are right in front of us. And if look deep down in our hearts, I think we can all find a hidden treasure. We wear so many layers, that we sometimes have to remove them to reach that immense treasure we have in us. »

---

Dalida

« We build ourselves, we sculpt ourselves. And then, we copy. Sometimes, we also believe that the other's dream is ours. »

---

Claire Farah  
<https://bit.ly/2U1NA0A>

## Questions

*How could you define yourself in one word?  
Do you find it difficult to understand who you are ? Why?  
My body, my self?  
If your body changes, does it change the person you are?  
Know yourself, as the old saying goes. Being yourself, what does it mean?*

### IDENTITY

The permanent and fundamental nature of a person or a group that expresses their individuality and singularity.

Person looking for their identity.

The information that characterises someone (date and place of birth, name, etc.).

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## Activity

### Traditional Biography / Imaginary Biography

#### Writing Reality and Writing Fiction

On the next page, you will find beginnings of sentences.

Complete them with what you can say about yourself today.

It is a short biography that (re)presents you.

Then, complete the same beginnings of sentences, only this time you write whatever your imagination can think of. Feel free to transform reality!

The imaginary biography expresses other things about you: your desires, your aspirations, your secrets...

Form a group. Imaginary biographies can be mixed and read out loud by the same person: can you guess who wrote what?

Each person can also read their own biography in front of others.

How do you feel when people listen to you or watch you express yourself?

Do you feel free ? Shy? Proud?

---

# Traditional biography

My name is.....  
.....  
.....

But people often call me.....  
.....  
.....

I was born.....  
.....  
.....

When I was little.....  
.....  
.....

Over time.....  
.....  
.....

And then one day.....  
.....  
.....

People often say that I.....  
.....  
.....

It's funny, because.....  
.....  
.....

But still.....  
.....  
.....



# Imaginary biography

My name is.....  
.....  
.....

But people often call me.....  
.....  
.....

I was born.....  
.....  
.....

When I was little.....  
.....  
.....

Over time.....  
.....  
.....

And then one day.....  
.....  
.....

People often say that I.....  
.....  
.....

It's funny, because.....  
.....  
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But still.....  
.....  
.....

# The Pursuit of Freedom

« In my opinion, the most important freedom is the free man. But the man who's free from within. I think we're a tangled web of thoughts and emotions, and that it is very hard to unify all of them. Frankly, for me, freedom means to be able to find inner unity, to be free from yourself, and lastly, to be free from your inner struggles. Voilà! »

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Dalida

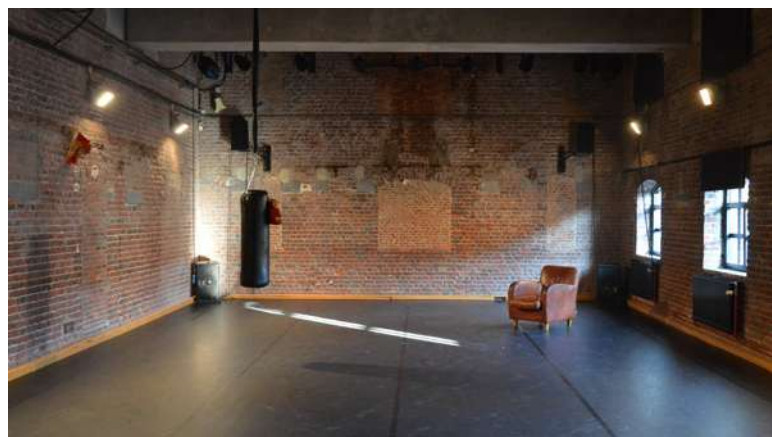
<https://bit.ly/3CeQm3S>

« Ten years ago, in Marseille, a 15-year-old teenager unfortunately crossed the path of a 14 year-old teenager he had never met before and who then stabbed him to death. The murderer "explained" his gesture as follows: "He looked at me the wrong way!" »

---

Daniel Marcelli

<https://bit.ly/3rVduQ0>



« Man is condemned to be free. Condemned because he did not create himself, yet he is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment he is thrown into this world, he is responsible for everything he does. Man, being condemned to be free, he bears the responsibility for all his actions, but also a share of the collective responsibility, because as a being, he contributes to the world, to society. What happens to me, happens through me, and I am entirely responsible for it, no one else is. Another way to put it would be that when I perform an act, I choose my act because I choose myself. To choose is to choose oneself. (...) Freedom is "the stuff of my being". It necessarily implies responsibility and choice. »

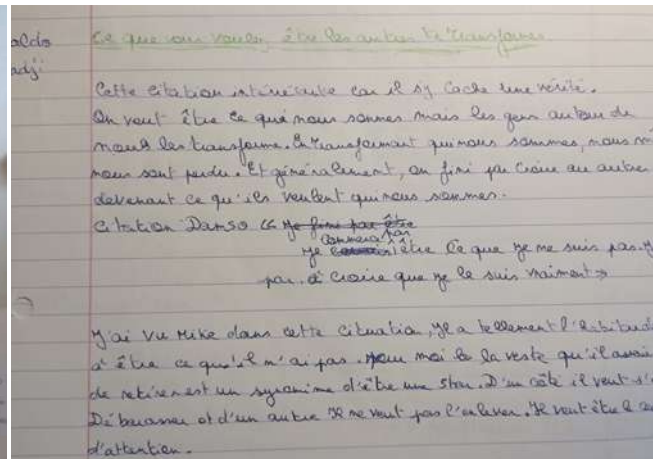
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Alexis J.

