

Panasonic Theatre

DAVID MIRVISH

presents

ONTROEREND GOED

THE BORDER PROJECT (AUS), VOORUIT (BE),
THEATRE ROYAL PLYMOUTH (UK) and RICHARD JORDAN PRODUCTIONS (UK)

production of

FIGHT NIGHT

Text by

ALEXANDER DEVRIENDT, ANGELO TIJSSENS and THE CAST

with

AARON GORDON, ABDEL DAOUDI, ANGELO TIJSSENS
AURÉLIE LANNOY, CHARLOTTE DE BRUYNE, MICHAÏ GEYZEN

Scenography

SOPHIE DE SOMERE, LILLITH TREMMERY

Light Design

LILITH TREMMERY

Costumes

SOPHIE DE SOMERE, ANGELO TIJSSENS

Sound Designer

DAVID HEINRICH

Graphic Design Voting System

NICK MATTAN

Composers

CAMERON GOODALL and DAVID HEINRICH

Technique Tour

BABETTE PONCELET and IBEN STALPAERT

Directed by

ALEXANDER DEVRIENDT

With thanks to: State Theatre Adelaide, NTGent, Angela Schellekens — CCB& & Unicorn Theatre

With the support of: Flemish Community, Province of East-Flanders, City of Ghent

Photography: Sarah Eechaut

about the show

FIGHT NIGHT COMBINES ONTROEREND GOED

and The Border Project's forces into a playful and immersive political exploration. The performance puts five actors into the position of "candidates" struggling to get the audience's sympathy and, ultimately, their vote. Only one of them will survive the relentless series of eliminations and they apply all possible tactics and strategies to assure their victory.

Set on a platform reminiscent of a boxing ring, the competition is fought not with fists but with words and looks. The audience, armed with a voting keypad, decides who stays and who goes, but gets entangled in an increasingly complex and puzzling system of rules and manipulations. As in mediated political campaigns, polls and predictions, debates and charm offensives challenge the voters' loyalty and common sense, in the end toppling their notion of free choice.

Fight Night is thoroughly political, but never explicitly so. The candidates don't voice a particular ideology, nor do they comment on social issues or economic realities. By stripping their discourse of identifiable political messages, the show draws attention to the very reasons and motivations that compel voters to vote. What is at stake, is

the way the concept of "rule of the people" is put into practice in contemporary democratic societies. *Fight Night* illustrates how content and ideas are only relevant if they make a difference in statistics and increase the chance to gain power through numbers.

As in Ontroerend Goed's *Audience* (2011), the spectators are again at the heart of the performance's dramaturgy. While in the former production, the audience was warmed up to become a crowd and then confronted with the beauty and danger of group behaviour, *Fight Night* casts them as voters granted unprecedented power over the progression of the show. Clearing their way through randomness and irrationality, consideration and conscience, the performance guides them on their path to become a majority.

Fight Night has toured the world in the last few years. The show has been in Belgium, The Netherlands, Switzerland, The United Kingdom, Australia and Hong Kong. There has been a remake in Istanbul and last summer, Ontroerend Goed took on Avignon, with the French version of *Fight Night*.

ontroerendgoed.be

 [#ogfightnight](https://twitter.com/ogfightnight)

Fight Night has a running time of approximately 90 minutes
with no intermission



The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all electronic devices such as cellular phones, beepers and watches.

director's notes

Your vote. So many people fight for it. So many promises are made to obtain it.

And yet it feels so small. Such a tiny contribution. A seemingly insignificant voice muffled by the turmoil of the powers that be.

I've been all kinds of voters. A frustrated one, consciously abstaining, too lazy to go, a fervent one, a social one, a strategical one.

But more and more I became fascinated by the extent to which my choice was manipulated on so many levels.

Not only by the politicians themselves or by the media. All sorts of little things in my immediate or faraway surroundings had an impact on my vote.

What it mostly boiled down to, is the feeling that made me say: "I trust this person."

A trust that seemed to be of my own making.

I trusted this one person in politics. He seemed intelligent and somebody who could represent me in the political field.

When he appeared on television he said things that made sense. Whether it was in a game show or political talk show I can't remember (the distinction has become blurrier day by day).

It's a feeling I share with many Trump-supporters today. You trust your own judgment so well, you rarely question what it's really based upon.

Until I took a closer look at his views during rehearsals for this show and I was

amazed how different our views were on so many levels.

How the things I cared about were not even mentioned in his political program.

I still trust the guy. He is a strong politician. He just doesn't get my vote anymore.

There is this other person whose program I share completely. She doesn't get enough votes to really matter in Belgian politics, but I believe the votes she gets, keep her going.

Because my vote matters to her and she matters to her party and the party influences decisions in a country, the country has a say in the European Union and maybe the powers beyond that are kept in check just a little bit more.

A chain of influence that can alter the world. Eight years under Romney would be a different world; a Canada led by Trudeau resonates even in our country; a referendum in Britain has altered the course of history.

I remember when we performed the show in London, there was this 80-year-old man who started shouting to younger people who were giving up their device, who were giving up their vote.

"Don't do it. People have fought for this!" he shouted.

I'm probably going to be like him.

— Alexander Devriendt

the company



ANGELO TIJSSENS

Angelo Tijssens studied theatre at the Antwerp Conservatorium. He made a few shows as a director, actor and writer, but after a couple

of years, he started working for OG as an understudy. Soon enough he actually joined the company and started touring all over the world. His work with Ontroerend Goed includes *A Game of You*, *Internal*, *Audience*, *A History of Everything*, *Fight Night*, *Are we not drawn onward to new erA* and *OMG*, with actress Charlotte De Bruyne. Angelo acted in some films and several television series, wrote three short films (two were nominated for a Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival) and is currently writing an experimental feature film called *Letter to Yourself*, together with artistic director Alexander Devriendt, and the feature film *Another Skin*, with director Lukas Dhont and choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui.



CHARLOTTE DE BRUYNE

Charlotte De Bruyne began acting in 2002 at the Ghent-based youth theatre Kopergieterij. This is where she first met Ontroerend

Goed, as one of the teenagers in *Once and For All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up and Listen*. After a two-year tour she played in several other OG shows including *The Smile Off Your Face*, *Internal*, *A Game of You*, *A History of Everything*, *Are we not drawn onward to new erA* and *Fight Night*. She went to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent to study acting. In 2012 she played her first movie role in *Little Black Spiders* directed by Patrice Toye. For her role in *Flying Home* she won an Ensor, a Flemish Film Award for Best Actress.



MICHAİ GEYZEN

Michai Geyzen studied at the Theatre Academy of Maastricht in the Netherlands. After getting his Bachelor in Theatre

degree, he continued his studies to get his master's. His first professional play as a director/actor was called *über-ich*, for which he won a prize at the Theater Aan Zee festival in Oostende. He has played leading roles in *Hendrik* (Studio Gebroed, Boulevard festival), *Romeo and Julia* (Hans van de Boom), *En we stierven nog lang en gelukkig* (Sermoen) and *Fight Night* (Ontroerend Goed). Michai also directs plays for children and teenagers (Laika) and has his own theatre company called De Mannschaft.



AARON GORDON

Aaron Gordon is an actor/writer born and raised in London, U.K. He began acting at the age of 10 in a number of amateur

productions. He was part of a number of drama organizations including Wac Arts and the National Youth Theatre. He trained with the National Youth Theatre Rep Company in 2013, which ended in a 10-week showcase in the West End. Since finishing the Rep Company he has been working as a professional actor in theatre and television. He found a secondary passion in writing when he was 18 and has since completed courses at Lyric Hammersmith and the Royal Court (two leading theatres in London). He has also completed a course with Channel 4 in screenwriting. His play *Sweatin' It Out* was one of the plays selected to be in the Angelic Tales Festival, a staged reading at Theatre Royal Stratford East. He is currently writing

a one-man show about schizophrenia, in which he hopes to star. Aaron hopes to pursue both acting and writing for years to come. He is drawn to stories that challenge our beliefs. He also believes in giving a voice to the underrepresented, including disabled actors. This is his first OG show.