<https://bit.ly/3fvzmfQ>

# Questions

Does being free mean doing whatever you want?  
Does being free mean being whoever you want?  
Does understanding freedom allow you to be free?  
Do you feel free to be who you are? Is it normal to be different?  
Who decides who is normal/free?  
Freedom, what for?



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## Activity

### Quotations

#### Collage, the Surrealists' way

On the next page, you will find a variety of quotations.

Take scissors, tape or glue and a white piece of paper.

Cut words, groups of words, commas, full stops.

Mix and create new sentences, new names. Freely!

You can then choose one of the new quotations and try to make connections with the performance. But not necessarily!

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Others are like mirrors that lead to the questioning  
of the self. | Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui

You can be anything you want to be, just turn yourself  
into anything that you could ever be. | Freddy Mercury

Looking someone in the eyes is also looking at yourself.  
| Ai Yazawa

Seeking confirmation of one's self in the eyes of others is  
like looking into the distorting mirrors of a funfair.  
| Alain de Botton

The freedom to be who we are is not enough, we also  
want the freedom to be who we are not. | Jean Grenier

When I started, I knew I was a star, it's just that others didn't  
know it yet. | Jacques Brel

Being on stage, doing nothing, and resulting from this  
steadiness: humanity. | Pippo Delbono

The secret to freedom is a library. | Bernard Werber

I believe that an artist is someone who feels pain with  
others. | Jacques Brel

# The Desire for Recognition

« I live for the applause, applause, applause  
I live for the applause-plause, live for the applause-plause, live for the-  
Way that you cheer and scream for me  
The applause, applause, applause »

---

Lady Gaga

<https://bit.ly/3inn7Ee>

« The gaze, among teenagers, makes them unconsciously fear that by looking or being looked they face a risk to lose a part of their selves or to cast doubts on what they hold to be true, especially since they perceive in some looks the weight of “societal judgement”. Yet, the teenager uses and abuses of this range of gazes, depending on that Other (parent, child, friend, colleague...). The teenager fears the Other’s gaze, but still searches for it to better provoke it or annihilate it. From “Why are you looking at me like that?”, to “Why aren’t you looking at me?”, feelings are mixed: contempt, anger, irony or desire, love...the desire for recognition. »

---

Jean-Yves le Fourn

<https://bit.ly/3iptkiT>

« Everything that exists is looked at. What is not looked at is left in the limbo of non-recognition. In fact, it is true for all aspects of life, all of them. Does an artwork exist without the gaze? »

---

Christian Bobin

<https://bit.ly/3inajOA>

« I wanted to be a singer,  
To tell my words, to sing my song,  
I wanted to be a writer  
To change my skin, to change the fact  
I wanted to be an artist,  
To tell the world that I exist. »

---

Luc Plamondon

<https://bit.ly/3jAS6Mh>



## Questions

*What are you proud of?*

*What do you do best?*

*According to you, why do some people choose to become artists?*

*Can you be an artist without being famous?*

*Can you decide whether to become famous?*

---

## Activity

### The Interview

#### Journalistic investigation and theatrical performance

Choose someone that you really admire, your “idol”.

On a piece of paper, write a dozen of questions that you could ask that person.

Two options:

1) Write down the answers yourself.

2) Invite someone to play the interview game, like on a TV show. It is even better with a microphone.

The person who wrote the questions plays the journalist, while the guest answers the questions while trying to impersonate the “idol”.

N.B. : The accuracy and precision of the answers do not matter  
as long as you enjoy acting and playing a character.

---





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« I'm afraid to loose sight, to not see anymore.  
Sometimes, I'm afraid to look.  
When I'm a bit lost in my life, I often say: 'Do  
you see? Do you see what I mean?' »

---

Philippe Léonard  
<https://bit.ly/3jEKJDK>

# AROUND THE SHOW

## BEFORE THE SHOW

### PHILOSOPHY WORKSHOP

We propose a **philosophy workshop** in classes to make students and teachers aware of the specific language of the show **Mike**. This encounter aims to allow teenagers to free themselves from the necessity to “understand the story”.

The central themes will be discussed briefly, and then we will focus, in a concrete and playful manner, on the notions of poetic image and nonlinear temporality. With this first meeting, our goal is to invite young audiences to experience the **freedom of vision and interpretation** when looking at the artistic object **Mike**.