AURÉLIE LANNOY

Aurélie Lannoy began her theatrical training at the Institut of Diffusion Arts in Louvain-la-Neuve. She continued her studies at the

Kleine Academie in Brussels until 2004, with movement and creation as a pedagogical basis. In the course of the following years, she also received training at the Susan Batson Studio in New York. Fresh from drama school, Aurélie joined Ontroerend Goed, a Ghent-based company that explores new theatrical forms. Their artistic affinities were obvious and immediately recognized. She has collaborated with them regularly as an actress, creator and performer, allowing her to perform internationally. She has received several awards, among them at the Adelaide and Edinburgh festivals. Alongside her work with Ontroerend Goed, Aurélie also joined forces with other groups, notably

the Parisian company Les Divins Animaux for the project *Flirt* and the musical group Les Vedettes. In July 2016, Aurélie began a research in residence to explore the possibilities and the limits of a deep and authentic relationship between actors and their audiences. On screen, Aurélie has appeared as the main character in *Inacia* by Charlotte Dupont, *Lucha Libre* by Ann Sirot and Raphael Balboni and in the video clip *Koko* by Nicola Testa and Martin Landmeters. She will also work with Anne-Cécile Vandalem (Das Fräulein Kompanie) for the video installation *Still Too Sad To Tell You*.



ABDEL DAOUDI

Abdel Daoudi graduated in 2012 from the theatre school in Maastricht. As an actor he worked for Drang Theatre on location, where he played and created several new and classical plays. As director and assistant director he worked for the National Theatre in the Netherlands with directors Theu Boermans and Eric de Vroedt. Besides acting and directing, Abdel teaches drama at the Rabarber Theatre School in The Hague and has a big passion for adapting repertoire with and for youngsters.

the creative team

ALEXANDER DEVRIENDT

Alexander Devriendt is the artistic director and one of the founders of Ontroerend Goed. His past work includes the creation of the individual theatre trilogy *The Smile Off Your Face*, *Internal* and *A Game of You*; the direction of the three celebrated teenage plays *Once and For All We're Gonna Tell You*, *Who We Are So Shut Up and Listen*, *Teenage Riot* and *All That is Wrong*; and *A History of*

Everything co-produced with Sydney Theatre Company. His most recent works are *Sirens*, a performance on feminism; *Are we not drawn onward to new erA*, a palindrome show; and *World Without Us*, the final part of the Fast Forward Trilogy. His plays have won several awards around the world and are performed all over Europe, Australia and America, recently visiting the Middle East, Russia, Hong Kong and Singapore.

ABOUT ONTROEREND GOED

“The most consistently challenging theatre-makers of the past decade.”

— THE SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF PERFORMANCE

Ontroerend Goed (a punning name, roughly translated as “Feel Estate”) is a theatre performance group based in Ghent, Belgium. At the core of all our work is the belief that the world is inevitably doomed but also the belief that every action matters, every interaction is worthwhile. The performances we create deal with how people, as individuals, cope with the world around them, the problems it poses, the high probability of its bad outcome and how everything people do, all their interactions as human beings, are extremely valuable and important. We embrace the tension between the two beliefs in every idea we try to communicate. We look for the ideal form to convey each idea. Ontroerend Goed has been touring the world, in Dutch, French and English for the last 15 years with their personal trilogy (*The Smile Off Your Face*, *Internal*, *A Game of You*), *Audience*, *A History of Everything* (with Sydney Theatre Company), with their teenage hits *Once and For All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up and Listen*, *Teenage Riot* and *All That Is Wrong*, the political game show *Fight Night*, the palindrome trip *Are we not drawn onward to new erA*, the feminist manifesto *Sirens* and their most recent show *World Without Us*. Ontroerend Goed is Alexander Devriendt, Joeri Smet, Charlotte De Bruyne, Karolien De Bleser, Angelo Tijssens, David Bauwens, Wim Smet, Babette Poncelet and Karen Van Ginderachter. In 2014, Oberon Books published *All Work and No Plays* — nine blueprints for theatre performance (which includes *Fight Night*) by Ontroerend Goed. www.ontroerendgoed.be on Facebook