## AFTER THE SHOW

### MOVEMENT WORKSHOP and/or WRITING WORKSHOP

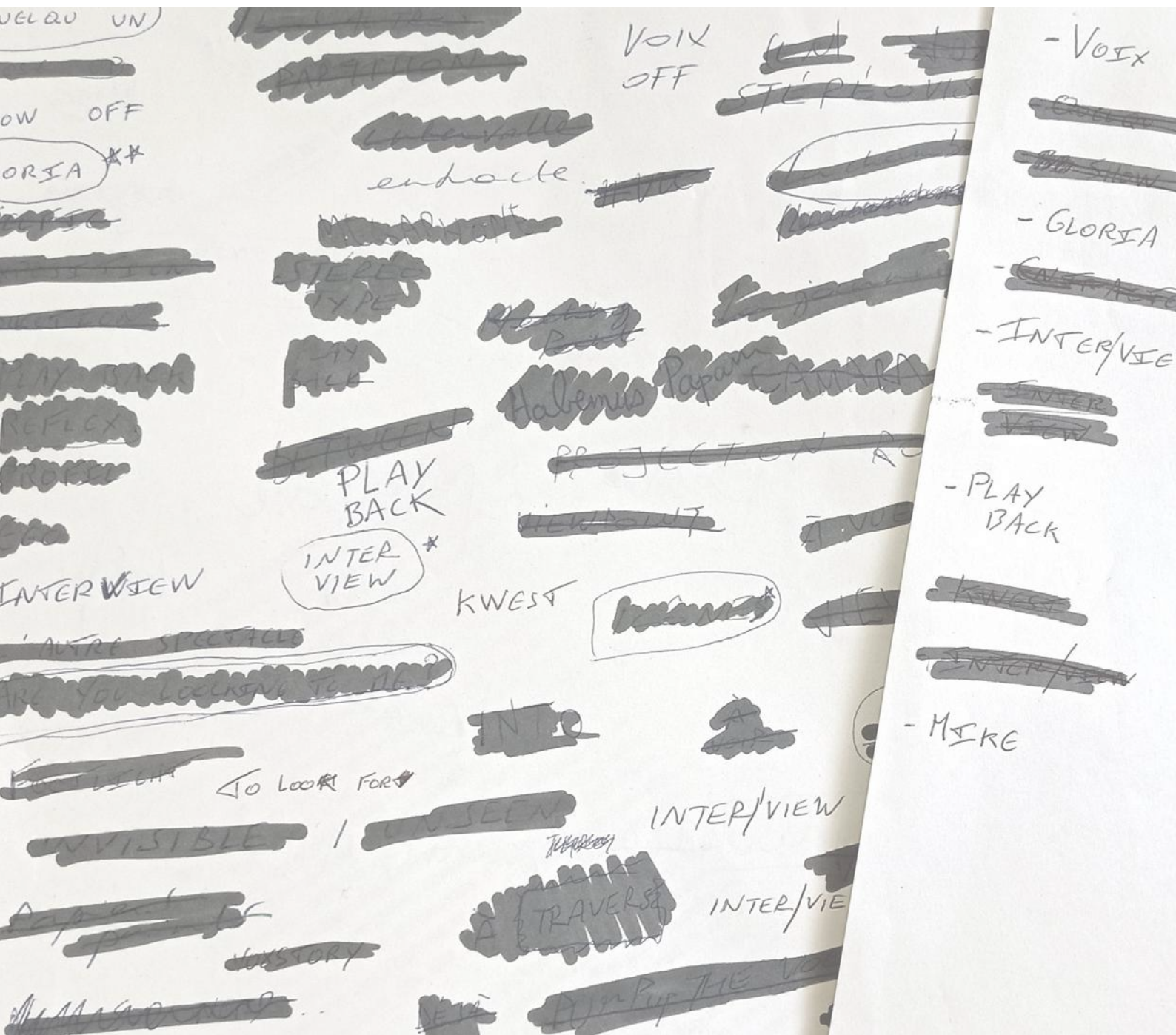
In the classroom or in the space where the performance took place, we propose a movement workshop and/or a writing workshop.

Scenes of the performance will be the starting point of these workshops. We will invite the participants who so wish to **recreate a sequence of the play** that they still have in mind and to interpret it in front of the whole class. By letting creative freedom emerge in small groups, we want teenagers to become aware of all the possibilities that exist in the creative act, we want them to experiment with what it is to perform on a stage (in front of an audience) and give us feedbacks on how they felt doing so.

We will also discuss the notion of **gestural writing** and invite the participants to compose their own narrative by following **methods of playful writing** experimented during the creation period.

### TALKBACK

After each performance, we are available for an **after-show talk with the audience**. This post-show discussion aims to offer to spectators an opportunity to confront their feelings to our experience, if they so wish. This moment is very dear to us because it brings the actors and spectators in the same light and establishes a simple and intimate relationship. Throughout the talk, we really want the spectators **to build their own representations of the performance**. We are convinced that meaning emerges for everyone through exchange and the plurality of points of view collectively shared.



Send us your projects, feedbacks and questions.  
We will be happy to hear from you and reply!

## CONTACT

<http://evni.be>  
[theatre@evni.be](mailto:theatre@evni.be)  
02 / 217 88 08

 Théâtre de l'EVNI