THEATRE ROYAL PLYMOUTH

Theatre Royal Plymouth is the largest and best attended regional producing theatre in the U.K. and the leading promoter of theatre in the South West. We produce and present a broad range of theatre in our three distinctive performance spaces — The Lyric, The Drum and The Lab — including classic and contemporary drama, musicals, opera, ballet and dance. We specialize in the production of new plays and have built a national reputation for the quality and innovation of our program. Recent Theatre Royal Plymouth productions include: *Monster Raving Loony* by James Graham, *The Man With The Hammer* by Phil Porter, *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez, *After Electra* by April de Angelis, *Grand Guignol* and *Horse Piss for Blood* by Carl Grose, *Merit* by Alexandra Wood, *Another Place* by DC Moore, *Chekhov in Hell* by Dan Rebellato, *The Astronaut's Chair* by Rona Munro, *Solid Air* by Doug Lucie, and *MAD MAN* by Chris Goode. The Theatre Royal Plymouth also collaborates with some of the best artists and theatre-makers in the U.K. and internationally. We have regularly co-produced with Ontroerend Goed, Richard Jordan Productions and Vooruit (*World Without Us*, *Are we not drawn onward to new erA*, *A History of Everything*, *Sirens*, *Fight Night*, *Audience*, *All That is Wrong*, *Under the Influence*, *Teenage Riot*), Paines Plough (*The Angry Brigade* by James Graham, *Love Love Love* by Mike Bartlett), Frantic Assembly (*Othello*, *The Believers* by Bryony Lavery, *Lovesong* by Abi Morgan), Told By An Idiot (*My Perfect Mind*, *And The Horse You Rode In On*) and recently Graeae (*The Solid Life of Sugar Water*). Alongside our own productions we present a program of quality and popularity and regularly launch national touring productions including *Swan Lake* and *Edward Scissorhands* (Matthew Bourne), *War Horse* (National Theatre) and most recently *Billy Elliot the Musical*.

RICHARD JORDAN PRODUCTIONS

Richard Jordan Productions is an Olivier and Tony Award-winning production company under the artistic leadership of British producer Richard Jordan. His London-based company was founded in 1998 and has been at the forefront of developing and presenting works by a diverse range of established and emerging writers and artists. Acclaimed Belgian performance group Ontroerend Goed and Richard Jordan produce together worldwide regularly in collaboration with leading U.K. producing theatre Theatre Royal Plymouth. A recipient of more than 40 major international theatre awards and enjoying associations with many of the world's leading theatres and arts organizations, Richard Jordan Productions has produced more than 200 productions in the U.K. and 21 other countries, including 70 world premieres and 81 European, Australian or U.S. premieres. Described by the U.K.'s *Stage* newspaper as "one of the U.K.'s most prolific theatre producers" and named seven times in their top 100 theatre professionals, Richard was the first recipient of the TIF/Society of London Theatre Producers Award, and in 2009 was a finalist in the British Council's first-ever Creative Entrepreneur Award. Richard's other Canadian productions include: *Miriam Margolyes in Dickens' Women*; *Dylan Thomas: Return Journey*; *Cadre*; *Once and For All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up and Listen*; *Hamlet* (solo); *Hirsch*; *Goodness*; *Kafka and Son*; *Internal*; *A Reason to Talk*; *Looking for Paul*, *BigMouth* and *A Brimful of Asha*. He has also worked extensively with a number of Canada's leading artists and companies producing their work internationally including: Volcano Theatre, Ross Manson, Rick Miller, Naomi Campbell, Raoul Bhaneja, Darren O'Donnell, Alon Nashman and Ravi Jain. In 2010, for his services to the U.K. and international theatre industries, he was selected for lifetime inclusion in A & C Black's annual publication *Who's Who*.

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